

PRIMITIVE BAPTIST MESSENGER

PULASKI, VA.

SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, 1967

Hear The Primitive Baptist Hour Sunday Morning
at 8:30 on WHHV 1400, Radio, Hillsville, Va.
at 8:30 on WPUV 1580, Radio, Pulaski, Va.

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

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TRUTH

Whenever I search
My heart from within,
I wonder just why
My life should have been.
From out of the depths,
My spirit doth cry—
"Why am I living,
And oh, what am I?"

When was it ordained
That my life should be?
Oh, was it sometime
In eternity?
There must be a purpose—
How can I know
What I must do—
Which way I must go?

I look at the world—
Its wonders I see—
All nature is clothed
In deep mystery.
Life is a symbol
That's clouded with doubt—
I can't understand
What nature doth shout!

My spirit perceives
An intricate plan—
Above and beyond
The wisdom of man.
The life I now live
That seems like a dream
Must be a small part
Of God's wondrous scheme.

Oh, that I could tear
This veil from my eyes—
And stretch forth my hands
Till they reached the skies—
To gather the whole
Of truth to my heart—
To know it in full
Instead of in part....

But, oh, who am I
To wish to be wise?
My poor mortal heart
In such weakness lies—
I cannot possess
All spiritual things—
I'll gather the crumbs
That each moment brings.

And whatever truth
Shall dawn on me here,
I'll savor the taste
And hold it most dear.
The glimmers of light
I see here and there—
I'll cherish like gems—
So precious and rare.

And when I have reached
The end of the way,
The shadows of night
Will dawn into day—
Each fragment of truth
Will fall into place,
And shine from the light
Of God's Holy Face.....

June Hawks Goins

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Sister Lillie E. Jackson, 88, quietly fell asleep August 13, 1967. She was a member of New Hope Church 50 years, 9 months, and 1 day. She was church Clerk for 36 years.

A true Mother in Israel, she was much loved by everyone, and is sadly missed. Being denied the privilege of natural motherhood, she became a mother to all of us who knew her.

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Harmony Grove Church was saddened by the loss of Sister Betty Ann Radford, August 14, 1967. Though a member but a few years, her love, and fellowship was treasured by the Church.

We apologize for being late. Due to illness it was impossible to get the paper out on time. We have combined the September and October issues. The Lord willing we hope to be on time in the future.

Appointments

Elder C. E. Darity will be speaking at the Pulaski Church Saturday night, Sunday morning, and Sunday night of the 5th weekend in October. Other appointments will be announced on the radio program each Sunday morning.

Regular Services

Good Home Primitive Baptist Church Axton, Va.
1st and 3rd Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m.
Elder Rupert Turner, Pastor.

GOD

God can take our happy hearts
And make them mourn and grieve—
He can cause our hearts to burn
With thirst we can't relieve.

He can take contented souls
And shatter them apart—
Take away all creature joys
And leave an empty heart.

God can fill our longing souls
With flames of love divine—
He can lift us from the dust
To peaks of joy sublime.

When our own strength lets us fall
And we must yield and wait—
Then we're made to be assured
Our mighty God is great!

He must halt us in our ways
And cause us to be still—
God must break the heart of man
To mold him to His Will.....

JHG

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LACK - WISDOM

"If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him". - James 1:5. This scripture has been misquoted, and misapplied about as much as any I can recall at present. The word LIKE is used instead of LACK as used in the verse. Like and lack are entirely two different words. Like means to be fond of. Lack means to be void of. This

is speaking of spiritual wisdom, and is to the Children of God. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, and to eschew evil is understanding.

Solomon prayed for wisdom that he might know how to go in and out before so great a people as Israel. He has much to say about wisdom in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, and says, "How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!"

We need not expect to just ask for wisdom, and receive it unless we put the effort to reading and study. Proverbs 2:3-4-5 reads, "Yea if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God." It has been said that there have been those that claimed they did not have to read their Bible in order to preach the gospel. Such a statement would show a lack of wisdom to begin with. If a man studies his Bible and yet preaches that God predestinated all things, good and bad, non-resurrection, or that there is nothing gained or lost in obedience, then he is still in much lack of wisdom.

We are told to seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you, yet this must be done in faith with an open mind, desiring that the will of God be done, because they preach eternal salvation by works, we know it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by His mercy and grace He saved us. So then the world with all its worldly wisdom lacks the wisdom that we are to ask God for.

I have met a few selfish-hearted people who seemed to think that only the preacher was to have any wisdom. The scriptures we are writing about says,

"If ANY among you", and, "who giveth to ALL men liberally". I am so thankful for this. Would you not hate to have to believe all you hear, even from some pulpits, that preach those false doctrines before mentioned? The ministry is to show themselves approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed (They should be supported that they might have more time to study.) When the need arose for the first deacons, as described in Acts, they were to seek out seven men full of wisdom, and the Holy Ghost. These things are needful today as never before. So then it behooves us all to ask of God for Wisdom, for in some way we all stand in LACK.

Kemp Walker

Luke 10:23-24, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."

My dear brethren, by the grace of God, it seems my mind has of late been much taken up by meditation on the substance of the scripture noted. Not so much in a sense to desire to expound on or enlarge on them, but to have brought to our remembrance how "...blessed are the eyes..." of this gospel generation. For it was written not only of the dead in sin, but many times in reference to God's people among the Jews "...and having eyes, they see not, and ears they hear not..."

When we consider that kings such as David and Solomon, of old, and all the prophets, looked forward to and longed to see this day which we so much enjoy, and at most had but the feeble shadow of the substance given us today, should it not bring to our

hearts the deepest shades of humility, that God should, for Christ's sake, have brought us to the very places the prophets longed to see?

When we compare what they of old received, with what God has given us in the gospel age, how rich we are. While Israel followed a pillar of fire and smoke, we have our guide, not where we must depend upon natural eyes to follow, but dwelling in the very hearts which He has given us.

Surely God did speak to our fathers in time past by the mouths of the prophets, and that was good, but how much better, that He now speaks by His Son, through the blessed Spirit which dwelleth in us.

The little bells on the hems of the priest's garments gave off a sweet sound, but how much more melodious to ears that hear, are the ringing sounds of His gospel, which tells us not only that our Priest still lives, but that because He lives we shall live also.

Surely the incense burning on the little golden altar did give off a pleasant odor, but how much more pleasant, the sweet odors of the prayers of the saints, gently rising from the heart burdened with love.

The shew-bread was good, but could it compare with the bread of life, which we eat each time we are blessed to worship Him, whether in the assembly of saints, or in the privacy of humble thanksgiving?

Oh, I know somehow that it brought comfort to the hearts of our fathers in time past to receive the promise that One should come and deliver His people from all afflictions, but how much more comforting is the good news that He has come; that the precious promises are fulfilled in Jesus Christ our Lord; that

by His stripes we are healed; that by His blood we are justified; that when He cried, "...it is finished", it was finished. In the words of a long forgotten poet, "finished all the types and shadows, of the ceremonial law, finished all that God had promised, death and hell no more shall awe."

Oh, my brethren, how thankful we should be, and how little room we have to complain. How bountifully God has blessed us in this grace generation! Should we not be found continually engaged in thanksgiving, and in humble service to Him? Were we blessed to devote our every breath this side of eternity to praising Him, how little it would be compared with what is due His great name.

May I exhort all who hope in Jesus' name, count your blessings, if you can, and see... is He not worthy of all reverence, honor, and adoration?

Submitted in love,
Reuben Hawks, Jr.

W A N I T Y

"Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity." Ecclesiastes 1:2. "Verily, every man at his best state is altogether vanity." Psalms 39:5.

It seems to me this statement does not exclude any man but includes every man, regardless of his condition, attitude, or any decision he may have or may not have made, regardless of whether he is in his very best state or in his very worst, he is altogether vanity.

Yet we are told that it is up to this kind of being to decide whether or not he will spend eternity in

everlasting shame or in peace and bliss in that Eternal day. We know the Bible does not teach such a doctrine as that, but rather teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ came to this earth for the specific purpose of saving this kind of people from their sins. What kind of people? People who are altogether vanity in their very best state.

Nowhere in the Bible does it say that Jesus offered salvation and made it available to all mankind and now is anxiously waiting to see just how many, and trying to get all, to accept this opportunity and have Eternal Life. But to the contrary, in the early morning of time God drove man out of the garden for the very purpose of keeping him from putting forth his hand and taking the fruit of life, according to his own words. Then at the appointed time, He, Jesus, came and gave Eternal Life to his people by the sacrifice He made on the cross. While He was here, before He made this sacrifice which did forever perfect those that are Sanctified, He also set up His kingdom here, which was also prophesied that He would do. To those of His children whom He gave this kingdom, He also gives a desire for heaven and creates within them a longing and desire for this life. It is then by the preaching of the gospel life and immortality are brought to light.

The poor hungry child of God is comforted and God is glorified. I hear and read much criticism of the Child of God praying for the resurrection. It is my understanding that the poor hungry Child of God who has been comforted is still vanity and was subjected in Hope of Eternal Life and will never get beyond this hope, till he comes in possession of that he has hoped for. Therefore, it is my honest conviction and thought that my very last prayer in this life will be, Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit and

in the great resurrection receive me in that upper and better kingdom and somehow I feel the Lord will give me in my last prayer a sufficient amount of security of that plea. No, I don't find occasion to criticize one for praying for the resurrection.

Submitted in love,
Elder Paul D. Law
Vero Beach, Fla.

There is much regarding the duty of the ministry which needs to be taught in our churches. Our young ministers need to be encouraged in this matter for the good of the cause and to the glory of our blessed Lord and Master. May God help us in the future and forgive us of our past sins in neglecting this great need.

It is my honest conviction, according to the teaching of the holy scripture, that it is the duty of the man who feels he is called to this wonderful work of proclaiming the greatest news on earth to God's people, to give his full time to this work. Then he will not get the job done, if he lives to be a hundred years old, for there is no place to stop. The Apostle Paul told Timothy "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." I Tim. 4:14-16.

I would like to refer to the 10-13 verses, which read "For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe. These things command and teach. Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in

word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine." These Scriptures among many others taught in this letter to Timothy and Titus give the duties and qualifications of a minister in regard to his work and labors in the ministry.

I could go on and on and never begin to tell all there is to do, for the work can never be done. I feel that the gospel of grace, election, and predestination is the greatest message to tell God's humble poor - that Christ came to save His people from their sins and completed the work, that He will save every one of them without the loss of one, and will come back and call their bodies from the grave and carry them home to glory to sing His praises forever! Praise His Holy Name!

In March, 1937, at the age of 24, I was licensed to speak in public and was ordained in Feb. 1938. At that time the ministry was afraid to teach the church the need of full time ministry and their support. Some said it gave them a chill and they did not want that but one time a year, and that was when they made up money for the church expenses for the next year and made it appear that it was a sin to give the preacher anything. They would quote the Apostle Paul where he said "they that preach the gospel should live of the gospel" and would spiritualize it. I tried to preach it the same way one time, but felt something was wrong and left out. I came home, got my Bible and searched the scriptures, and never preached it that way again. I read the 9th chapter of I Cor. and found what it really did teach - I feel that this scripture surely teaches the full support of the ministry and the 9th chapter of 2 Cor. tells the church how this should be done.

Soon after my ordination the churches in this area began to call for my services. At that time I was a

tenant farmer and had to work very hard but would read my Bible at night and meditate on the scriptures throughout the day. I had many wonderful spiritual seasons in the field and feel the Lord opened many wonderful things to me in what the scriptures teach. But this was not the beginning of my study of the scriptures for when I was at the age of fifteen I felt the call of the ministry, at which time my mother was a widow and we were very poor. I had no opportunity for any education and I could not read. When I would start to read I would have to go on my knees in prayer and beg the Lord to help me learn to read and to understand what the scriptures teach. It seemed the Lord was very near and wonderful to me; there was no one in my area that I could talk with who understood what the scriptures teach. Some would laugh at me and scorn me but even then, my understanding was what it is today. One day about five years later, I met my wife's father and we talked about what we felt the scriptures teach and we were in one accord. We talked about our experiences and what the Lord had done for us. It was a glorious day in my life and I was made to feel I was not alone in the world. After my wife and I were married we went to a Primitive Baptist Church, and it seemed the preacher preached to me and told my experience better than I could. We had never seen each other before in our lives, and it was so wonderful that I wanted everyone to hear him preach.

But back to the subject at hand, after a few years my wife and I had to quit the farm because we were short of help and went on public works. I had to work long hours at which time I was called to four and five churches and could only get a few minutes at a time to read my Bible. I would lay on my bed and pray and cry because the burden was so heavy, for I knew that I was not giving the cause justice. But even then, the Lord was gracious to me! Being surrounded with wicked people, I could not meditate as I should which was a

handicap to my duty; so you see why I feel as I do about the minister giving his full time to his work in the ministry.

Christ said "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Luke 16:13.

I feel our churches should consider and try to find out what the scriptures teach on these subjects. Forget the traditions of men - search for the truth as it is taught in the Bible, and stand behind the ministry so they will not have to entangle their minds with the cares of the world and wonder what will become of their families. If we give our support they can keep their minds on the scriptures and give their time to study of the Bible, praying for understanding of what the scriptures teach and to rightly divide the word of truth. We will have a stronger ministry and stronger church. We need to visit among the sick and the young people and talk about the wonderful doctrines of grace. The ministry needs to go among those in destitute places to hold appointments and preach the truth as it is in Christ. I know some of our people think the old Baptist Church building is the only place there is to preach, but I know there are many of God's children in other places who would love to hear the wonderful and glorious news of grace and that their salvation is complete in Christ, and He finished the work He came to do, saving His people from their sins, to someday bring them before His Father and will say, "Behold, I and the children which Thou hast given me".

Some think that preaching is not work, but let that person go and talk to his doctor about public speaking and learn for himself. I have a wonderful doctor who loves the truth in Christ, and he told me two years before I had my first heart attack, that if I did not slow

down, I would wind up with what I did two years later. Thirty minutes of public speaking takes as much out of a man as 6 hours of digging ditches. That was in 1952 but now they say that it is as much as eleven hours. So you see why Christ said that a workman was worthy of his hire and that it is not all play. But we know that the dear Lord will take care of his servants, if the church fails to do that she should, as long as the minister applies himself and is faithful to the cause.

I believe and feel that the true called servant of God will be concerned about this great cause, and it will drive him to his knees to beg the great God of heaven to lead him in these wonderful truths. He will not go into this work for what money he can get out of it - that will not be his concern, but it will be to feed the flock of God over which the Holy Ghost has made him overseer; so they will have a balanced diet that they might grow strong in the grace of God and in the power of His might and honor His great Name on earth!

I feel that too much time has gone to waste already, and it is time to wake from sleep and rise from the dead, and the Lord will give us light. I feel that the churches need to pray that the Lord will send laborers into the field for the harvest is white and the laborers are few. It is stated in the Bible where no oxen are, the crib is clean, but much increase is by the strength of the ox. Proverbs 14:4. I feel that the purpose of the gospel is to convert the child of God from the false doctrines of the modern religions of the world to the truth as it is in Christ and teach them to turn from the ways of the world and follow Christ - BE A SEPARATE PEOPLE AND LET THEIR LIGHT SO SHINE BEFORE MEN AND GLORIFY THEIR FATHER IN HEAVEN. "Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.

For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes.

And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double; because they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable things." Jeremiah 16:16-18. I feel this very scripture is being fulfilled today in our midst by false preaching that is leading many of God's people astray from the truth and has defiled the Lord's land. Oh, may God help us to see this and earnestly pray for guidance in this so great a matter and labor more and more in the Lord's vineyard is my humble prayer.

What I have written has been in much love and for the good of the cause of Christ Jesus our blessed Lord and Master, and for the good of the cause in general. I know I am so imperfect and so little and full of mistakes and fall so short of these things, that it makes me feel too unworthy to write on this subject. I pray that the reader will look over my imperfections and pray for this unworthy creature. May our great God's blessings be with us all is my prayer.

Elder F. R. Moore

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OBEDIENCE

Isaiah 1:18-20 "Come now and let us reason together saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

The subject on my mind is the o b e d i e n c e of the Lord's children. There is a people that call them-

selves Primitive Baptists who profess to believe that the Lord's children can't obey unless the Lord gives them a mind to do so. In other words, they teach that unless the Lord has predestinated that his children obey him, they simply can't be obedient or disobedient.

May I say here that my purpose in making this effort is not to cause controversy among the Lord's dear children. I most sincerely and prayerfully desire to be obedient to my heavenly Father. Who I feel, if not deceived, called me from the most dreadful regions of darkness, of this sinful world into the marvelous light and liberty of the spiritual kingdom of the most high God of heaven and earth. Having delivered me from the bondage of sin and death, for some reason best known by our heavenly Father, it pleased him to call me to preach the gospel of the blessed Son of God.

I believe the greatest desire since feeling the burden of the ministry has been to know the truth and to rightly divide the word of truth. Jesus said to his believing children, "if ye continue in my word you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free". St. Joh. 8:31.

I recall that Jesus also taught, and this was his children he was teaching, that this is the work of God that you believe on him whom he hath sent, that is one Christ Jesus.

This is in harmony with the apostle Paul's teaching in Ephesians 2:10 - "For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." The same apostle also teaches, and this is the Lord's believing children also, "Wherefore my beloved, as ye have always obeyed not as in my presence only but now much more in my absence work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God

which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure". Phil. 2:12-13.

Now here the apostle uses the expression wherefore meaning the teaching preceding this statement, that if there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the spirit. Fulfill ye my joy that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord and of one mind. (In so doing just exercising obedience to the apostles teaching and all of the Holy Scriptures). Here the apostle is commending the Philippian Saints for their obedience both in his presence and also in his absence.

You know the Lord's children have always been quick to forget the Lord and his teachings. I feel sure the great Apostle must have been thinking of the many many times the children of God forgot the Lord and by their disobedience caused the wrath of the Lord to be kindled against them.

The Israelites had obtained mercy from the Lord. They cried by reason of their afflictions when they were in bondage in Egypt, and the Lord heard their cries and delivered them. After the Lord had performed many great and mighty miracles in the presence of his people, parting the waters of the Red Sea, allowing his children to cross dry shod without the loss of a single one, then completely destroying the enemy in the same water — After all this and many more wonderful blessings received at the hands of the Lord, yet they complained and became so disobedient that many times the Lord's wrath was kindled against them. (His children please remember.)

The Lord made a promise to Abraham after he had exercised his belief and his faith. (Please remember Jesus said this is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.) It pleased the Lord to tempt Abraham. Genesis 22:1. The Lord, you remember

instructed Abraham to take his only son Isaac and offer him for a burnt offering unto the Lord. Abraham was simply obedient unto the Lord. Genesis 22:18. The Lord spake to Abraham and said "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice". I believe the word obey has been stressed more throughout the teaching of the scriptures than anything else. It is so important that the Israelites suffered anciently, are a type of our experiences today. The Lord came here for the purpose of saving his people from their sins. Matt. 1:21. In so far as the eternal security of his children are concerned, our blessed Lord most wonderfully completed this great work of redemption.

The Apostle Paul stated in the Titus letter that the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. Teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lust, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. Titus 2:11-12.

Dear friends, this is so plain. The wonderful grace of God, his unmerited favor to poor sinners who are the object of his wonderful love and mercy has brought this great salvation. Now let us examine this great salvation briefly. The definition of salvation as the apostle uses it here is preservation from danger or trouble here in time while we live. Remember the text Titus 2:11-14, the 13th verse says, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us- (his children right on) that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works". 15th verse "These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee". May the dear Lord help us all to ever be faithful and obedient to the heavenly calling. As James taught, "be ye doers of the word and not hearers only deceiving your own selves".

The psalmist David began writing the beautiful book of psalms with these words- "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners; nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord and in his law doth he meditate day and night". David completed the last chapter of Psalms the 150th every verse with "praise ye the Lord".

I want to encourage the Lord's little children to obey the dear Lord who said "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest". My experience has been that I have found rest in him. The command of our blessed Lord is to "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you".

To the above command many times I have been disobedient and suffered the chastening rod of our Lord. But I am so thankful for his rich mercy that he permits us to repent and return again into the presence of his glory. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power both now and ever." Amen. Jude 24-25.

I want to beg an interest in the prayers of you dear people who read this. Please remember our churches and pray for the peace of Zion. In Christian Love,

J. A. Langham

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You will find a self addressed envelope for your convenience when your subscription comes due. Please return with your renewal.

Blindness vs: Sight

Eph. 4:17- "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth (from here on) walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, (18) Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart."

I suppose we too could say, there is no greater evil upon man than blindness. Natural blindness is so pitiful. People living a lifetime without the vision to see the beautiful things that are around them- the blue of the sky, the glow of the sun, the silvery rays of the moon, the twinkling of the stars, the falling of the rain, the beauty of the rainbow after the rain, the majestic ocean with her whitecapped waves, and also to see the ocean come rushing to the bank, and that it can come no further, the great mountains turning green in the summer, and the beautiful color of the leaves in the Autumn, gold, brown, red, and a blend of all colors. Yea! the beauty of spring, the color of the flowers, the beauty of the birds, and a million more things that can be seen by the human eye. Of course, we must say this in behalf of those who are naturally blind, they are not without inward vision. Many are gifted above others with sight. Sound and sense are doubly keen. They seem to see and know more than many who have 20/20 vision.

We could go on for pages describing the talents of those who are naturally blind, but this is not our purpose in writing. The blindness we shall deal with is far greater by measure than the natural inability to see. We see people with perfect natural vision and also very alert to all affairs about them.

They can see the trend of business, the change of styles, a long-range vision of things in the world about them, and yet these people give no evidence whatsoever of any spiritual sight. Their understanding is darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. Yes! the heart of the alienated sinner is blind. No wonder Jesus said "Except a man be born again he cannot SEE the kingdom of God". John 3:3. Also, this vital point was confirmed by the Apostle Paul when he quoted "but as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10- But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God". I Cor. 2: 9-10. So we can see plainly ourselves, by the revealing power of God's Spirit, that the natural man cannot receive nor understand the things that are of God. Why? because they are foolishness unto him and neither can he discern (see) them because they are spiritually discerned. Man is born spiritually blind as far as nature is concerned, until he is given spiritual eyesight. This shows him forth as a child of wrath even as others, until the spiritual power of God's grace comes into his heart, and gives him a new nature (the inner-man) by which he then has spiritual eyes to see. Otherwise, there is no power in the earth, invested in man, that can infuse in him these spiritual faculties. Until that time he remains in spiritual blindness!

Blindness in Ignorance

Whenever it shall please the God of all grace and mercy to open the eyes of our souls, give us the grace of life, yes! divine life, and the grace of faith, by which we may be enabled to see and understand

the things freely given us of God, "yet we may not see clearly all things. I do believe we experience his pardoning grace, his eternal love, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us, and the basic grace of faith is instilled within us, and we are taught to know him; and in this, every child of grace finds an experimental peace within.

Nevertheless, many are taught things by men who wrestle the scriptures to their own destruction, and hinder the children of God from entering into the full glory of this grace, due to the false teachings of men. The ministers of Satan spend all of their time in fair speeches, and a show of earthly knowledge, to lead astray the simple among the heirs of God. Those who follow such teachings could be also considered blind, not in heart but rather, in the lack of knowledge.

Blind Teachers

Jesus said, when the blind lead the blind, they both fall into the ditch: blind teachers, trying to teach law for grace, darkness for light, bitter for sweet, and are themselves unstable souls, for they themselves are ever learning, and never able to come into knowledge of the truth. As Paul spoke concerning Hymenæus and Philetus, who concerning the truth have erred; saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrew the faith of some; nevertheless, Paul further states, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. II Tim. 2:18-19. Of course, this belief of error did not change the plan and purpose of God, but it did cause some of his people, in a gospel sense, to become blind to the truth. There is not only blind teachers out in the so-called religious world, but also many rise up among the true Church and teach false ideas, and

lead some away after them. These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with the tempest; to whom the mist of darkness (blindness) is reserved forever. Some will live and die in this blindness! This was so true of many of the Lord's people among the Jewish nation who persisted in their own ways, having a zeal of God but not according to knowledge, and with many of them God was not pleased, and they were destroyed in the wilderness of disobedience and unbelief. This was so forcefully set forth by the Apostle Paul in Romans 11:24 (last clause) "that blindness in part (there were some Jews who did believe the gospel but not as a whole) is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in" (or until the children of God among the Gentiles have the gospel fully preached unto them, as was the case with the Jews). I believe the Gentiles did come into the fullness of all the gospel as preached by the apostles, and as was illustrated in many places in the scriptures, before the Jews were completely cut off. Also, I feel it is altogether possible when this gospel has been fully preached in all the habitable world of the Gentiles, and they too can become blind to the truth, and not only so but also God can remove the blindness from the Jews as stated in II Cor. 3. Especially notice the 16th verse, "nevertheless when it (the heart of the Jew that is born of God over which the vail of blindness drops until it) shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away".

God's Servant Blind

"Who is blind, but my servant?" This is what God said by the prophet Isaiah 42:19. "Who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the Lord's servant?" Verse 20- "Seeing many things, but thou observest not; opening the ears, but he heareth not".

Yes, many of us today, claim to see and under-

stand the ways of God, and yet, we do not observe them. We fail to see the "signs of the times" and warn the children of God. We allow Jacob to become a spoil for the world, and give Israel to the robbers, to take that which belongs to God and his service and give it unto man, the flesh, and the institutions of the devil.

Yet we claim to be perfect! We say it is others who are blind. We say, like the Jews, "we see" and therefore our unbelief remains, and our sins are not forgiven. But the prophet went on to say: Isaiah 43:8- "Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears".

Yes: this gospel is for the blind, who have eyes. Many have closed their own eyes, and brought about their own blindness. They need their eyes anointed with eyesalve of the truth, that they may see! Bring them to Jesus in the gospel! Jesus only is able to open their eyes of understanding and remove, by his truth, the blindness of error that covers the optical nerves of their souls. This is not the new birth, but a renewing in truth, turning them by the gospel from the darkness of error to the light of the truth as it is in Christ. For some have gone away from God in such error that they cannot see afar off, and have even forgotten they were purged from their old sins. O! what brightness, when this operation of truth has removed the "cataracts" or growth of error that blocked the optical nerve and the eyes can now be brought into focus on the things of God, and not the things of this world. How much brighter does the future look by faith, as we view the judgment, not in our righteousness but in his righteousness! How much brighter and clearer, can we see death, sorrow, the loss of loved ones, coming afflictions in our bodies, world troubles, church troubles, war within, wars without! Yes! every-

thing is clearer to those to whom the Lord has given a better sight and removed much blindness of doubt and fear from their minds.

Yours in Him,
Cecil E. Darity

The Gospel of Christ

Romans 1:16 - "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

Here, as in all the Bible, we are told what the gospel is and to whom it is addressed. It is the power of God unto salvation to the believer, not to the non-believer (or dead sinner).

In 1st Corinthians 1:21, we read again, "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

Verse 23 and 24 tells us, to preach Christ crucified is a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness unto the Greeks. But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

Our text speaks of the gospel of Christ. Gospel is good tidings or good news. In the Galatian letter, the Apostle rebukes the church for being so soon removed from him and the true gospel of Christ, unto another gospel. The word "of" shows us there is no other gospel then the gospel of Christ, the good news of our Lord and Saviour.

In Acts 28, we see the Apostles' devotion to the truth. Verse 30: "Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him". Verse 31: "Preaching the Kingdom of God and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no man

forbidding him".

For a moment, let us go back to a point so misunderstood today. The gospel is for the delivering of the child of God from error to truth, those already born of the Spirit, those called of God.

1st John 5:1 - "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God". This is in the past tense. To believe, one must have life, and the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are spiritually discerned. Read 1st Corinthians 2:11-14.

The gospel of Christ is the best news a sinner will ever hear on this earth. It is the good news of the accomplishments of our Lord, not His trying, but His doing the will of God. To you that are weary of sin, and the burden of this old nature, the gospel of Christ is addressed. "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country". Proverbs 25:25. In Romans 10:13, we read, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved". Can a dead man call on anyone? This would be contrary to all reason.

Romans 10:8 - "But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; (9) that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved". Please notice verse 10, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation". The mouth cannot confess something not believed in the heart. Prov. 16:1 - "The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord".

Paul preached Jesus Christ to these brethren at Rome that they might rest in His works, submit to His righteousness, to His glory and praise, and for their good while here in the world. Editor

REGULAR SERVICES

Pulaski Primitive Baptist Church Pulaski, Va. 4th Street in the Auditorium of the Woman's Club on the First Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. Each Sunday night at 7:00 p.m. Elder R. W. Bowles, pastor

Bethel Primitive Baptist Church Hiwassee, Va. 2nd and 4th Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. Elder Roy W. Bowles, pastor

Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church Indian Valley, Va. Each Sunday morning at 10:30 a.m. Elder J. S. Harris and Elder E. G. Singleton, pastors

Pine Grove Primitive Baptist Church 6 miles north of Hillsville on Route #52. 1st and 3rd Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. 2nd, 4th, and 5th Sunday nights at 7:00 p.m. Elder Ray Rotenizer, pastor

Laurel Fork Primitive Baptist Church Laurel Fork, 4th Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. Elder Monroe McGrady, pastor

Mill Primitive Baptist Church Sutherlin, Virginia. 1st and 2nd Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. Elder R. F. Kidd, Jr., pastor

Harmony Grove Primitive Baptist Church Hillsville, 2nd Sunday afternoon at 2:00 p.m. & 4th Sunday night at 7:00. Elder W. L. Gardner, pastor

New Hope Primitive Baptist Church 5 miles north of Hillsville on Rt. #221. 4th Sunday afternoon at 2:00 p.m. Elder Allen Easter and Elder Reuben Hawks, pastors

Cross Roads Primitive Baptist Church Baywood, Va. Sunday after the 3rd Saturday at 11:00 a.m. Elder C. C. Sawyer & Elder Reuben Hawks, pastors

Galax Primitive Baptist Church Galax, Va. 2nd Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m. and Sat. night before at 7:30 p.m. Elder C. C. Sawyer & Elder F. R. Moore, pastors

Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church Located on Rt. 608 - 8 miles from Amelia Courthouse. Services 2nd Sunday and Saturday before. Elder W. C. Tuttle, pastor. R. L. Anderson, Clerk. Ph. 561-2676 Amelia, Va.