



The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator

“To testify the gospel of the grace of God.” Acts 20:24

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THE BIBLE DOCTRINE OF REWARDS

By Elder Ed Colley

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Hebrews 11:6

A truth that we hold dear as Baptists and believers in God’s sovereign grace is that ‘salvation is of the Lord’ from start to finish. We are not willing to compromise in the least this great Bible truth. We also understand that man’s efforts to save himself and keep himself saved are futile on his part and from God’s perspective are actually ‘dead works’ to be repented of. We deplore any doctrine that would

seek to give man any credit whatsoever for accomplishing his salvation for **‘By grace ye are saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast’**.

But, does the Bible present a doctrine concerning man’s works that complements rather than contradicts salvation by grace? Does Scripture speak of believers being **expected** and **encouraged** to perform good works after the conversion experience? Does it also teach that good works will be **(See REWARDS Continued Page 7, Rt. Col.)**

THAILAND MISSIONS REPORT: CHILDREN’S CENTER NEWS

By Wayne Camp



Janice Lee and Ruth Camp with children and clothes

When we went to Thailand in March, 2002, my wife took a lot of clothes and shoes for the children at the Children’s Center. With the help of ladies from the Beverly Manor Baptist Church in Washington, Illinois, the Grace Baptist

Church of Claremore, Oklahoma, and our own ladies here at PHBC, four large suitcases were needed to take the clothes and shoes. When we went to the children’s center they had the task of trying to find the clothes that fit each child as they are doing in the picture at the beginning of this article. Due to time constraints they were unable to complete the task but it was completed later by those who care for the children. (See Pictures on Page 2).

Ruth and our ladies want to thank the ladies from the other two churches who helped so greatly. We were able to give all the children more than one outfit and a pair of new shoes.

In a recent issue of the paper we showed a picture of the blown-down girls’ house at the new children’s center. Happily we report that the building is being rebuilt with a permanent structure. The roof is not yet on. Bro. Anond is

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Bible Study 10:00 A. M. Sunday

Worship Service 11:00 A. M. Sunday

Evening Service 5:00 P. M. Sunday

Mid-Week Service 7:00 P. M. Wednesday

You Are Welcome!

using steel and tile for the roof this time and is awaiting electricity to do some welding on the steel structure. The new building has a concrete floor, concrete columns to support the roof that will be steel and tile. The walls have concrete blocks on the lower five feet and then bamboo for ventilation on the upper part of the wall.

The dining hall, which will also serve as a chapel and a classroom for at least the first session of the Sovereign Grace Baptist School of Theology, is also finished in a similar (See **CHILDREN'S** Cont. P. 10, Rt. Col.)



Above, the girls dressed in some of the clothes holding the shoes in their hands for this picture.

Below, the boys wearing some of the clothes and some display their new shoes.



THE SANDY CREEK-OPEKON CONNECTION (?): Was There One?

By Wayne Camp

Matthew 23:29-30 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

Sometimes I fear we Baptists are like the Jewish leaders during the ministry of Jesus Christ. He charged them with building the tombs of the prophets and garnishing the tombs of the righteous while seeking to kill those living preachers who were teaching the same truths that the prophets had taught. (Mat. 23:29-30) Sometimes we espouse doctrines that are neither set forth by precept nor by example and make them a matter of our faith and practice. Or, we may denounce a doctrine as heresy and apostasy, while lifting up as great Baptists of days gone by men who believed and taught the very doctrines we claim to be heretical.

LAUDING MEN AS GREAT BAPTISTS AND AS PILLARS OF ORTHODOXY WHILE DENOUNCING AS HERETICS THE LIVING WHO HOLD THE SAME DOCTRINES

What I am about to say pertains to my experience as a pastor in fellowship with the churches of the American Baptist Association. Let me assure the reader that what I am saying was not true of all my ABA brethren; it was of some. It was not true of all ABA churches; it was of some. While in that fellowship I came to see the truth of unconditional election, particular redemption, and effectual calling. I began to preach, teach and publish these doctrines. I preached the annual message at the ABA messenger meeting one year and preached that salvation is of the Lord in its **Origination**, in its **Execution**, in its **Application**, in its **Demonstration**, and in its **Consummation**. Some the older brethren wept for joy while others listened in disgust. A few of the

messengers noisily left the auditorium, refusing to listen.

In the days, weeks, months and years that followed I continued to publish the doctrine of free and sovereign grace. I was amused that the History and Archives Committee of the ABA honored such Baptist giants as J. R. Graves, J. M. Pendleton, J. P. Boyce, and others in their annual reports. I recall also one report on the great Baptists of the Philadelphia Association. We were told that our perpetual existence was traced through the Philadelphia Association.

During all this time I was being denounced by many as a heretic because I believed what these men whom we were honoring believed. When confronted personally, I would show folks what J. P. Boyce believed. I would tell them how that while he was president of the Louisville Seminary all faculty members must sign that they believed all five points of the system nicknamed "Calvinism." Many times brethren would respond, "I don't care if they did believe it; it is heresy and I won't fellowship with any who believe it." I would then tell them, "When you denounce as heresy these doctrines believed and championed by our Baptist forefathers, you cut your historical throat."

You see, Dear Readers, you cannot denounce something as heresy and apostasy, and then claim folks who believed it as your progenitors in Baptist history. If you denounce as heresy something someone living is teaching, don't play the hypocrite by claiming as your great Baptist forefathers those who held the same doctrines. I am not suggesting that we must agree with everything our forefathers taught. It is one thing to disagree with someone on some point of doctrine. It is entirely another thing to denounce as a heretic someone with whom you disagree while holding men as past champions of the faith who held to what you now call heresy.

A CURRENT MATTER

There are those who adamantly insist it is

heresy to believe a group of Scripturally baptized believers can come together and covenant together to work and worship together as a church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet, some of these same brethren trace their history through the Sandy Creek Baptist Church of North Carolina, a church that clearly was self-constituted.

Historian David Benedict wrote, "Not long after arriving at Sandy Creek the group constituted as a church under the same name."

Benedict goes on to say, "As soon as they arrived, they built them a little meetinghouse, and these 16 persons **formed themselves into a church**, and chose Shubael Stearns for their pastor, who had, for his assistants at that time, Daniel Marshall and Joseph Breed, neither of whom were ordained." (David Benedict, *The Baptist Denomination, Vol. II*, P. 38).

Eld. John Sparks wrote, And not long after the New Englanders had cobbled themselves a little meetinghouse together, in a small grove of trees near a rock spur at the corner of Husband's Sandy Creek tract, and **constituted themselves formally into the Sandy Creek Separate Baptist Church** on November 22, 1755, none could harbor any more doubts whatsoever that God had ordered and inspired their call to a great and extensive work in the west. (Eld. John Sparks, *The Roots of Appalachian Christianity: The Life and Legacy of Shubal Stearns*, P. 63).

Of the constitution of the Sandy Creek Separate Baptist Church William Cathcart wrote, "Mr. Stearns was ordained among the Separates; and after he had been immersed and ordained as a Baptist minister, impressed with what seemed to him the call of God to remove far to the West to perform a great work for his Master, he and a few of his

members, in 1754, departed from Connecticut. He stopped on the way before he reached the home selected for him by the providence of God, Sandy Creek, Guilford Co., N. C., when, on Nov. 22, 1755, **he and his companions formed a church of sixteen members**" (P. 1042).

David T. Morgan, Jr. writing for the *North Carolina Historical Review* wrote,

During the year of 1754 Shubal Stearns came to believe that he was divinely led to move "far to the westward, to execute a great and extensive work." With a few of his church members he left Connecticut and made his way to Opeckon in Berkeley County, Virginia. Whether or not he went there to join his brother-in-law cannot be stated with certainty, but upon finding him they "joined companies" and settled for awhile "on Cacapon" in Hampshire County about thirty miles from Winchester.

When the "great and extensive work" which Stearns had envisioned failed to materialize in Virginia, he grew restless. Soon the combined parties of Stearns and Marshall moved two hundred miles south to Sandy Creek in Guilford County. Stearns chose the new location because some friends had written him from the area that North Carolinians were eager to hear preaching. He and his party arrived at Sandy Creek in November, 1755. Not long after settling down they organized the Sandy Creek Baptist Church. The total membership of the new church was sixteen. Included in the membership were three preachers, Stearns, Marshall, and Joseph Breed. Neither Marshall nor Breed was ordained.

Morgan Edwards, the famous Baptist preacher of the Philadelphia Association who visited North Carolina in 1771-1772, described the founding of the Sandy Creek Church as follows:

"In 1755 a small company from Connecticut came and settled in the forks of Capefear river at a place called Sandy-creek. they were 16 souls in number, having Shubal Stearns to their minister: these were the beginning of what are commonly, tho' improperly, called *Separat-baptists*, who soon spread thro' the province, to South-Carolina and Georgia, and northward, to Virginia...." (*North Carolina Historical Review*, Vol. 45 [1968], P. 264-265).

If a linked-chain succession is essential to being a true church, Sandy Creek was not a

true church, nor are any churches who trace their lineage through Sandy Creek. There is no way of getting around the unvarnished truth that Sandy Creek Baptist Church was a self-constituted church.

Some, in their alleged chain-link succession back to the first church in Jerusalem, try to make a case that the Sandy Creek Church came out of the Opekon church. Here is the alleged link:

Sandy Creek came out of the Opekon Baptist Church in Berkeley county, Virginia (History of the Baptists in Virginia by Semple p. 13). Other spellings for this church are Opequon and Opekon. She was reorganized by certain ministers of the Philadelphia Baptist Association in 1751 upon the Calvinistic plan, sifting out the chaff and retaining the supposed good seed according to the record.

Now notice carefully what this says, Sandy Creek came out [Emp. Mine, RWC] of the Opeckon Baptist Church in Berkeley county, Virginia (History of the Baptists in Virginia by Semple p. 13).

The truth is quite different. Semple says nothing of the kind. I give here the complete record of the matter from **Semple's History of Virginia Baptists**, Revised by Beale, 1894, Republished 1976, pp. 12-14.

"The *Separates* first took their rise, or rather their name, about the year 1744. They increased very fast for several years. About a year after they were organized into a distinct society they were joined by Shubal Stearns,* who, becoming a preacher, labored among them unto 1751, when, forming acquaintance with some of the Baptists, he was convinced of the duty of believers' baptism. Being a good man, to know his duty was sufficient to induce him to perform it. The same year in which he was baptized he was ordained, and took the pastoral care of a church.

"Mr. Stearns and most of the *Separates* had strong faith in the immediate teachings of the Spirit. They believed that to those who sought Him earnestly God gave evident tokens of His will. That such indications of the divine pleasure,

partaking of the nature of inspiration, were above, though not contrary to reason, and that following these, still leaning in every step upon the same wisdom and power by which they were first actuated, they would inevitably be led to the accomplishment of the two great objects of a Christian's life—the glory of God and the salvation of men. Mr. Stearns, listening to some of these instructions of Heaven, conceived himself called upon by the Almighty to move far to the westward to execute a great and extensive work. Incited by his impressions, in the year 1754, he and a few of his members took their leave of New England. They halted first at Opeckon, in Berkeley county, Virginia, where he found a Baptist church under the care of Rev. John Garrard,** who met him kindly. Here, also, he met his brother-in-law,+ the Rev. Daniel Marshall, just returned from his mission among the Indians, and who after his arrival at this place had become a Baptist.++ They joined companies and settled for awhile on Cacapon, in Hampshire county, about thirty miles from Winchester. Here, not meeting with his expected success, he felt restless. Some of his friends had moved to North Carolina; he received letters from these, informing him that preaching was greatly desired by the people of that country; that in some instances they had ridden forty miles to hear one sermon. He and his party once more got under way, and traveling about two hundred miles, came to Sandy Creek, in Guilford county, North Carolina. Here he took up his permanent residence. Soon after his arrival, viz., November 22, 1755, he and his companions, to the number of sixteen, were constituted into a church called *Sandy Creek*,** and to church Mr. Stearns was appointed pastor. In this little church in the wilderness there were besides the pastor, two other preachers, viz., Joseph Breed and Daniel Marshall, neither of whom was ordained.

Thus organized they began their work, kindling a fire which soon began to burn brightly indeed, spreading in a few years over Virginia, North and

South Carolina and Georgia.

The subsequent events seem completely to have verified Mr. Stearns' impressions concerning a great work of God in the West.

*The pastor of Opequan church at this time, as the author elsewhere states, was Elder Samuel Heton.

+Daniel Marshall married Martha Stearns, in 1748, as his second wife. She is said to have been to him a "Priscilla," indeed.

++See our history of Kettocton Association.--- Author's note.

**The constituent members of this church consisted of eight men and their wives. The names of the male members were Shubal Stearns, Peter Stearns, Ebenezer Stearns, Shubal Stearns, Jr., Daniel Marshall, Joseph Breed. Enos Stimpson and Jonathan Polk. The church was located in Guilford (now Randolph) County. The first Association in North Carolina, formed in 1758, bore the name of Sandy Creek.

Did Semple say that Stearns and his group joined the church at Opekon? Did he say that they came out of the church at Opekon? Did he say that they received "authority" from the church at Opekon to start the work in North Carolina? Here is what Semple does say. They halted first at Opeckon, in Berkeley county, Virginia, where he found a Baptist church under the care of Rev. John Garrard,** who met him kindly.

I was once traveling from Illinois to Arkansas. I stopped off in Jackson, Missouri, and visited and "found a Baptist church" and attended the services on Sunday evening. When the pastor learned who I was and having heard of me, he invited me to preach. I was "met kindly" by the pastor. But, when I left and headed on to Arkansas it would have been unbelievably ludicrous for anyone to say that I "came out of that church." Nor, could I assume in any form or fashion that they had extended any kind of endorsement for me to go anywhere and start anything.

Furthermore, Stearns and his group did not settle at Opekon in Berkeley County, Virginia (Now in West Virginia). Rather, they started a settlement on the Cacapon River of Hampshire County, Virginia (also now in West Virginia). Without any apparent "ministerial success" in this place, they soon removed to North Carolina.

Dear Reader, I cannot find one Baptist historian who in any way indicates that Shubal Stearns and his party joined the Opekon church.

It seems rather presumptuous for anyone who insists on a direct link-by-link succession of churches to include such an ambiguous link, if a link at all, in their lineage. It appears to be a pure fabrication that is the result of desperately grasping at straws.

If someone who holds that this Opekon-Sandy Creek connection is valid will show me the following I will gladly withdraw my contention that this link is a farce.

1. Show definite proof that Shubal Stearns and his party were ever received as members of the Opekon Church.
2. Show definite proof that Shubal Stearns was sent out of the Opekon Church with authority to start the Sandy Creek Church.

That is not asking a lot, is it? Of course, if you cannot prove the first, you need not worry about the second. If either of these things cannot be proven, the link is destroyed. The destruction of this link alone will, in the eyes of the strict chain-link brethren, unchurch untold numbers of churches here in the USA and doubtless many others in other parts of the world.

For two or three years now I have been tediously researching some of the links in the lineage that included the Sandy Creek Church. I have especially centered my attention on that one church because so many churches in this country trace their history through this alleged Opekon-Sandy Creek link. I believe from my studies that the Stearns party left Connecticut without being sent by a Scriptural Baptist Church. As Semple points out above, Stearns and his group believed in what was tantamount to direct revelations from God. He believed God had given him direct instructions to go west and start a great work and so he persuaded a group to go with him and there is no indication they went with any kind of church vote or endorsement. Their contact with the Opekon church was minimal and they were never members at Opekon but settled rather in another county of Virginia (a county that is now a part of West Virginia). When the great ingathering he expected did not happen there, and hearing of a great desire of folks in North Carolina to hear the gospel, Stearns and his party left and headed to North Carolina. There is no indication whatever that I have been able to

find that the church at Opekon endorsed their move. In fact, there is no indication that I have been able to uncover that they even sought any approval or authority for their move. They simply went on the word of Shubal Stearns.

This is probably one thing that prompted G. W. Paschal to write the following concerning the churches of North Carolina.

The English Baptists influenced the early Baptists of North Carolina only through tradition and indirectly through the Baptists of other colonies. No English Baptist preacher came to North Carolina, but it is probable that among the colonists from the first were many of the Baptist faith, for it is certain that from the settlement Baptist principles on such matters as freedom of conscience, separation of church and state, and democracy in government were prevalent in colonial North Carolina. Nor can it be said that the Baptists of North Carolina owed their origin to the missionary efforts of Baptists of other provinces. The first General Baptist churches in North Carolina were organized by a man who had been living in the province for several years, while the first Separate Baptist Church, that at Sandy Creek, was founded by a man impelled only by his own missionary zeal. The Baptist churches of North Carolina are almost indigenous (*History of North Carolina Baptists*, G. W. Paschal, P. 38, Vol. 1, CHRAA edition).

Based on his historical researches, Paschal said, "*The Baptist churches of North Carolina are almost indigenous.*" He did not believe they originated by some other church sending ordained, endorsed men into North Carolina to start churches. Paschal held that Stearns came there "*impelled only by his own missionary zeal.*" I might add that he was also impelled by what Semple (see earlier) said was the result of Stearns "*listening to some of these instructions of Heaven.*"

Did Sandy Creek Church come out of the

Opekon Church? The strict chain-link brethren say, "Yes." They say, "Sandy Creek came out of the Opeckon Baptist Church in Berkeley county, Virginia" (*History of the Baptists in Virginia* by Semple p. 13). The truth is that Semple says no such thing. He does not even indicate such on page 13 of his book. All he says is, "They halted first at Opeckon, in Berkeley county, Virginia, where he found a Baptist church under the care of Rev. John Garrard, who met him kindly."

George Baylor Semple is a good historian. But, it takes an incredibly wild imagination or pure flight of fantasy to get a link for a chain of church succession out of what Semple wrote. I assume this is the best that can be done or a

(REWARDS Continued from Page 1)
acknowledged and rewarded? Did Christ teach that rewards for service were possible? Did he rebuke for pursuing rewards? Does He delight in dispensing them? Are we wrong in desiring something that the Lord desires to give us? Did the apostles desire something beyond assurance of salvation and a daily, close walk with the Saviour? Did they desire rewards for service? Were they ever concerned that their efforts would not be rewarded? Did they encourage their hearers to strive for rewards?

If the Bible teaches that rewards based on works are to be sought by the saints of God then are there conditions for obtaining rewards? What types of behavior does God sanction and promise rewards for? Can some rewards be won and then lost before they are awarded? What role will rewards play in the future state?

The Lord's Nature, His Words and the Principles He Established Speak of Rewards

As the Lord reveals Himself in Scripture so are we to understand who He is. The Lord presents Himself as a Rewarder. The Hebrews passage above declares that those that come to God must believe that He is and they also must believe that He is a rewarder. He rewards those that diligently seek him, in this instance.

Several figures are employed in God's Word to encourage us in our pilgrimage on earth. Some of the figures when viewed in their

material setting very definitely carry with them the concept of exertion and effort followed by results that are pleasing to the one who put forth the effort. For example, the Christian's experience is likened to a runner in a race, a farmer sowing and a warrior fighting. The runner strives for the prize, the farmer toils for the fruit of the soil, and the warrior strives to win the battle and enjoy the spoils of his victory.

John's vision on the isle of Patmos was of those things that are to be. Included in that vision were words spoken by the soon coming Christ to be taken to heart by His own. In Revelation 22:12 he says, 'And, behold I come quickly and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be.' From this passage we understand that Christ's second coming is the time when He has the privilege of giving His reward to every man in direct relation to their works.

Shouldn't we bow to Him and acknowledge that our all-wise God knows what is a good motivator for His people? Are we wiser than God? If rewards are not to be pursued why did our Lord rebuke the Pharisees for failing to 'seek the honour that cometh from God only' (John 5:44). Why would it be said of the Lord Jesus that he '**for the joy that was set before him** endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God' (Hebrews 12:2) if it were not a noble thing to anticipate, expect and long for a prize at the end of faithful service?

Are we dangerously mistaken when we fall back on our sovereign grace truths to explain away our inactivity and lack of vigor for service? While God is working in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure isn't it true that we are still accountable for our actions? And, don't these facts concerning the rewarding nature of God, His stated purpose to grant rewards, the figures He employs to spur us on to service and our Lord's personal example all lead us to rethink how we should view rewards?

WHAT DID HIS DISCIPLES SAY OF REWARDS TO BE GRANTED?

There is no question that the Apostles were spiritually minded men. And, beyond that, they

were used of the Lord to be human authors of divinely inspired (therefore infallible) writings. Did any of them have anything to say about rewards and what our attitude should be toward them?

James writing in chapter 1 verse 12 states that a man can expect to receive a reward for enduring testing. This reward, a crown of life, awaits those that because of their love to Him endure temptations.

In the second epistle of John verse 8 the apostle weighs in on the subject of rewards. He warns his readers that were being exposed to deceivers and damaging doctrine. They were to be careful and 'Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.' Embracing of anti-Christ doctrine could not only be damaging to them in this life but would cause a full reward to be forfeited. What was true for John's readers is also true for us.

The apostle Peter knew the importance of living a life in conformity to God's expectations. A factor that moved him to exhort to a holy lifestyle those to whom he wrote was the fact that the Father would one day 'without respect of persons [judge] according to every man's work' (I Peter 1:17).

Of all the apostles Paul was the one who articulated most often the necessity of keeping in mind that conduct on the earth was being noticed, recorded and would be brought back to view at the judgment of the saints. He spoke of the individuality of rewards when he said that 'each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor' (I Corinthians 3:8). His exhortation to servants in Colossians 3:24 was to obey their masters in the fear of God and heartily as unto the Lord. The consolation that should animate their service to the Lord was that they would receive the reward (or recompense) of the inheritance. As he lived among the Greeks he saw the effect the prospects of a temporal prize had on the daily lives of participants in athletic contests. The Holy Spirit allowed him to see a lofty, eternal application to an earthly, temporal practice. The saints, understanding they were in a race with a prize to be obtained, were to 'so run, that ye

may obtain' (I Corinthians 9:24).

WHAT TYPE OF BEHAVIOR IS CONSIDERED REWARDABLE BY THE SAVIOUR?

Future rewards for the child of God are the result of how they live here on earth. Does the Bible have anything to say about what type of conduct the Lord particularly notes as worthy of rewards?

There are times when difficult choices are forced upon us. Many saints have denied themselves present comfort for the glory of God. Men and women understanding the call to faithful service have turned their back on reasonably comfortable lifestyles in order to please their Lord. The apostle Peter was concerned that there be compensation for following the Lord. Far from being rebuked for this line of thought the Lord answered him with comforting words of future rewards. In Matthew 19:27-29 our Lord's promise of abundant future blessings as a result of denying one's self in the here and now extended beyond Peter to 'every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake'.

Some works result in rewards from men and not from God. The Saviour cautioned that alms doing and praying could be done in such a way as to have no eternal value whatsoever. The reward of these activities done in the sight of and for men was that men would acknowledge them. That is as far as the reward would go. However, alms doing and praying done secretly and only for the glory of God results in open reward from the heavenly Father (see Matthew 6).

Concern for God's prophets and fellow believers because of who they are can result in rewards that are not to be lost. One commentator has emphasized that the phrase 'in the name of' in Matthew 10:41-42 is literally 'because they are'. Accordingly, he that receives a prophet because he is a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. Similarly, one can receive a righteous man's reward and one can establish for himself an irremovable reward if reception of the righteous man and kindness toward the child of God is done because of who they are in the

sight of God.

Far from our works being judged simply on outward actions the Lord makes it clear that motives are really the key that unlocks the door to future rewards. Paul states that we are to 'judge nothing before the time until the Lord come, who... will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God' (I Corinthians 4:5). It is told that on George Whitefield's tomb are the following words: 'The type of man George Whitefield was that day shall declare'. May we all realize this solemn fact for 'we shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ'. There our works done in the body shall be scrutinized by the omniscient God.

Suffering for the name of Christ can bring temporal joy. Peter and John went away from the temple rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for His name. The benefits of suffering for Christ, however, extend beyond this life. 'Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven' (Luke 6:22-23).

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THE REWARDS?

It is nice to know that we are justified in pursuing future rewards. It is good to know now what conduct the Lord deems worthy of praise. Do we have any thing to help us know what the rewards will consist of?

Of course the Bible mentions crowns. We should be interested in what they are and the qualifications for attaining them. While the subject of crowns is worthy of prayerful study there are other aspects of future rewards that, too, are mentioned in the word of God.

Christ promises a special place of responsibility in His future earthly kingdom for those who meet certain qualifications. 'He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron' (Revelation 2:24). This promise fits in perfectly with the very explicit promise to Peter

and the other apostles of 'sitting on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel' in the regeneration. Sufferers also have a promise of future authority and responsibility for as Paul says to Timothy, 'if we suffer we shall reign with him'.

Places of familiar companionship are promised in the future to some. In Revelation 3:4 the saints of Sardis that have 'not defiled their garments...shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy'. This implies that some saints will not be worthy to walk with Him in especial relations at that time because of soiled garments. There is a difference between being 'in Christ' and having part 'with Christ'. Peter learned that lesson from our Lord as he disputed with him over the washing of his feet. The 'bathing' of justification through the blood of Christ opens the door for communion with Christ. The washing of our feet (our lives that come in contact with the filth of the world daily) by constant approach and confession of our sins secures for us a cleansing by the blood of Jesus Christ from all sins and fits us for communion and companionship.

CAN REWARDS BE LOST?

There is no doubt that we can digress in our spiritual life here. We can attain certain heights of spiritual growth and if we are not careful we can become dull of hearing. But, is it possible for us to fail to gain something that could and should be ours in the future state?

Paul, during his ministry, was concerned enough about the loss of rewards that he constantly kept his body under subjection. His usefulness as a steward of the mysteries of God was important to him in this life. He knew that improper conduct could cause him to be considered a 'castaway' (or disqualified) after having preached the gospel. He also was compelled to strive for attaining to the resurrection (actually the 'out resurrection') from the dead. Further study on this great doctrine is recommended to the serious inquirer.

A telling type in the Old Testament is revealed clearly in the New Testament. At Kadesh Barnea many of the nation of Israel failed to believe that God could fulfill His

promises and carry them safely into Canaan to dwell there. With many of them God was not well pleased (see I Corinthians 10) and they never did receive their inheritance. I believe that the inheritance of the saints of God is to rule and reign with Christ during the millennium. This inheritance is not guaranteed, I believe, but rather is contingent upon lives lived consistently with demands placed upon us by the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

SUMMARY

Future rewards are not to be thought little of. We should give them their rightful (Biblical) place. While it may seem rather selfish and unspiritual to expect and strive for rewards the Bible makes it clear that it is neither. The God we serve is pleased to call Himself a rewarder, prompted his apostles to strive for them and encourage those whom they came in contact with to do the same, and has laid out for us certain behaviors that can result in future rewards. Let us think highly of the same things He thinks highly of. And, let us strive to please Him in all we do knowing that 'he that judgeth me is the Lord'.

CHILDREN'S Cont. from Page 2) structure as the boys' and girls' houses except that the framework for the roof structure is wood with tile rather than steel with tile. (Go to p. 11)

GIRLS WEARING CLOTHES RECEIVING SHOES



There is still much to be done at the Children's Center. The water well is probably finished as I write this but Bro. Anond has been making a round of the churches and is not at home so I do not know exactly where we are on that. The last report I had was that the well was down to 140 meters (450 ft.) depth but they had to bring in a bigger drilling rig to go to the necessary 150-180 meters. This depth should provide water that is safe to drink. We must then install a water tank at a cost of approximately \$4500.

Within the week the electricity should be run to the land so that they can connect to it and have electricity for the buildings and the water pump. We must still purchase items for the

cooking and storage of food.

There is also the need to run water from the river before November for the dry season. This will cost approximately \$5,000. And, there is a land payment due January 1. It is a little over \$3450. It could increase if the value of the dollar continues to decrease as it has recently.

I have not tried to give a detailed list of our needs at the center but through the Lord's people we have been able to meet the needs as they arise and pray that this may continue until the work is complete.

We are being extremely careful that we spend the money as wisely as possible and that we also spend it as the supporters designate.

PLANS FOR THE WORK I WILL BE DOING IN THAILAND

By Wayne Camp

Several have asked me to give some details about the work that I will be doing in Thailand during the four months of November, December, January, and February. I am glad to provide this information.

On October 28, 2002, Bro. Bill Lee, and I, with possibly one other Brother will depart for Thailand. The other Brethren will only be staying a little over two weeks, I will remain until my departure for home on February 28, 2003.

We will arrive sometime on Wednesday of that week and will try to get a little rest and begin visit some of the villages/churches through Sunday or Monday. Then, in the second week, we will conduct a Bible Conference that will most likely be attended by representatives from all the churches. This will last about 4 days and will be filled with intensive teaching and preaching of the word of God. I will also take time to explain to the folks who attend some of the things concerning the Sovereign Grace Baptist School of Theology.

The primary purpose in starting the school is to train the pastors and preachers but there are a number of others who want to attend. I must explain that the effectiveness of the teaching will be diminished if all who wish attend. As it stands now, we are sure to have between 30 and 50 students without the ladies and other men attending who wish to do so. There is also a problem of housing and feeding that must be faced.

After the Bible Conference, we will begin classes on Tuesday, November 12, 2002. On the first day we will register the students, have orientation, and in the afternoon a time of discussion with the pastors and preachers that should help me in my planning for future classes.

At this time our schedule calls for classes from 9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon and from 1:00 to 3:00 PM. We may have some changes in that exact schedule. The pastors want more hours than that in the classroom but I feel they will see the value of homework time after we run that schedule for a time.

I plan to teach the following classes the first year.

ENGLISH: One hour at the beginning of each day, Tuesday through Friday. The reason for teaching English is that there are no books on Bible subjects in the Lahu, Lisu, and Thai languages. I believe it will be simpler to teach the brethren the English language than it will for me to learn Lahu, Lisu, and Thai, and then translate books. Their Bibles, though that is all they have, are very poorly translated. My goal is to also enable them through teaching English to read the KJV from which I will be teaching. There will be other activities in which I will teach English. I plan to teach them to sing some hymns they already use in English. After a reasonable period of time they will also be required to memorize verses of Scripture in English. When Bro. Anond and Bro.

Daniel become more adept in English, we may then work on translating some material into the Lahu and Lisu languages.

THEOLOGY: Theology proper is a very great need among these people. One must keep in mind that many of the people had not heard of any of the three persons of the Godhead until recent years. By "Theology Proper" I mean that I will begin by teaching about God, his existence, being, nature and attributes. As all who have taught on the attributes of God know, in the process I will be teaching much about salvation and other subjects. I also plan to spend a good deal of time on Christology as we study the persons of the Godhead.

ECCLESIOLOGY: In this course I plan to teach

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on the origin, Head, nature, perpetuity, rule of faith and practice, doctrinal position, ecclesiological separation, membership, mission and purpose, offices, ordinances, financial support, Administrator (Holy Spirit), discipline, and destiny of the church. I will stress each area of this study as I need to do so. For instance, these folks are very strong on the Scriptures as the rule of faith and practice so will not need as much time there as in the area of ecclesiological separation. It is only in the last few years that they have learned that there needs to be ecclesiological separation. In Thailand, Baptists as well as others, make little distinction between groups. The Church of Christ of Thailand is an amalgamation of Presbyterians, Baptists, Nazarenes, and others. The Northern Baptists, the Lahu Baptist Convention, and most other Baptists fellowship together in this mongrel group. Our churches are pretty much alone in practicing ecclesiological separation so the pastors need to be strengthened in this doctrine so they can strengthen the churches.

HOMILETICS: This course will be a study in sermon preparation. An orderly presentation of a message is essential to an orderly understanding of what is preached. I hope to teach these men to put their notes together in an orderly manner.

WEEKENDS: On the week-ends I will travel with Bro. Anond and speak in the various churches.

I trust that this will give the readers some idea of the scope of what, God willing and enabling, I hope to do in Thailand.

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