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# Shield of Faith

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## There Is No Restraint to the LORD

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*“And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the LORD will work for us: for there is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few” (I Samuel 14:6).*

From the human perspective, there is very little in the world that is certain. We cannot look, even for a moment, into the future. We “know not what shall be on the morrow” (James 4:14). We know not whether the Lord shall grant that we see the morrow. As believers, we are called upon to live in the assurance that the unchanging God holds the future. The Apostle Paul stated, “For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s” (Romans 14:8). Our business is with today. We are only to ask bread day-by-day, and only for the day’s consumption. To worry over the uncertainties of tomorrow is to fail to trust God.

Jonathan, the son of Israel’s first king, Saul, faced the uncertainty of battle against the enemies of God’s people. He did not know the outcome of his actions, yet he trusted God, and went forward despite the uncertainty. From the record of Scripture, we can find principles of action from which we, too, may pattern our lives of service to the Lord.

“And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the LORD will work for us: for there is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few” (I Samuel 14:6). Jonathan’s expression, “it may be that the LORD will work for us,” did not imply a doubt, but an uncertainty. He was assured that God would deliver his people; yet, he was not certain that he would do it at this time, and in this way. *Doubt* and *uncertainty* are synonymous in primary meaning, but one may be uncertain of the future and yet be without doubt

of God’s grace even in uncertain times. Jonathan’s words signified simply that battle was not in his own power, but it depended upon God. So it is with every battle of life that we may face. We may not know the future, but we know God, Who holds the future.

Scriptures do not inform as to what motivated Jonathan to act as he did. This act of Jonathan was very contrary to the principles of war. No military operation would ordinarily be undertaken without the knowledge and command of the general. When he approached the Philistines, “... Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet” (I Samuel 14:13), making him very vulnerable before his enemies. Either Jonathan acted in a very foolhardy manner, or he acted under Divine influence, following God’s leadership even when it was contrary to human reason. The outcome leads us to conclude that he followed God’s leadership. So long as he followed the Divine influence, he could be assured of Lord’s guidance and aid. In life’s uncertainties, men of faith can trust the certain God, even when His guidance defies natural reason.

“And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the LORD will work for us: for **there is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few**” (I Samuel 14:6 emphasis added). When men in the fear and love of God engage in duties to which he calls them, they may safely trust in him. He is not limited. He can easily bring deliverance by a few, by many, or by Himself. It is no difficult thing to Him to save by few, nor can anything hinder him, whatever the difficulties may be.

Scripture abounds with instances of the Lord’s using one man to bring about great victory for His people. Of Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, it is said, “Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars

of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable” (Hebrews 11:12). From “...one, and him as good as dead,” the Lord made a nation, demonstrating the truth of the Apostle Paul’s words, “But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence” (I Corinthians 1:27-29).

As we consider *uncertainties*, we should also consider a *certainly* for a moment. When God’s people begin to think small, entertaining the notion that one person or one “small church” cannot accomplish anything, we can be *certain* of *failure*. With many congregations today declining and membership aging, we all too often hear “We can’t.” If we were left to rely upon our own strength, it would probably be true that “We can’t.” The church, however, is never left to her own strength. Let us remember the words of Paul, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Philippians 4:13). Let us also always remember, “... there is no restraint to the LORD” (I Samuel 14:6).

“But if they say thus, Come up unto us; then we will go up: for the LORD hath delivered them into our hand: and this shall be a sign unto us” (I Samuel 14:10). We may infer that the same Spirit that inspired this undertaking also put into Jonathan’s heart to ask for a sign or token of God’s will.

Jesus condemned as “an adulterous generation” certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees who said “Master, we would see a sign from thee” (Matthew 12:38-39). While they implied that if they could see some miracle from Jesus, they would believe on Him, these men had, in fact, seen

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many of Jesus' miracles and still did not believe. No sign would satisfy their hardened hearts.

It was not a miraculous sign that Jonathan sought. Rather, his seems to be a desire for God's direction. Jonathan was led to go "...to the Philistines' garrison" (1 Samuel 14:1), but what was he to do when he arrived? Jonathan faced another uncertainty, so he sought the Lord's will.

Every child of God needs the direction from the Lord; not only for the path we are to take, but also for each step we take along that path. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way" (Psalms 37:23). The word translated *good* in this text properly signifies a strong man, a conqueror or hero. Even the most powerful must be supported and directed by the Lord; otherwise, their strength and courage will be of little advantage. We should constantly pray as did the Psalmist, "Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me" (Psalms 119:133). While the way before us may be uncertain, the Lord has promised to be with us and guide us. "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). Upon this promise, we may rely.

Having received his sign from the Lord, Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, "... Come up after me: for the LORD hath delivered them into the hand of Israel" (1 Samuel 14:12). The Lord had assured him of victory, yet it was still necessary that Jonathan engage in the fight. He was the instrument by which God would give the victory. As is often the case, God's providence and man's efforts combined to bring victory. The Lord did not need man's assistance, but graciously allowed Jonathan to have a part in the victory.

All spiritual success lies in our seeking to be instruments in God's hands, and in our lending ourselves to Him, to do in us and by us whatever is good in His sight. Jonathan did not fight for a personal cause; it was the Lord's cause that he sought to advance. He was willing to give up his life, if the Lord should require it, in advancing the Lord's cause. It is such consecration in spiritual service that brings most blessing and success. "He that loveth his

life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal" (John 12:25).

Jonathan had faced uncertainties with faith in God, and achieved a considerable personal victory. "And that first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armourbearer made, was about twenty men, within as it were an half acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plow" (1 Samuel 14:14). The Lord used Jonathan to begin an even greater victory over Israel's enemies. Saul's army seemed powerless before the Philistines. They were doubtless fearful and discouraged. Saul, in his self-will, had presumptuously offered a burnt offering, which he had no authority to do. He ought to have waited for directions from the Lord through Samuel, yet he proceeded to act as if he were quite independent of God's guidance. His impatience cost him his kingdom. Saul and his army now seemed to be paralyzed with fear.

We might draw parallels between that day and ours. We can certainly see times in which the people of God seem powerless before our enemies. Each one should examine their own case to find reasons for lack of power. We will seek to find ways to regain the power we have lost.

Note carefully the events that followed Jonathan's victory. "And Saul and all the people that were with him assembled themselves, and they came to the battle: and, behold, every man's sword was against his fellow, and there was a very great discomfiture. Moreover, the Hebrews that were with the Philistines before that time, which went up with them into the camp from the country round about, even they also turned to be with the Israelites that were with Saul and Jonathan. Likewise all the men of Israel which had hid themselves in mount Ephraim, when they heard that the Philistines fled, even they also followed hard after them in the battle" (1 Samuel 14:20-22).

First, the army "assembled themselves, and they came to the battle" (v. 20). They now no longer cowered in fear of the Philistines. The watchmen of Saul saw that "the multitude melted away, and they went on beating down one another" (1 Samuel 14:16), and soon learned that Jonathan was unaccounted for. They recognized a great opportunity before them and quickly took advantage of the opportunity. By the action of one, God stirred the army to ac-

tion.

Next, "the Hebrews that were with the Philistines before that time" (v. 21), re-joined their brethren. It is uncertain whether these were in bondage as servants, or had joined the Philistines to gain their favor and protection. In either case, they were restored to their people.

Finally, "all the men of Israel which had hid themselves" (v. 22), joined in the battle. Israel faced a mighty foe. "And the Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and people as the sand which is on the sea shore in multitude: and they came up, and pitched in Michmash, eastward from Bethaven" (1 Samuel 13:5). Their fear was understandable when considered in a natural sense. "When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait, (for the people were distressed,) then the people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits" (1 Samuel 13:6). They had forgotten the power of the One they served. They also seemed to have forgotten God's promises to them and they way he had blessed them in the past. They should have remembered the words of Joshua, "One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the LORD your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you. Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God" (Joshua 23:10-11). We, too, need to remember these words.

By the actions of one, the entire army was aroused to fight. Those held by the enemy were freed. Those who were fearful found courage. "So the LORD saved Israel that day: and the battle passed over unto Bethaven" (1 Samuel 14:23 KJV).

Scripture records many instances of the Lord's using one or a few to accomplish extraordinary feats. These individuals were uncertain of what lie ahead, but they trusted God, Who is always sure and certain. They yielded themselves to the Lord, and He exerted His power on their behalf. Let us in like manner face our uncertainties trusting in "...God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ" (2 Corinthians 2:14). "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4-5).

## Bible Quiz

Different parts of the body were used to teach biblical truths. Fill in each blank with the proper part of the body.

1. "The \_\_\_\_\_ is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9).
2. "If thy right \_\_\_\_\_ offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell" (Matt. 5:29).
3. "But the \_\_\_\_\_ can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison" (James 3:8).
4. "Out of the same \_\_\_\_\_ proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be" (James 3:10).
5. "For my \_\_\_\_\_ shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my \_\_\_\_\_" (Prov. 8:7).
6. "A wicked man hardeneth his \_\_\_\_\_: but as for the upright, he directeth his way" (Prov. 21:29).
7. "Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken \_\_\_\_\_ and a \_\_\_\_\_ out of joint" (Prov. 25:19).
8. "He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack \_\_\_\_\_: but the \_\_\_\_\_ of the diligent maketh rich" (Prov. 10:4).
9. "A wicked doer giveth heed to false \_\_\_\_\_; and a liar giveth \_\_\_\_\_ to a naughty \_\_\_\_\_." (Prov. 17:4).
10. "A fool's \_\_\_\_\_ is his destruction and his \_\_\_\_\_ are the snare of his soul" (Prov. 18:7).

*Answers on page 4.*

## "Miscellaneous Essays"

The Writings of Elder John Leland p.436 (1845)

WHERE THEN SHALL a guilty sinner find relief? The light of nature, philosophy, and state policy are all silent: neither of them can give a gleam of hope beyond the grave, nor show one sin forgiven. But the gospel of Jesus, is loaded with such blessings as guilty sinners need. Yes, through the blood of the cross, and the resurrection of Christ, pardon of sin is administered and eternal life made known. When sinners are made sensible of their pollution, and feel the plague of sin, on applying to the Saviour, and receiving the balsam of his grace, they obtain a perfect cure. All whoever apply, are received; all who look, do live; all who touch, are made whole. Though Christ crucified, is to the Jews a stumbling-block, to the Greeks foolishness, to the men of worldly wisdom scorn; yet to them who believe, he is the wisdom of God, and the power of God. O! that all my dear countrymen might apply to this balm; then would they joyfully believe in the truth of the scriptures.

## Christ Is All In All

by Jeremiah Burroughs, (1657)

The Apostle Paul was a chosen vessel to bear the name of Christ, to carry it up and down in the world. Indeed, his spirit was full of Christ. He desired to know nothing but Christ, to preach nothing but Christ, to be found in none but Christ. The very name of Christ was delightful to him. He seeks to magnify Christ in all of his epistles and, in these words I read to you, he omnifies Christ. He does not only make Him great but he makes Him all. *There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all.* That is, there is no privilege in the one to commend them to God, and there is no lack of anything in the other to hinder them from God. Let men be what they will in their outward respects, what is that to God? Let them be never so mean in regard of all outward things, that can never hinder them from the enjoyment of God, for God does not look at these things, but Christ is all and in all to them.

As far as God sees Christ in anyone He accepts them. If Christ is not there, no matter what they have, He does not regard them. Christ is all in all, even in the esteem of the Father Himself. He was the delight of the Father from all eternity, Prov.8:30, and the Father undertook infinite contentment in Him upon His willingness to undertake this blessed work of the redemption of mankind. God the Father is infinitely satisfied in Christ. He is all in all to Him. Surely if Christ is an object sufficient for the satisfaction of the Father, much more, then, is He an object sufficient for the satisfaction of any soul.

But that which is the main scope of the Holy Ghost here is this high expression of Christ's transcendent Excellency, which I will deliver in this doctrinal proposition: Christ is the only means of conveyance of good that God the Father intends to communicate unto the children of men in order to eternal life; He is all in all. This which I am to preach to you now, namely God's communicating Himself in His mercy to mankind through a Mediator, is the very sum of the gospel, the great mystery of godliness. It is the chief part of the mind and counsel of God that He would have made known to the children of men in this world. This is the great message that the ministers of the gospel have to bring, and it is the most absolutely necessary point in all theology.

*Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. I Corinthians 1:8*

How could Paul be so confident, so sure of the Corinthian saints? Because of the conviction within his soul of the truth of his next three words, "God is faithful." He had found Him so. He knew what it was to have God take him in hand and put him straight, and he did not doubt for one moment that God was prepared to do for each of His own, what had been done for him.

How good it would be if we could always see in our brethren the potential that the Spirit of God sees, and believe in His ability to accomplish all His gracious purpose in each one. Such a vision would be of inestimable value in helping us to help each other, and so carry forward the work of the Spirit in us. God is faithful, and whether we see it or not, every one who belongs to Him is moving on to the fulfillment of a destiny beyond our highest thought.

## Perilous Times

Thomas J. Bazemore

*From The Primitive Monitor (Oct. 1900)*

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” II Tim. 3: 1-7.

[S]ee how disobedient children are these days, especially those who profess religion, the false religion that is so plentiful now. Children seem to act as though they knew more than their parents. There are so many parents who have turned their children over to others to be taught, and have failed to give them that good, old-fashioned, moral training at home, that a large per cent of the rising generation have their heads full of false religion and exalted ideas of themselves. This being the case, the surroundings are such that it is now a very difficult task for any to raise their children properly.

These disobedient children are unthankful, unholy, and without natural affection. They speak and act as though they owed nothing to their parents, not even respect. And they are truce-breakers, destroying or breaking the little seasons of peace and quietness that their parents may have in this world of sin and sorrow and care. They are false accusers, alleging things against the people of the Lord that are false, such as claiming that the Lord’s ministers preach that infants go to hell, which they never did and never will preach. They also claim that the Lord’s people favor drunkenness, and excuse drunkards, which is a false accusation. These characters, though so full of their religion, are said to be incontinent; that is, loose in morals. So far from being righteous and holy, as they profess to be, they

are not even moral. They are fierce; that is, violent. They are fierce towards those that oppose them and their false notions. And they despise those that are good; consider them beneath their notice.

They are traitors; will not do to rely on as friends, they are so treacherous and deceitful. And they are heady; are self-willed; will not listen to the counsel of those that are older, wiser, and better than they. They are high-minded; are haughty; have an exalted opinion of themselves and their supposed attainments. They are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. Indeed, they do not love God, but have a form of godliness, in order to be popular, and to be in the style. They love to go to meeting with fine clothes on, and be much noticed. While they have a form of godliness, and appear to be very religious and sanctimonious, they deny the spiritual power that comforts the heart of the Christian and incites to righteous living. The apostle goes on further and says, “From such turn away.”

...Jesus says, “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it;” Matt., 10:34-39. So we see that families are divided. Some are the children of God, and some are not. Some know and love and obey the truth; while others do not know it, only to persecute it. This is the case with some families, evidently, as proven by the words of Jesus, as follows: “Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather

division: for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three;” Luke 12:51-52. It is very unpleasant for a family to be thus divided, but happy is the Christian that proves by his works that he does not love father or mother, brother or sister, son or daughter, wife or any one else, better than he loves Christ. Happy is the one that taketh up his cross, in this particular, even though he be opposed by his dearest one in the flesh. Happy is the one that thus loses his life, for in the best sense he shall find it. In a sense he suffers death without, but he finds life within. Seeing Him that is invisible, he endures the suffering, and rejoices that he is counted worthy to suffer for the sake of Jesus.

### The Advantages of Pleasing God Rather than Men

by Richard Baxter

1. If you seek first to please God and are satisfied therein, you have but one to please instead of multitudes; and a multitude of masters are harder pleased than one.
2. And it is one that puts upon you nothing that is unreasonable, for quantity or quality.
3. And one that is perfectly wise and good, not liable to misunderstand your case and actions.
4. And one that is most holy, and is not pleased in iniquity or dishonesty.
5. And he is one that is impartial and most just, and is no respecter of persons, Acts x. 34.
6. And he is one that is a competent judge, that hath fitness and authority, and is acquainted with your hearts, and every circumstance and reason of your actions.
7. And he is one that perfectly agrees with himself, and puts you not upon contradictions or impossibilities.
8. And he is one that is constant and unchangeable; and is not pleased with one thing to-day, and another contrary to-morrow; nor with one person this year, whom he will be weary of the next.
9. And he is one that is merciful, and requireth you not to hurt yourselves to please him: nay, he is pleased with noth-

### Answers to Bible Quiz

1-Heart; 2-Eye; 3-Tongue; 4-Mouth; 5-Mouth, Lips; 6-Face; 7-Tooth, foot; 8-Hand, hand; 9 - Lips, ear, tongue; 10-Mouth, lips

*(Continued on page 7)*

Devotions:

## Daily Devotion

By Elder Bill Taylor

### *The Light of the World*

*From Workday Grace - January 23, 2007*

*"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5:14-16*

Many years ago, our family went on a trip to tour a large underground cave. As we went farther and farther down into the cave, I began to notice the electric lights and started to ponder what would happen if the electricity went off. I wondered how hard it would be for our eyes to adjust to the lack of artificial light and find our way out. A few minutes later I received the answer to my questions. The tour guide stopped the group and told us he was going to show us what it would be like if he turned the lights out. He cautioned us not to move after the lights went out, for safety purposes. I soon saw why he told us that. Once the lights went out, I experienced a darkness that I had never experienced before - my eyes did not adjust to the lack of artificial light, because there was nothing to which they could adjust! In a cave there is a total lack of light, so your eyes are worthless - you are essentially blind. Apply this experience to what the world would be like if God's people were not providing light, for they are the only light that exists in the world. Men will speak of great minds, great writers and philosophers, great inventors, as if they were sources of light in the world. If that is so, the greatest ability they can have is to be as the moon, simply reflecting the true light. Jesus told His disciples that they were the light of the world. They also could only reflect the true light, but their brightness was far greater than the brightness of the moon. As they went about preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ and reflecting His glory by its effect in their lives, these followers of Christ provided light in a world as totally dark as that cave was to my family so many years ago. Jesus admonished His disciples then - and the admonition still applies to us today - to let their light shine forth so that it gives light to all that are in the house. I believe that being "in the house" indicates that only those who are born of the Spirit of God will actually see the light - in fact, I believe only those converted to the truth of Christ will see it; others may see the effects of it and wonder, but they will not give glory to God. Only those whose eyes are able to see the light can glorify the Father of all lights. The good news is that the light of God's glory, when reflected by our good works, will result in those who are in the house glorifying their Father in heaven.

I pray that we will reflect His glory today, giving light to all who are in the house.

Elder Bill Taylor

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Hymns and Hymn Writers

## Take My Hand, Precious Lord

Back in 1932 I was 32 years old and a fairly new husband. My wife, Nettie, and I were living in a little apartment on Chicago's Southside. One hot August afternoon, I had to go to St. Louis where I was to be the featured soloist at a large revival meeting. I didn't want to go. Nettie was in the last month of pregnancy with our first child. But, a lot of people were expecting me in St. Louis.

I kissed Nettie good-bye, clattered downstairs to our Model A and, in a fresh Lake Michigan breeze, chugged out of Chicago on Route 66. However, outside the city, I discovered that in my anxiety at leaving, I had forgotten my music case. I wheeled around and headed back. I found Nettie sleeping peacefully. I hesitated by her bed; something was strongly telling me to stay. But eager to get on my way, and not wanting to disturb Nettie, I shrugged off the feeling and quietly slipped out of the room with my music.

The next night, in the steaming St. Louis heat, the crowd called on me to sing again and again. When I finally sat down, a messenger boy ran up with a Western Union telegram. I ripped open the envelope. Pasted on the yellow sheet were the words: YOUR WIFE JUST DIED. People were happily singing and clapping around me, but I could hardly keep from crying out. I rushed to a phone and called home. All I could hear on the other end was "Nettie is dead. Nettie is dead."

When I got back, I learned that Nettie had given birth to a boy. I swung between grief and joy. Yet that night, the baby died. I buried Nettie and our little boy together, in the same casket. Then I fell apart.

For days I closeted myself. I felt that God had done me an injustice. I didn't want to serve Him any more or write gospel songs. I just wanted to go back to that jazz world I once knew so well. But then, as I hunched alone in that dark apartment those first sad days, I thought back to the afternoon I went to St. Louis.

Something kept telling me to stay with Nettie. Was that something God? Oh, if I had paid more attention to Him that day, I would have stayed and been with Nettie when she died. From that moment on, I vowed to listen more closely to Him.

But still I was lost in grief. Everyone was kind to me, especially a friend, Professor Fry, who seemed to know what I needed.

On the following Saturday evening, he took me up to a neighborhood music school. It was quiet; the late evening sun crept through the curtained windows. I sat down at the piano, and my hands began to browse over the keys. Something happened to me then. I felt at peace. I felt as though I could reach out and touch God. I found myself playing a melody. Once into my head, the words just seemed to fall into place:

"Precious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, let me stand,  
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn,  
Through the storm, through the night  
Lead me on to the light  
Take my hand, precious Lord, Lead me home."

As the Lord gave me these words and melody, He also healed my spirit. I learned that when we are in our deepest grief, when we feel farthest from God, this is when He is closest, and when we are most receptive to His restoring power.

And so I go on living for God, willingly and joyfully, until that day comes when he will take me and gently lead me home.

Tommy Dorsey

# HISTORY OF THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

## BAPTISTS OF THE UNITED STATES

The organization of the First Churches and Associations And their fundamental principles

We will next turn our attention to the Baptists of our native country. It has been with great interest that I have prepared this history to this period. There have been many things that I have omitted that would have been of great interest to many, but my only intention has been to give to our people a brief, useful record of the true Church of Christ.

From the most recent and thorough investigation it is believed that Dr. John Clark (a physician) and eleven other persons formed, at Newport, Rhode Island, in 1638, the first Baptist Church in America. Clark resigned the care of the church in 1651 to return to England, and was succeeded by Obadiah Holmes. The pastors and members of this church remained Calvinistic until about the year 1820.

The Welsh Tract Church, whose meeting house is two miles from Newark, in New Castle County, Delaware, is the oldest Old School, or Primitive Baptist Church, in the United States, and the only American Baptist Church that was regularly organized in Europe before emigrating to this country. It was constituted, in the spring of 1701, by sixteen Baptists, in the country of Pembroke and Caermarthen, in South Wales, with Thomas Griffith, one of their number, as pastor. A "Church Emigrant," they embarked at Milford Haven in June, 1701, and landed at Philadelphia, where they continued about a year and a half, and where their membership increased to thirty-seven. They then procured land in North Delaware, and in 1703 they built a small meeting house near Iron Hill. In 1746 they rebuilt on the same location a stone house for worship, which they have now (1909) used 163 years. Over two hundred years they have held regular service at that place. This was one of the five churches that formed the Philadelphia Association, the first association in America.

The second oldest Old School Baptist Church in the United States is Hopewell, in a village of the same name in New Jersey. This church, composed of twelve members, five of whom were Stouts, was organized at the residence of Joseph Stout, April 23, 1715, upon these eight fundamental prin-

ples: 1st, the Three-Oneness of God; 2d, His Self-existence and Sovereignty; 3d, The Total Depravity of the Natural Man; 4th, The Eternal, Personal, Unconditional Election of all the Members of the Body of Christ; 5th, The Special and Definiteness of the Atonement; 6th, The Necessity of a Spiritual Birth in order to Worship God in Spirit and in Truth; 7th, the Sovereign and Efficacious Operations of Divine Grace upon all the Vessels of Mercy; 8th, The Baptism of Believers by Immersion.

The Baptists at that time adopted the London Confession of Faith with two additional articles, known then as the Philadelphia Confession of Faith.

The church at Southampton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, was constituted in A D. 1746. Its organic members were from the church at Pennepek. The Pennepek Church was constituted in A D. 1687. It was gathered by the faithful labors of Elder Elias Keach, who was also its first pastor. He was the son of the noted Benjamin Keach, of London, who was a member of the convention that drew up and published the London "Confession of Faith" in A D. 1689.

The Philadelphia Association, in Pennsylvania, was the first Baptist association formed in America, constituted in A D. 1707; the second was the Charleston Association, of South Carolina, organized in A D. 1751; the third was the Sandy Creek Association, of North Carolina, organized in A D. 1758; the fourth was the Kehukee Association, of North Carolina, organized in A D. 1765; the fifth was the Ketocton Association, of Virginia, organized in A D. 1766; the sixth was the Warren Association, of Rhode Island, organized in A D. 1767; the seventh was the Stonington Association, of Connecticut, organized in A D. 1772; the eighth was the Strawberry Association, of Virginia, organized in A D. 1776; the ninth was the Shaftsbury Association, of Vermont, organized in A D. 1780; the tenth was the Salisbury Association, of Maryland, organized in A D. 1782; the eleventh was the Woodstock Association, of Vermont, organized in A. D. 1783; the twelfth was the Dover Association, of Virginia, organized in A D. 1783; the thirteenth was the Georgia Association, of Georgia, organized in A D. 1784; the fourteenth was the Vermont Association, of Vermont, organized in A D. 1785; the fif-

teenth was the Salem Association, of Kentucky, organized in A D. 1785; the sixteenth was the Elkhorn Association, of Kentucky, organized in A D. 1785; the seventeenth was the Holston Association, of Tennessee, organized in A D. 1786.

The first associations organized in each of the following States were as follows: New Hampshire, the Meredith Association, in A D. 1789; New York, the Warwick Association, in A D. 1791; Ohio, the Miami Association, in A D. 1797; Mississippi, the Mississippi Association, in A D. 1807; Illinois, the Illinois Association, in A. D. 1807; Indiana, the Whitewater Association, in A. D. 1809 (this is an error - the Wabash District Association was organized earlier in the same year. - PBL); New Jersey, the New Jersey Association, in A D. 1811; Alabama, the Bethlehem Association, in A D. 1816 (this is an error - the Flint River Association was organized in 1814 - PBL); Missouri, the Missouri Association, in A D. 1817 (this is an error - the Bethel Association was organized in A D. 1816 - PBL); Louisiana, the Louisiana Association, in A. D. 1820; Michigan, the Michigan Association, in A D. 1827.

To show some of the difficulties under which the Baptist people so rapidly grew in the early settlement of America, I will give a sketch of Lewis and Joseph Craig and Aaron Bledsoe. These three had been indicted for preaching the gospel of the Son of God in the colony of Virginia. The clerk was reading the indictment in a slow and formal manner; when he pronounced the crime with emphasis: "*For preaching the Gospel of the Son of God in the colony of Virginia*" a plainly dressed man, who had just ridden up to the courthouse, entered and took his seat within the bar. He was known to the court and lawyers, but a stranger to the mass of spectators who had gathered on the occasion. This was Patrick Henry, who, on hearing of this prosecution, had ridden some fifty or sixty miles from his residence in Hanover county, to volunteer his service in their defense. He listened to the further reading of the indictment with marked attention. The first sentence which caught his ear was, "For preaching the Gospel of the Son of God."

From *History of the Primitive Baptist Church* by Elder J. Harvey Daily  
To be continued

## Simple Truth

Written by Wilson Thompson

### **On the Being of God, his Majesty, and the obligations all the world is under to worship him.**

ALL gospel truth, is calculated to reveal God to man, in his nature, and works of providence and grace. In this work we shall therefore speak;

First, of the truth of the being of God. Secondly, show that there is but one God. Thirdly, hint at his Majesty, and the obligation all the world is under to worship him; for what he is, and for his creating and preserving goodness.

The truth of the being of God, is abundantly proved, by the things that are made; which declare his eternal power and God head. This terraqueous globe, with all its variety of animate and inanimate productions, afford sufficient evidence to prove to every unbiased mind, not only the being, but also the power and wisdom of the great architect. Let your eyes turn to the heavens, behold the sun, moon and stars; then ask your reason, if these are the works of chance. Follow the astronomer, while he pursues those orbs through the hemisphere, then ask yourself; if chance can produce such order, or fulfill such regular revolutions; than contemplate within yourselves, and ask, am I the work of chance? does any man live by chance, or die by chance? No, reason forbids the conclusion; and stands convinced of the being, power, wisdom and eternity of God: but how to think, or speak of God, or how to understand him in his existence, perfections, or grace, is too unsearchable for reason; here it must stop; and stand as a humble inquirer, to receive instruction from revelation; for without this, reason must be for ever confused to find out what God is like; and with thousands of the heathen, we might be led to suppose, he is like the sun, the stars, the leek or onion, man, or gold; and so be led to worship some of those creatures: this is the best, that reason can teach, without revelation. For a proof of this, contrast the ideas of the heathen, respecting the supreme being, with the ideas of those that are blest with the book of revelation; seeing then, that reason must receive, and revelation is all that can instruct in this matter; let us hear what the scripture saith of this mystery; for there God speaks of himself, explain-

ing his nature and grace; saying in Exod. 34.5. And the Lord passed by before him, (Moses) and proclaimed the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Num. 14.18. The Lord is long suffering and of great mercy. In the sacred scriptures, God reveals his being in the most convincing language, by his inspired servants, as in the 90th. Psalm 2d. verse, Before the mountains were brought fourth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God. Psalm 93.2. Thy throne is established of old, thou art from everlasting. Isaiah 44. 6. we have the words of God as follows: thus saith the Lord the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts, I AM the first, and I AM the last; and beside me there is no God; Isaiah 57. 15. For thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity. Here the convinced Nebuchadnezar, saying; Dan. 4. 34; I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation. See Dan. 12.7. Rev. 4.9.10. and 10.6 and 15.7. and Heb. 1. 12. Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine holy one. Thus while we attend to revelation, as our instructor, God is made known, as one who is glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders in the earth. This brings us to the second particular, to show that there is but one God.

Men curious in their inquiries, ask to know, how many Gods there are; we answer; there are lords many and gods many, (such as reason have invented and heathens do worship,) but to us (who are taught by revelation,) there is but one only true and living God; and this the following passages, abundantly prove; See Amos, 4. 13. For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what are his thoughts, and maketh morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, the Lord, the God of hosts is his name. Exod. 34. 14. For thou shalt worship no other God; for the Lord whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God. Psalms 82: 18. That men may know, that thou whose name alone is Jehovah, art the most high over all the earth. Deut. 6. 4. Here O Israel, the Lord our God is but one Lord. Isaiah 44. 8. Is there a God besides me? yea, there is no God; I know not any;

Isaiah 45. 21. 22. There is no God else besides me, a just God and a Saviour, there is none besides me; look unto me, and be ye saved all ye ends of the earth, for I am God and there is none else. 1. Cor. 8.4.6. There is none other God but one; to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him. If the above scriptures do prove any thing, they all go to prove that there is one, and but one only true and living God. And we shall now attempt to show that God is an undivided, uncompounded spirit, without personal form or parts; and for this purpose we call in the following witnesses. 2. Cor. 3. 17. Now, the Lord is that spirit; and where the spirit of the Lord is there is liberty; thus we learn that God is a spirit, and they that worship him, must worship in spirit and in truth; thus where the spirit of the Lord is mentioned in scripture, we are to understand no other; then the same God in his spiritual operations, this is evident from Peters words to Annias; Acts 5. 3. 4. Why hath Satan filled thin heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? thou hast not lied unto men but unto God. That the Holy Ghost is the true God, appears again in the case of Mary's conception, recorded Luke 4. 35. And the angel answered and said unto her, the Holy Ghost shall overshadow thee; therefore also, that the holy thing, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the son of God. When God is declared to be every where present, it is under the name spirit, as in Psalms 139. 7. Whither shall I go from

*(Continued on page 8)*

### **The Advantages of Pleasing God Rather than Men**

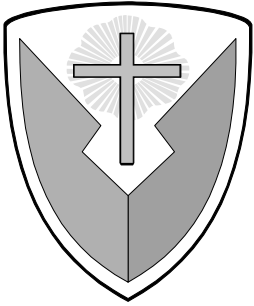
*(Continued from page 4)*

ing of thine but that which tendeth to thy happiness, and displeased with nothing but that which hurts thyself or others, as a father that is displeased with his children when they defile or hurt themselves.

10. He is gentle, though just, in his censures of thee; judging truly, but not with unjust rigour, nor making your actions worse than they are.

11. He is one that is not subject to the passions of men, which blind their minds, and carry them to injustice.

12. He is one that will not be moved by tale-bearers, whisperers, or false accusers, nor can be perverted by any misinformation.



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And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works, Hebrews 10:24

## Simple Truth

*(Continued from page 7)*

thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? When God gave spiritual gifts to men, though the gifts were diverse, yet they were all by the same spirit, thus we have seen that there is a God, that there is but one God, and that he is a spirit. That God is undivided and uncompounded, is evident from those scriptures, already mentioned; and many more that might be called in, if we deemed it necessary, such as, Mark 12.29. And Jesus answered him the first of all the commandments is, hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord: verse 30. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart; &c. verse 32. And the scribes said unto him, well, Master, thou hast said the truth; for there is one God, and there is none other but he; the 34th verse inform us, that the scribes answered discretely. Deut. 4. 39. Know therefore, this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon earth beneath; there is none else, and as this will be treated upon more largely in another place, we shall pass on to notice, the majest of God, and the obligation all the world is under to worship him.

The Majesty of God is taught in the scriptures as follows; see Judges, 29. 11. 12. Thine O Lord, is the greatness and the power, and the glory, and the victory and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth, is thine, thine is the kingdom O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all; both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all. Nehem. 9. 32. Our God the great the mighty and the terrible God. Job 37. 22. with God is terrible majesty, Psalms 29. 3. 4. The voice of the Lord is upon the waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful. The

voice of the Lord is full of majesty. A display of the majesty of God is recorded in the 18th. Psalm, from verse 7. to 15. The earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth. There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth, devoured, coals were kindled by it. He bowed the heavens also, came down and darkness was under his feet, and he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place: his pavilion round about him, were dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies: At the brightness that was before him, his thick clouds passed, hail-stones and coals of fire. The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail-stones and coals of fire. Yea he sent out his arrows, and scattered them: Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.

Thus the Majesty of the one undivided God, is illustrated in the scriptures of truth, as one that is worthy of the praise of all other beings, or things; but man is not only under obligations to praise God, for what he is in the majesty of his sovereign character, but for discriminating benefits, bestowed upon him, in his creation, and endowments in Edom, and for the long suffering of God toward him; in and since the fall. David called for fire and trees, and all things animate and inanimate, to praise God, but in the ardor of his spirit, when addressing man, he says; O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men; if life is a blessing, God ought to be praised, for he is the giver and supporter of it.

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