



The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator

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

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The True Christian—God’s Workmanship

Ephesians 2:10

(From a sermon preached at Central Baptist Church)

by Pastor Bill Lee

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

Once again Paul is expounding the doctrine of salvation by grace. In his writings, Paul goes over this again and again. Surely this is an important matter or else Paul would not have devoted so much time to teaching this doctrine. The constant theme of the teaching and preaching of Paul seems to center around the sovereignty of God and salvation by grace. And by doing so he forever linked these two Biblical

doctrines together. You simply cannot have one without the other. The doctrine of salvation by grace will stand or fall with the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God.

There are many today who give lip service to the doctrine of salvation by grace while at the same time they deny the sovereignty of God. They pretend to preach that salvation is by grace, but then they proceed to tell the sinner what acts he must perform in order to be saved. But Paul completely demolishes this doctrine of men by stating; **“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it (See GOD’S WORKMANSHIP, Page 4, L. Col.)**

EAGERLY ANTICIPATING GETTING BACK TO THAILAND

By Wayne Camp

As this paper is being prepared for printing, Ruth and I are eagerly anticipating returning to Thailand for another four months of teaching the young preachers and, as she did last year, Ruth will be teaching English to the children in the Hill Tribes Children’s Center.

Indulge me for a little personal information. One of the highlights of our being home this summer has been our 50th wedding anniversary. Our four boys, their wives and 12 children all pitched in to give us a memorable celebration of the 50 years that we have enjoyed together. They all expressed their support for our work in Thailand.

Another blessing of the celebration was having several couples whom I had married



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present. One couple has been married 48 years, another 46, another 37, and the most recent marriage was one year ago. There were other couples also but this will just give you an idea of the span of years of the weddings I have performed over the years that I have been preaching since I surrendered on September 5, 1957.

I mentioned earlier that Ruth will be teaching the children English again this year. The pictures below were not made until shortly before we returned home on March 1, 2006. I

WITH OUR FOUR SONS ALL OF WHOM I MARRIED TO THEIR SWEET WIVES



do not recall including them in any of our reports. Almost every Saturday Ruth is picked up by Bro. Anond and they go back to the children's center where Ruth teaches the children English for about 3 ½ to 4 hours. Bro. Anond and Ruth also taught some of the students who were slow in English each day while I taught the more advanced students. This was a great help to me.



RUTH AND STUDENTS BRO. ANOND AND SHE TEACH

Please pray for us and we prepare to go. God willing, Bro. Bill Lee, Ruth, and I will be leaving for Thailand on October 30, 2006. Pray that we will be well and that we will have a very productive year in the school and in visiting and preaching to the churches. We will start the

school year with a Bible Conference before Bro. Lee returns to the states. After he leaves we will get right down to another term of school in the Sovereign Grace Independent Baptist School of Theology.



CHILDREN LEARNING ENGLISH



ANOTHER AGE GROUP IN ENGLISH CLASS



RUTH AND SOME OF HER BOYS



**RUTH TEACHING CHILDREN
SOME OF THE CHILDREN IN CLASS**



SOME OF RUTH'S GIRLS



We do manage to get a day or two off for a little sight seeing but that is very rare. Most of

the time, when we do have a day off, we have studying to do or we may go to a prison where I will preach. On one day we went to a prison in Chiang Rai but something had come up that we were unable to have a service. Since we were that far north we decided to see some waterfalls on our way back to Chiang Rai. There are many waterfalls in Northern Thailand so it was easy to see several very beautiful falls. The picture below was taken at one such waterfall.



(GOD'S WORKMANSHIP Cont. from P. 1) is the gift of God: *Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them*". Ephesians 2:8-10

In verses one and five of this chapter Paul speaks of the deadness of sinners. The word translated "dead" in both of these verses can also be translated "corpse". In verse one Paul states; ***"And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins"***. Then in verse five he states; ***"Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)"***. To put it as clearly and plainly as I know how, I will state that there is no such thing as a living corpse, just as there is no such thing as a sick corpse. The only kind of corpse you will ever find is a dead corpse. And this is the exact description that Paul gives of the sinner. The sinner is dead in trespasses and sins.

There are two basic reasons that salvation is by grace and not by works. The first reason is the sovereign will of God. Simply put, God has willed that salvation be wholly of grace and therefore it must be as God has willed. He has not willed that salvation be based upon the work of the sinner therefore salvation is not based upon the work of the sinner. The second reason that salvation is by grace is the natural condition of the sinner. Or we could say it is because of the natural "deadness" of the sinner. This spiritual deadness is enough in itself to disallow any and all doctrines of salvation by works. The impossibility of the dead sinner being able to perform any good works that would merit salvation is equal to the impossibility of a corpse leaving the casket by its own power in order to perform a day's work. I don't suppose any would be so foolish as to believe the latter of these impossibilities, but many seem very eager to believe the former.

But Paul seems to cry out against the doctrine of salvation by works. He does this by first stating in verse five, ***"for by grace ye are saved"***, and then again in verse eight, ***"For by grace are ye saved"***. And this is followed immediately by the words, ***"Not of works, lest any man should boast"***, verse nine. In this verse there is both a statement of fact, as well as a reason given. First the fact stated; ***"Not of works"***. And then the reason stated, ***"lest any man should boast"***. The fact that salvation is by grace totally excludes any and all boasting by the individual who is saved.

But to get to our text, let's consider verses nine and ten together. These two verses are linked by the word "For". Note, ***"Not of works....For we are his workmanship"***. This little word "For" can also be read and understood as "because". Salvation is not the work of the one being saved "Because" it is the work of the One doing the saving. We are His workmanship! And notice we are so much the Lord's workmanship that we are called a "creation". We are ***"created"*** in Christ Jesus.

That no creation is self-created should be evident to all. There by necessity must be a Creator. Contrary to popular belief, Christians are not self-created. They are not their own creator. Even nature itself teaches us this truth

for there never has been a tree that sprouted from its own fruit. Even so, a Christian is not the product of his own works. The Christian is a creation. The Christian is the work and product of the Creator. The Christian is created “unto” good works and not “because” of good works.

The Apostle stated in I Corinthians 15:10; **“But by the grace of God I am what I am”**. This was not only true of Paul being an Apostle, but it was also true of him being a Christian. Paul knew very well that his salvation was wholly by the grace of God and that it was not produced by his works or worth. Even so, no Christian is self-produced but rather is the product of the workmanship of Almighty God. The Christian is not produced by chance or by any sort of spiritual evolution. We are His workmanship from start to finish, from quickening to glorification.

It is stated in Philippians 1:6; **“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ”**. God did not begin the work of salvation in us and then leave it up to us to finish this work. As foolish and contrary to Scripture as this is, it is the doctrine that is held by many. For many preach loudly and openly that God has now done all that He can do, and the remainder is up to you. This kind of teaching is a direct contradiction of the Word of God, but yet accepted and believed by many.

The Bible clearly teaches that the One who initiated the work in you will be the same One who will perform or finish the work. If it were true that God only started the work but then simply stepped out of the picture and left it up to the sinner to finish, we would all be doomed. For first of all, none of us would have a clue as to how to finish the work. And second, even if we knew the “how”, we would not possess the ability to perform the work, being dead in trespasses and sins and thereby rendered totally without strength.

In I John 3:2 it is stated, **“it doth not yet appear what we shall be”**. Here’s where I have a question. If we do not know what we shall be, how could we be in the process of bringing ourselves to that end? But the One who did begin the work in us does know the end of His

work. He has declared the end from the beginning. And we will remain His workmanship until we reach the pre-ordained end.

It is evident that the One who is the Author must also be the Finisher. We are His workmanship! He is still the Potter and we are still the clay. The Potter did not stop His work after His initial contact with the clay. Nor did the Potter expect the clay to fashion itself into a vessel of mercy. No, the Potter continues His work. He began the work and He will finish the work. Day by day and year by year the Potter continues His work. How thankful we ought to be that we are His workmanship!

In our text, Ephesians 2:10, Paul continues by stating that we were **“created”** in Christ Jesus. The true Christian is not the product of reformation or self-determination. The true Christian is the product of God. You and I had no being as a Christian until God created us as a Christian. Creation is an act of God and God alone.

And we should also note in our text that we are created **“in Christ Jesus”**. We are not created as a Christian in the waters of baptism nor are we created in decisional regeneration. We are not created in church doctrine or creed any more than we are created by good works. We are created **“in Christ Jesus”**.

In the original creation we were all created in Adam. This is the reason we all by nature bear the image of Adam, even fallen Adam. But in this **“new creation”** we are created in Christ Jesus and therefore we are even now being conformed unto the very image of Christ. Our being created in Adam was a death sentence for all of us. But our being created in Christ Jesus was a life sentence, for **“he is the way, the truth, and the life”**.

Once again in our text, Ephesians 2:10, we read these words, **“unto good works”**. Notice, we are created in Christ Jesus **unto** good works. This causes us to look back at the original creation once again. And we will ask this question; “When God created Adam and placed him in the garden, what did God give Adam to do?” Was Adam simply to enjoy the beauty of the garden, the paradise of God? Was Adam created and placed in the garden just so he could enjoy and partake of the fruit of the

garden? No! For we read in Genesis 2:15, ***“And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress and to keep it.”***

There was work for Adam to do. God put Adam, whom He had created, in the garden to perform work. Adam was to dress and keep the garden. Contrary to what many may think, there was work to be done before the fall. Work is not the results of the fall and work is not a part of the curse resulting from the fall. Work was certainly made more difficult by the fall and the curse that followed. But God originally put Adam, His creation, in the garden to dress it and to keep it.

Even so, as we are created in Christ Jesus, it is not in order that we sit idle and do nothing. We are not created in Christ Jesus simply to enjoy the blessings and perform no work. No, we are created ***“unto good works”***. The word to the true Christian is ***“occupy ‘til I come”***. It is ***“Son, go work in my vineyard”***. And I am convinced that those who truly are created in Christ Jesus will busy themselves in good works. I am equally convinced that they will even be ***“zealous of good works”***.

And we can also notice in Ephesians 2:10 that these good works will be a way of life for these new creations. These good works will not be sporadic or occasional, but rather they will be a part of the very being and existence of the true Christian. Those who are truly new creations will ***“walk in them”*** as their daily course of life. And this new life of walking in good works is just as certain as the new creation itself.

There is one more thing that we must mention concerning Ephesians 2:10, and it relates to what we have just stated. As the Apostle speaks of these new creations walking in good works he states, ***“which God hath before ordained”***. We need to seriously consider these words for I am convinced that they may go beyond what we might think.

First we should know that whatever God has ordained is certain to come to pass. While it is true that men have certain devices in their hearts, we are sure that the counsel of the Lord shall stand and that our God will do all that He has purposed to do. Therefore when we read

that God has before ordained that those who are created in Christ Jesus should walk in good works, we have no doubt that this will be the case. We believe this to be true simply because a sovereign God has ordained it to be so.

But the teaching here seems to go even beyond the fact that God has ordained this. For the word translated ***“ordained”*** in our text also carries with it the meaning of ***“prepared”***. Keeping this in mind we can understand the words of Ephesians 2:10 to mean that God not only determined that we should walk in good works, but He has also prepared the good works that we are to walk in.

I would even go beyond this and say that God not only has prepared the good works that we are to walk in, He also prepares us to walk in these prepared works. And for each of us this seems to be different. By this I simply mean that the works that God has prepared for you are not necessarily the works He has prepared for me. We could also state it this in this manner, the works that God has prepared me for are not necessarily the works that He has prepared you for. Each of us has our own place and position of service. Our place and position, whatever it may be, is prepared for us and we are prepared for it.

Once again I will go back to the original creation and ask this question; “When did God create Adam?” Was it not on the sixth day after God had prepared the garden as a place for Adam to work? The Garden of Eden was already prepared and ready when God created Adam and placed him in it to dress it and to keep it.

If you have ever been created in Christ Jesus, God has already prepared a place of service for you. It might be in the home, among family and friends. It might be in the church in a special role of service. It might be in the ministry as a pastor or a missionary. Wherever it may be and whatever it may be, God has prepared a work for you and He will prepare you for that particular work. God will always work on both ends of this matter. Even as God enabled Paul when He put him in the ministry, He will also enable us for each particular work. ***“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them”***.

SALVATION BY GRACE PERPETUATED THROUGH PRESERVATION AND PERSEVERANCE

Part II

Perseverance

By Wayne Camp

"The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger" (Jer. 17:9).

In our previous lesson we considered the preservation of the saved. In this one we will consider the other side of that doctrine which is called perseverance. The grand mark that distinguishes true believers from false professors is their persevering attachment to Christ. There are hearers who may be classed as "**stony ground hearers**" who eagerly receive the word but have no root in them and at the first sign of opposition they wither away. They have not believed to the saving of the soul and will draw back into perdition (Heb. 10:39).

A few years ago I wrote a manuscript on the subject of perseverance. A friend borrowed it to preach in a Bible conference in Missouri. To his and my surprise there were a number of brethren who objected to the subject. They felt that it might cause folk to question their salvation. Are we not commanded to "**give diligence**" to make our "**calling and election sure**" (II Pet. 1:10)? Did not Paul exhort: "**Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith**" (II Cor. 13:5)?

If this study of perseverance prompts you to make a solemn, self-examination of your experience and life to see if yours was truly a case of graciously wrought salvation then one of its purposes will have been accomplished. Do you have a persevering attachment to Jesus Christ? Is your assurance based on an experience alone, or is there a fruitful life that assures you that you are truly a new creature in Jesus Christ? Is your faith an on-going, persevering faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? Are you **NOW** believing on him?

THE DEFINITION AND NATURE OF PERSEVERANCE

To help clarify this gracious aspect of salvation it is necessary to define what is meant by the perseverance of the saints. We will define it negatively and positively.

PERSEVERANCE DEFINED NEGATIVELY

When we declare from the word of God that true believers persevere we are not saying that saints are not tempted. Our Lord, was himself tempted yet without sin (Matt. 4:1; Lu. 4:2). "**We have not a high print which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin**" (Heb. 4:15).

We all face temptations daily. We may, as will be discussed further in a moment, give in to that temptation as many saints have and do. But God provides a way of escape (I Cor. 10:13) and the truly regenerate will eventually take it.

It should also be pointed out clearly and with Biblical evidence that perseverance does not mean that children of God do not sin. Those who claim to live without sin deceive no one but themselves. "**If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us**" (I Jn. 1:8). While the justified stand before God as though they had never sinned, God's word still declares that "**there is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not**" (Eccl. 7:20).

David, a dearly beloved saint of God, fell into awful sin. He lusted after another man's wife and took her and committed adultery with her. He then initiated a cover-up conspiracy that ultimately ended in the murder of Bathsheba's husband. He continued in impenitence and cover-up for months before finally repenting and confessing his sin to God. He had no peace of mind and heart while in a state of impenitence but he was still God's child and eventually he

repented, giving evidence that the child of God cannot go on sinning without severe chastening at the hand of God.

Peter denied Christ three times and cursed but he did not go on the rest of his life in such a practice of sin. God brought him to repentance. A true child of God who does not repent endangers his physical life. God has delivered his children ***“unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus”*** (1 Cor. 5:5).

PERSEVERANCE DEFINED POSITIVELY

From a positive standpoint there are several important things that perseverance means. It means that a truly regenerate believer cannot persevere in the habitual practice of sin. The person to whom sin is a way of life is simply proving that he has not been born of God. ***“He that committeth sin is of the devil: for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin: for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God neither he that loveth not his brother”*** (1 Jn. 3:8-10).

Much error and confusion have come out of a misinterpretation of these verses. They do not teach that a born again person cannot and does not commit acts of sin. Dr. A. T. Robertson wrote:

One may argue plausibly that we have linear action (the habit of sin) presented in I John 3:6 as in 3:4 and 3:8 where the idea is plain in the clause: ***‘For the devil sins from the beginning’*** (Lineal-progressive present indicative active). He is a continual sinner. Now in I Jn. 3:9 John says of the man who is begotten of God; ***“and he cannot go on sinning (as a habit like the devil) because he is begotten of God!”*** The English rendering “He cannot sin” fails to note that it is the present infinitive here and not the

aorist. John does not say that a child of God is not able to commit a single act of sin as the aorist infinitive would mean. (***The Minister and His Greek New Testament***, p. 100).

Dr. Robertson was, for many years, professor in Greek at the Baptist Seminary in Louisville, KY., and was a Greek scholar of world renown. He says that the idea in these verses is the habitual, uninhibited practice of sin. The child of God cannot habitually practice sin as the devil has been doing from the beginning.

Perseverance means that those who are truly Christ's sheep follow him. Jesus declared: ***“They follow me”*** (Jn. 10:27-29). He did not say: “I hope they follow me.” He said: ***“They follow me!”*** The sheep of Christ, when called out of this world of sin by divine grace, follow Christ in the path of service that he leads. When they fall into sin, they will not remain permanently in that sin for they cannot habitually practice sin. A sow enjoys wallowing in the mud; a sheep may get into the mud but is very unhappy there. A mere professor, like a sow, may return to and enjoy wallowing in the mire of sin that is part of this world. The child of God may fall into terrible sin but he will not be happy, nor will he remain in the habitual practice of sin.

Perseverance means that true disciples continue in the word. They love it, study it, and obey it. ***“If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed,”*** declared Jesus to some folk who professed faith in him. As he continued to speak to them their unregenerate condition was quickly manifest. In verse 37 he charges them: ***“My word has no place in you”*** (Jn. 8:37). A little later he charged: ***“Ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth”*** (Jn. 8:40). Again he said to them: ***“Ye cannot hear my word”*** (Jn. 8:43). A little later he says: ***“He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not because ye are not of God”*** (J n. 8:47). It is clear from this passage that the true believer, the ***“disciple indeed,”*** continues in the word of God. Those who habitually disobey or rebel against the teachings of the word of God are simply manifesting that they do not belong to the Lord: they have not been regenerated. The

true disciple may stumble but he does not constantly rebel against the word of God.

THE SOURCE OF PERSEVERANCE

Man is incapable of perseverance by his own willpower and inclination. ***"The way of a man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23)***, Since man does not have the ability to persevere in his life for Christ we must look for power from an outside force. It will not be found in friends or family. It will not be found in the preacher or the congregation, though God does use them as one of his many instruments in causing us to persevere. As with every, other aspect of salvation we are dependent on God for persevering grace.

TO WILL AND TO DO

How can we will and do the pleasure of God? Do we, of ourselves, have the ability to fulfill the laws and work of God? We cannot boast of our service to God ***"for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13)***. The fact that it is God working in the saved to do his pleasure and will is encouraging and humbling. It is encouraging because God is always faithful in fulfilling that which he has commenced. He who has regenerated and justified us can be trusted to cause us to persevere. What he has begun he will perform until the day of Jesus Christ. ***Philippians 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.*** It is humbling because all that we have, all that we are, and all that we do in the service of God must be traced back to God working for and in us. The spring from which all good works and all faithful service flow is the grace of God.

When a child of God starts to fail in his service and perseverance God works in another way to bring him back to faithful service. He has assured the perseverance of his covenant children in words that run thusly: ***"I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they***

shall not depart from me" (Jer. 32:40). God has promised his Son that he will be faithful to their covenant and when his children forsake his laws and do not walk according to his statutes he ***"will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes" (Psa. 89:32)***. ***"The Lord shall judge his people,"*** wrote Paul (Heb. 10:30). He then added: ***"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (V-31)***. There is ***"a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation"*** for those children of God who willfully sin (Heb. 10:27). This fear, this reverential awe, of God has the effect of causing us to seek closer fellowship with God and causes the erring child of God to return to faithful service for God.

God orders the steps and establishes the goings of his children (Psa. 37:23; Psa. 40:2). With all of these Divine forces at work it is easy to see why the child of God cannot continue for long in sin. God will either bring him in line or take him home. There is a sin unto death that can be committed by the child of God (I Jn. 5:16). Moses was killed and did not get to lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land. Many of the Corinthian congregation were "weak and sickly" and "many" more were asleep (dead) because of their conduct at the Lord's table (I Cor. 11:30). Fear of chastening and physical death will often bring the wayward child of God into line and cause him to persevere.

THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF PERSEVERANCE

We have already considered the fact that God's chastening is one of the means that he uses to accomplish the grace of perseverance in the lives of his saints. He chastens us ***"for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness" (Heb. 12:10)***.

He also accomplishes his work of perseverance by causing his children to really comprehend that he is truly their Father. ***"Ye have received the Spirit of adoption,"*** wrote Paul. ***"whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15)***. ***"Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father" (Gal. 4:6)***. Again Paul

wrote: ***“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the children of God” (Rom. 8:16)***. This constant witness of the Spirit in our hearts always reminding us that we are the children of God is very effectual in causing God's children to persevere.

The Holy Spirit indwelling the child of God and bearing witness with our spirits also produces certain fruits in our lives. The love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, etc. that are so essential to a persevering godly life are produced by the Holy Spirit. In addition to producing fruit essential to persevering in God's word and will, the Holy Spirit also causes the children of God to crucify the flesh with its lusts (Gal. 5:24). We must war constantly with the flesh and ***“bring it into subjection”*** if we are to persevere (I Cor. 9:27) this we can only do through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Word of God is another instrument that he uses in accomplishing our perseverance. His word is living and powerful and rebukes us when we have sinned. It warns us to examine our lives and be certain that we are not merely professors (Heb. 4:12; Matt. 7:21-23).

The word of God also has a cleansing affect on our lives helping to accomplish perseverance. Jesus said: ***“Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you” (Jn. 15:3)***. David asks a very important question and then answers it. ***“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word” (Psa. 119:9)***. Jesus prayed: ***“Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth” (Jn. 17:17)***. Certainly God uses his word as a very effective instrument in causing the saints to persevere.

CONCLUSION

In a conclusion let me remind you of the raven and the dove which Noah sent forth from the ark. The raven was sent forth first. Due to his ravenous nature, he found exactly what he wanted in the putrefied bodies that floated on the waters. He never returned to the ark. A dove was sent forth but found nothing to suit its nature so it returned. The false professor can go

out into the world and be perfectly happy and satisfied with the sinful pleasures of the world. He is like the dog that eats its own vomit or the washed sow that returns to wallowing in the mire.

The child of God may go out into the world. He may fall into sin but he cannot be happy there. He will be miserable in the midst of the greatest pleasures sin has to offer. He will either return to the Lord or the Lord will take his life. God will not allow one of His children to go on forever in a habitual practice of sin. He will do whatever is necessary to cause us to persevere.

Bouquets and Brickbats

LOUISIANA: Just want to say hi and get acquainted. I see you are up in millington, TN. I did live up in Rosemark for a while. I was not a Sovereign Grace believer then. But the Lord did manifest Himself to me since then. By revelation, He let me know that He was the Potter and I was the Clay. That as the potter does as he pleases with his clay, so God does as He pleases with men.

Is there a way you can make me known to believers in your area for correspondence? Would appreciate hearing from them. My address is; Harold Brown, 7512 Terrebonne Street, Marrero, Louisiana 70072. And you have my e-mail address. May God Bless!



BABY GIRL

Several have asked about the baby girl whose mother was going to kill because her husband was in prison and she could not provide for her daughter. Bro. Anond rescued the baby and

she is at the children's home and is doing well. She is a pretty little lady.

HAVE YOU HEARD?

Have you heard that salvation is absolutely free. It cannot be bought or earned by good works. It is the gift of God. **Romans 8:32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?** Please note the expression, **"freely give us all things."** The word **freely** means that what is given to us in Jesus Christ is given without any regard for any thing we have done. We do not deserve it. Salvation is given to the true believer in Jesus Christ out of pure grace, pure unmerited favor. There is absolutely no meritorious conditions attached.

Notice also these things in Christ are **given** to the true believer in Christ. We do not purchase them. We do not earn them as wages. We have absolutely no claim on God for them. **Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.** Sin earns the wages of death, spiritual death, eternal separation from God in the awful lake of tormenting flames. But, eternal life is a pure gift given to the true believer in Jesus Christ. It is a gift from God. It is a gift motivated by everlasting, immutable love. **Jeremiah 31:3 The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.** Have you received God's gift of eternal life?

NORTH SPRINGFIELD BAPTIST CHURCH OF NORTH SPRINGFIELD, VERMONT, IN WHICH J. R. GRAVES WAS BAPTIZED

By Wayne Camp

I suppose if there is any one man that could be called **"Mr. Landmarker,"** it would be J. R. Graves, author of **Old Landmarkism, What Is It?** Of course, J. M. Pendleton would be close up there with him as would A. C. Dayton.

According to William Cathcart, at the age of 15 years, Graves was baptized into the fellowship of the North Springfield Baptist Church of North Springfield, Vermont. This church was started out of the First Baptist Church of Chester, Vermont. But, the First Baptist Church was not formally and officially organized by the First Baptist Church of Bellingham, Massachusetts. Their only link to the Church in Bellingham, Massachusetts, is the fact that, after he visited Chester and determined to work there, he returned to Bellingham and the FBC of Bellingham ordained Aaron Leland a "Travelling Minister" on June 20, 1787. [While this would satisfy some, others would unchurch the First Baptist Church of Chester and thus unchurch the North Springfield church and thereby repudiate the baptism of J. R. Graves. As Bro. Larry Killion has said and I agree, "I think we would have to be meticulously rigid and very nit picky to unchurch Bro Leland . . ." RWC].

In July, 1787, Elder Aaron Leland and his wife, Joanna, left Bellingham, MA, and travelled to Chester, VT, where Joanna took sick and died shortly after their arrival. Leland had been invited to come to Chester, VT, "to preach with us" by a petition of fifteen citizens, none of whom were Baptists.

On August 9, 1789, two years after arriving in Chester, the Chester Baptist Church was formed in covenant by the 10 people Leland had gathered during his two years there. On October 3, 1789, the church in Bellingham, Massachusetts, dismissed Bro. Leland from its membership sending a letter of recommendation to the church in Chester, VT. On January 14, 1790, the Chester church received the letter and formally voted to "receive Elder Aaron Leland as a Minister of this church according to the above recommendation." The entire text of this letter is in the records of the church. Bro. Leland pastored this church for 43 three years. It was his first and only pastorate.

The current pastor of the First Baptist Church of Chester, Vermont, Eld. Tom Charlton, writes, "The Bellingham, MA, church did not directly

**FALL MEETING
CENTRAL BAPTIST
CHURCH**

Grenada, MS

September 15, 16, 17

SERVICES

Friday night—7:00

Saturday morning—11:00

Saturday night—7:00

Sunday morning—11:00

Sunday night—5:00

Speaker

Bro. Jimmie Davis

Fulton, MS

Pastor: Bill Lee

Phone: 662-226-2715

form the Chester, VT, church. However, on invitation from citizens of Chester [none of whom were Baptists, RWC], Aaron Leland did travel here and in his life had a lasting influence on the community."

The Old Landmarker himself, the great Baptist, J. R. Graves, was baptized in the North Springfield Baptist Church which formed out of the First Baptist Church of Chester, VT, which was not directly, or formally, formed out of another Baptist Church. There is no indication that Graves ever renounced his baptism and sought re-baptism. If it had been the contention of this Old Landmarker that every church must be formally started by another Baptist Church or it is not scriptural and could not, therefore administer scriptural baptism, surely he would have repudiated his baptism.

[Editor's Note: The information for this historical sketch has been gathered from three sources. (1) I have a copy of a lengthy letter in hand from the current pastor of First Baptist Church of Chester, VT, containing information which was based on the church minutes and other historical sources, which was sent to another brother who sent it to me and others. (2) An article on J. R. Graves, Pages 466-468 of *The Baptist Encyclopedia*, by William Cathcart. (3) An article on Eld. Aaron Leland from *The Baptist Encyclopedia*, Page 682. Though I found nothing additional, I also read quickly through *J. R. Graves: Life, Times, and Teachings* to check and see if it mentioned a rebaptism of Graves]

A NOTE FROM EDITOR CAMP

In the last issue of the paper we published an article on the so-called **NEW METHOD** of church constitution. In that article I used a number of historical statements to show that the self-constitution of churches is, in fact, a very old method. I purposely did not go into a discussion of the Scriptures that support this method. **Why?** Because I am currently working on an article on the churches of the New Testament in which I will examine the Biblical record of the constitution of those churches. Many say that we must be able to prove trace our history **link by link** to the church in Jerusalem. Yet, if one of our churches ran to the church in Rome, we would be at a loss to prove our connection. There is absolutely no way to prove how or by whom the church in Rome was constituted. That is true for other churches. This article will be dedicated to a search of the Scriptures on the subject.

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