

The Remnant

*“Even so then at this
present time also there
is a remnant according to
the election of grace.”
Romans 11.5*

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INFANT SALVATION

*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me:
and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out
(John 6.37).*

Many texts might be used to precede this subject. The above, from John 6, directs us to precisely the same thing all the others would; all children of God have a relationship with Jesus which results from the Father giving them to His Son. John 6.37 shows us there is an order in the deliverance of the elect. The Father gives, those given come to Jesus, and Jesus receives those that come. This, and all other texts relating to deliverance, by the absence of anything to the contrary, must include infants as well as adults if infants are to be saved.

Let it be positively noted, nowhere in Scripture can a text be found that associates any entire group or particular subjects of Adam's family with the election of grace.

We ask at the outset: does the deliverance of infants, assuming infants are delivered, differ *in any respect* from the deliverance of any others of the family of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost? Put plainly, can it be hoped infants will be delivered, or saved, simply because they are infants? Do they constitute a special class of the family of man considered worthy of redemption only by reason of their infancy or lack of physical maturity? These and many other questions we hope to answer in this article, should the Lord be pleased.

We are sure it would be rare to find anyone so void of feelings or compassion that they would be indifferent to the destiny of infants and little children who die at that early moment in their brief life. By early we suggest a time before they are capable of mature thinking and decision making. Who can know precisely where infancy ends and adulthood begins? Certainly we cannot, and furthermore, we care not to presume. For the purposes of this study only, we consider infants and little children as those little ones yet dependent on the care of others to sustain their lives. We aim only to ascertain the truth. There are no doctrinal axes we desire to grind. If the Lord enables, we shall cautiously be very mindful of many who have lost a dear child in the sunrise of their lives, for assuredly, it is a tragedy known fully only by those that experience such grief and loss.

INFANT SALVATION

There are several divergent opinions relative to the salvation of infants. We mention the four most prominent ones of which we are aware. 1. There are those who believe all infants will be saved. 2. There are those who believe some infants will be saved and others lost. 3. There are those religious deviants so fanatical for their Arminian creeds they would argue that all infants are lost (or at least the vast majority) because they cannot adhere to the rites prescribed to them (for example, infant baptism). To be assured of a home in heaven, all, regardless of age, must meet these rites. 4. There are some who say they simply do not know, that the Bible does not give them enough

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information to establish a view on the subject of infant salvation worthy of their faith.

Of the four positions given above we shall give no attention to Number 3. Arminians are never at a loss for sudden alterations of views if confronted by common sense, truth, or the exposure of their errors. Thus we leave them and their *works* theories so we may pursue better purposes.

Position 4 shall be discussed at the conclusion of this article. It is appropriate to question the basis of both positions 1 and 2, to ascertain whether their proponents believe their position is established by Scriptures or if they simply believe it from the tenderness of their heart. However, if they believe their position based on the Scriptures, what Scriptures are they? We have never seen anything that

could be any support at all to position 1 and little to prop up position 2. If any believe their views simply from tenderness, or wishful thinking, they really belong with position 4. It would be far more honorable and consistent with Christian decorum to simply say "I don't know" than to be without a "Thus saith the Lord" when asked. And, by God's grace, we are going to ask.

The arguments for the universal salvation of infants abound, and we have read and heard them for many years. Nothing, however, we read or heard came close to convincing us the theory was anywhere near scriptural. In fact, substantial material that has come our way actually reinforced our opinion that there is a complete absence of proof to convince a believer that infants will be saved on the basis of infancy. We have also heard and read considerable in favor of the salvation of *some* of those infants dying in infancy. As yet, not a single case has been presented to satisfy us the salvation of all infants dying in infancy is a factual Bible doctrine. We shall in due time examine several of the favorite arguments offered us.

SALVATION

Does an infant need salvation? A better question to be asked is this; are infants sinners? The majority of our readers are well aware, from both the Bible and experience, that total depravity knows no exceptions, so we shall not weary them with proof texts. It is sufficient to reiterate what the Word of God says. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." The word, "all" embraces humans. It embraces *all* humans. Infants, born or unborn, are humans. The Old Order of Baptists firmly believes "all" sinned in Adam. Adam was the federal head of all his race. Humanity, all of it, had their standing in him. Consequently, they all fell when he fell. The Word affirms "For as in Adam all die." However, if it is contended that infants are not sinners, then the discussion of infant salvation is moot. Infants would stand in no need of salvation. Jesus did not die for them if they are not sinners. He came to seek and to save that which was lost. If infants are innocent and sinless, they are not, and never have been, lost. Infants would not be sheep, for Jesus laid down His life for the sheep. They would not be bought with a price for they stood in no need of redemption, not

being sinners. The benefits of the cross would not apply to infants. The cross was the means to take away the curse, under which infants never fell if not sinners. If infants are sinless beings they shall never join the heavenly chorus and sing "...a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation (Revelation 5.9)."

If infants are not sinners, we ask, what are they? Are they somehow free of the sin that Adam passed on to all mankind in the garden? If free of sin, what has Jesus done for them? If free of sin then how can they die? The wages of sin is death. If any infant dies in infancy then of what did it die if it was not a sinner?

But, infants *are* sinners and *do* stand in need of salvation just like any other sinner.

What is salvation? It is deliverance. Who delivers? Who but Jesus can? And then, we ask, how does Jesus deliver? "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2.1)." If it should be conjectured that Paul was speaking about adult sinners and not infants, we counter, what then did Paul mean in verse three of the same context where he said "...and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others (Ephesians 2.3)." These were not just practicing sinners; they were natural born sinners. It was their inherent nature to sin. Thus, as soon as they had a nature, they were sinners. We leave it to our objectors to inform us when humans get their nature.

Briefly, what is the method of salvation for all that will be saved? First, they are chosen of the Father, in Christ, before the world was shaped. Second, Christ purchased them on the cross. Third, they are born again by the Spirit. Fourth, they shall be delivered up to heaven with Christ at the last day. We shall direct our attention only to point three.

"Ye must be born again (John 3.7)." Must be! It cannot be escaped. Those that will forever enjoy the blissful world beyond this veil of tears ***must be born again***. About now our wise opponents are saying to themselves, "The hardshells are sure ignorant. They do not know that Jesus was not speaking to an infant. He was speaking to Nicodemus, a full grown, full blown Pharisee." Yes, humbly, we confess Jesus was speaking to an adult. Our response is, *So what?*

WHY YOUR PAPER MAY STOP COMING TO YOUR HOME

Have you moved? Has your address been changed, even slightly? If so, you may not receive your copy of THE REMNANT any longer. We are glad to send you the paper, but the Post Office will not deliver to the wrong address. They are under no obligation to deliver the paper without a proper address change, and usually they will not. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY! We must pay fifty cents to the USPS each time you move without notifying us. If you desire to continue receiving the publication, you must notify us when your address changes. Otherwise we have no other option than to drop your name from our list. Thank you for your cooperation.

We had just as well clear this hurdle now and move to other matters.

What has age to do with salvation? Wherein does the smallest infant differ from a wrinkled old person of many years? Are they not alike clay in the Potter's hand? Are old folks more in need of salvation than middle-aged folks? Are middle-aged folks more in need of salvation than infants? If one sin will damn a sinner (James 2.10), no matter what their age, we may dismiss age as a factor in the salvation of any or all that will rejoice finally in heaven. There can be no deviation from the fact that salvation is rooted in election and there is positively no indication in Scriptures that election derives from distinctions among the family of man. The only distinction must come from God's eternal purpose to save. There is nothing we know of that would indicate God chose any or all infants solely because they were infants.

If salvation was determined by election (a truth we firmly hold) then were the elect, or at least some of them, chosen on the basis of age? Did God choose His family *in Christ* or *out of Adam's fallen race*? The answer here reveals much of what one believes about God and His sovereignty. If God chose them *in Christ* then eternal union, not age, was the determining factor. If He chose them *out of Adam's fallen race* then they are in the same fix as everyone else regardless of age, and age then cannot be a factor, one way or the other. No matter how one dresses it up,

if God chose some on the basis of *anything* other than His own sovereign will, then He did in some manner show respect to persons. In this case He showed respect to infants. If infants, why not cripples? Why not the blind? Why not the rich? Why not those that try their best? Is God somehow obligated to save little children or infants? Our personal desire would be that all who die in infancy be saved but it is not for us to determine. If God is obligated to save infants what is it that brings on the obligation? Would not any obligation outside of Himself render the sovereignty of God imperfect?

If God saves all little children simply because He wills to, I shall personally rejoice with others concerned for the precious little ones. But, what does the word of God say about it? Is there evidence in the Bible that God will save all infants? Is there evidence in the Bible that God will save *some* infants based on their infancy?

Is there one method of salvation provided for adults and another provided for infants? Would both methods be found in Christ? If so, what then could be the difference? If there is no difference then there is only one salvation and all, infants and adults, are alike on the same standing, to be delivered on the basis of election, not age. What does the Word of God say about salvation for infants simply because they are infants? We respond firmly, nothing is said about it.

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4.12).” From this we conclude, if one is saved, whether young or old, they must be saved by Jesus. Thus they must all be sinners, young and old, and they must be saved or there is no hope. The infant’s only hope is Jesus, not its infancy. The adult’s only hope is Jesus, not its length of years.

JOHN THE BAPTIST AND SIMEON

It is suggested that John the Baptist is an example of God saving infants. The notion must be rejected! It certainly is an example of salvation but John did not die in infancy. All that may be proved in John’s case is that God was pleased to reveal Himself to him at a very early age. He may do so in the case of others if it so please Him, but neither will that prove *all* infants

will be saved. The salvation of John the Baptist no more proves God saves all (or some) infants dying in infancy than Simeon proves that God saves all (or some) old folks dying in advanced years (Luke 2.25-35). What they both prove is that God is sovereign in relation to when He reveals Himself to His elect. Age with God is nothing. Age has nothing to do with election or at least if it does the Bible is silent about it.

DAVID’S SON

David’s son by Bath-sheba is a rare example being offered as proof God saves infants dying in infancy. “And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me (II Samuel 12.22, 23).” Certainly there can be conjectures and speculation drawn from these tender words. It is very possible that David believed the child was in heaven. But David did not say that, nor did he even imply such. What he said was that the child was dead, and he could not be brought back. Even so, David found comfort that he could go where the child was. He might as well spoken of the slumber in the grave, “sleeping with his fathers,” an expression which was very common among the Israelites. We may be totally wrong. So may be our detractors.

If, for the sake of common ground and congeniality, we agree David’s son was indeed in heaven, that David hoped to join him there, does that by any stretch prove all other infants dying in infancy will be there also? As well might we prove that everyone that robbed and stole, as did Judas, will be a devil doomed to hell. The case of Judas will not settle the issue for all robbers, for Jesus promised at least one robber he would be with Him in paradise on that day. Neither will the case of David’s son prove there is salvation for all infants dying in infancy.

Before anyone adopts a theory it should be tested to its extreme. Never more so than here is this a useful practice. For instance, we know that many Conditional Primitive Baptists believe all infants dying in infancy will be in heaven. Those same folks believe there is no ordained time for anyone to die.

They contend one may die at any moment and God definitely has not predestinated the death of any. Some of them are quite vociferous about it, too. However, it is a fact beyond dispute, if all infants that die in infancy are secure in the Father's love and ordaining decrees then all reprobates must have a time *not to die*. That time is infancy. Conversely, they have a time that they *will die*. That time is somewhere beyond infancy. It matters not that we do not know exactly when it is. A reprobate *cannot* and *will not* die in infancy if the salvation of all infants, dying in infancy, be true. Otherwise, the reprobate would suddenly be changed into an elect vessel of mercy upon dying in infancy. What could that be other than the results of a changing God?

A question worth much consideration regarding reprobates is, at what time does the reprobate become eligible to die? Since he cannot die in infancy—an impossibility if all infants go to heaven when dying—when can his time to die come? At age six? At age twelve? Would it not be a matter of great relief for parents to know where the deadline is? For instance, if God-fearing parents had a child that was about five years old and the child showed signs, however minimal, of maturity, then would they not have reason to dread the development of that child? Why so? Simply this: the doctrine of infant salvation for all dying in infancy offers the parents a hope (other than Christ), however slim or remote, that the child is sure of heaven should it die before maturity. The closer the child comes to adulthood the odds drop off. When first born there could be no danger of damnation, but now, with advancing development the lingering fear appears that suggests the child *may* be a reprobate. Absurd you say? Not at all if you recognize the frailties of human reasoning.

As well it is worth mention that those holding to infant salvation must believe that all infants dying in infancy have been born again prior to their death. We are well satisfied that we are not to do evil that good may come, but what parent could avoid thinking of these matters should their little infant become seriously ill? Should they pray for its recovery, or should they pray for its death? If the child dies, the parents can live out life with the assurance the child is in heaven. It must have been born again. If the child survives then it may be a reprobate.

And too, if infants' dying in infancy assures them of heaven, how can we avoid the fact that abortionists are sending millions to heaven with their wicked practice? Each time they slaughter an unborn we may safely say, another elect vessel of mercy went to be with Jesus. Had it lived, had the abortionist not murdered the child, we must ever entertain the awful dread the poor thing might live out a normal life and yet perish in the burning fires of hell, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. Only death in infancy can assure us our children will pass safely to the portals of glory if infant salvation be so.

BELIEF

Contrary to what Conditional Primitive Baptists and assorted other semi-universalists maintain, there will be no unbelievers in heaven. No goats, no tares, no false disciples; only believers will gather around the throne of God to worship the Lamb. Be sure of this: anyone leaving this world in unbelief will remain that way. There is a great gulf fixed. This would pose a problem for Conditionalists and Missionary Baptists as well. With Conditionalists the problem does not exist in their mind, for anyone can go to heaven that dies with a grin on their face or is buried with a lily in their hand. But the problem does exist. Infants all go to heaven, and belief is not necessary, as they see it. But Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine (John 10.14)." Conditionalists can create new moons as quickly as they can prove the sheep can know Jesus and not believe on Him. What does this text say then if it does not say that there is an interrelation between Jesus and all His sheep? Are infants elect? If the answer is yes then they must be sheep. If infants are not elect can we dare presume they, as non-elect, will be in heaven? This all is reduced to the simple fact that infants as well as adults must be believers to enjoy eternal rest with the Lord in glory. Just about here some may think they have us cornered.

Belief is a product of grace. Belief is begotten of faith. Faith is the gift of God. The elect believe because they are born again. They believe because they are alive. They believe because Christ is in them the hope of glory. They believe as a result of what Christ has done for them and not what they have done

to get that way. What is it that causes someone 80 years old to believe? The voice of the Son of God. What causes someone to believe that is 40 years of age? The voice of the Son of God. What then causes a youth to believe? The voice of the Son of God. Lastly, what could cause an infant to believe? "Why, they cannot. They are too young to believe," the carnal minded complain. Friend, are you saying the same grace of God in the voice of His Son that stirs the mature to believe, cannot stir the infant to believe? Is this something impossible with God or only impossible in your mind? When one is blessed to see that this is a work in the inward man and not a work in the outward man all the difficulties vanish away. If belief was a requirement of the Adamic or natural man then none could believe. The natural mind is enmity with God.

What we have said above serves a fit answer to the missionary minded as well. The infant need not hear the voice of a preacher, a soul winner, or a Sunday school teacher to live. All that is needed is the voice of Jesus. The same voice that told Lazarus to rise from the tomb is sufficient to raise the infant or the ancient from their death in sin. However, we pause to say here with emphasis, all this does not prove that God does save all, or any, infants. It only proves He can, and that without the hindrance of Arminian or Conditionalist theology.

But we must now come to terms. Humbly, we say that the Bible offers absolutely no proof that God does save all or some infants dying in infancy. He can, and with some uncertainty we say He probably does, save some infants dying in infancy. This no one can prove and certainly we dare not try. If brethren feel, through grief or a sense of great loss, their beloved infant that God took is in heaven, so be it. We cannot think their hope for the infant harms anyone. However, we cannot and must not attempt to make a doctrine solely from our feelings. In the absence of Scriptural support we personally feel much more comfortable asserting we do not know how the matter will fall. We are positive that if God takes all or none of the infants dying in infancy He has done according to His good and perfect will. It is not the business of His creation to require of God a reason. The Lord's arm is not shortened that He cannot save. The question is, will He?

May the Lord give each of us sufficient grace to find consolation and peace in all our losses. We dare not presume but trust solely to what He has revealed in His Word, and that alone.

Elder J F Poole

EDITORIAL IS A FLAT TIRE "A GOOD THING" OR "A BAD THING"?

Elders James F. Poole and Robert N. Lackey leaving their positions as Publishers of *The Remnant* saddens me deeply. I would have preferred their continuing to produce this paper as they have so admirably done for over eleven years. This, in God's providence, was evidently not meant to be, no matter how much you and I might wish otherwise.

The Remnant was established on the principles of free grace and the Absolute Predestination of all things. Its first editorial, in the issue of April, 1987, said: "As was seen from our Prospectus the greatest emphasis we felt at this time should be laid on our predestinarian views. Not that by any means we believe predestination to be the paramount doctrine in the Bible. However, there is no doubt in our mind that every Bible doctrine is influenced by the subject of predestination."

Our opinion has not been changed since 1987, and we intend to continue, by the grace of God, in the same direction, unswerving.

To this day I am occasionally told, "It is unnecessary to say 'absolute,' since true predestination is absolute." This might well be true in casual conversation among friends. It is definitely not true when one is engaged in setting forth the doctrine of Jesus Christ, especially when one is addressing an audience with mixed beliefs or is defending the doctrine against its many enemies, whether from the stand or on the printed page.

There are many who profess to believe in predestination but who do not believe, as we do, that predestination covers all things and all events in time and eternity. They will jovially talk of predestination in general terms; but, when one becomes specific about events in our lives being predestinated, or if the word *absolute* is mentioned in the same sentence with

predestination, they panic. Their voices become strident, the color rises in their faces, and suddenly they are not nearly as jovial as they were before. Predestination, they tell us, must be only of “the good things,” whatever that means.

A flat tire is one of “the good things” to someone who makes his living repairing flats, but it is one of “the bad things” to the one who, as he lugs his wheel up the highway, believes the world should be more to his liking. Yet, he may be the very one who says he believes in predestination—of the good things.

From time to time we use the word *absolute* to distinguish our position from his.

It should be obvious; this paper is not for such as he. If partial predestinarians can read *The Remnant* and get comfort, encouragement, or anything else of a positive nature from it, we are glad. By God’s grace, however, *The Remnant*’s goal is the same now as it has been since its inception: We hope to provide food along the way for God’s sheep who hunger for the truth they can find almost nowhere else, the Absolute Predestination of all things.

The Remnant never has emphasized predestination over the Lord Jesus Christ, our only hope of salvation. By His grace, we never will. All else, including predestination, is and must be centered in Christ’s finished work: His blood, His righteousness, His life, death, and resurrection graciously imputed to sinners. Sinners are not saved—as multitudes slanderously affirm against Christ Jesus—by something they must do to complete what He supposedly only started. It is His intercession, His pleading His own holy perfection in behalf of His elect family, which saves them in time as well as for eternity.

Above all else, then, predestination centers in Jesus Christ. Why would the Scriptures return repeatedly to God’s decrees “before the foundation of the world” if this were not so? “Truly the Son of man goeth as it was determined....” Who, if not God, determined how the Son of man was to go, and when, if not eternally, did He determine these things? We call God’s eternal determination predestination. Of necessity, predestination must be as absolute as He is.

It is in the strength that He gives that we hope to continue publishing *The Remnant*, bearing witness to this and other biblical truths in as clear and unequivocal words as our God may grant us.

To answer the lead question, a flat tire in and of itself is neither good nor bad. As sure as it is a *thing*, however, it is one of the *all* things which work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose.

Doubtless, a word should be said about a change in *The Remnant*’s masthead, the addition of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, to our name and return address. On September 12, 1963, the State of Texas legally recognized Saints Rest Church as a fully chartered, tax-exempt, non-profit corporation. In her articles of incorporation, her statement of purpose included “...support public worship, the preaching and teaching of the Gospel of Christ and of the Kingdom of God by word, radio, television, and other available means.”

Until now, Saints Rest Church has done relatively little with the printed page, which is “other available means.” However, God in His providence gave her the opportunity to assume this new relationship with *The Remnant* when, early this year, Elder Poole asked me to take the responsibilities of editing and publishing the paper. Saints Rest felt, we trust by God’s grace, she could scarcely refuse.

Some readers may worry about this, that *The Remnant* might degenerate into little more than a church bulletin. We fervently pray it will be manifest that any such worries would be unfounded. This, then, is our pledge to our readers and also to Saints Rest Church: By the grace of God, we do not intend to turn *The Remnant* into a “church paper,” or to make it the voice of Saints Rest or of any one church. We hope to continue, as we feel *The Remnant* has successfully done for these eleven years, to publish Biblical articles by sound writers regardless of their affiliation. Nor, on the other hand, do we intend to represent—or misrepresent—Saints Rest Church, as though we were her official voice. We are not. She is now as she ever has been, an independent body, sovereign under God over her own affairs, who has graciously loaned her aegis to this paper. In turn, *The Remnant* will remain as it has been since its inception, an autonomous voice for our God’s sovereign, predestinating grace.

We beg an interest in your prayers as you are blessed to remember us before the throne of grace.

—Editor

A CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY: BY GOD'S GRACE, THE "HARD-SHELLS" HAVE BEEN PRESERVED ANOTHER 100 YEARS

One hundred years ago this year, the "Reverend" Dr. George A. Lofton proudly clutched a copy of the newest release of his book, *Character Sketches*, in his hands.

Our readers might wonder: Why has this Dr. Lofton, of all the people we might write about, attracted our attention? He has caught our eye because a century ago our church brethren and spiritual forebears had caught his. Dr. Lofton could not refrain from commenting on them in his day; now, we can scarcely keep from making a few observations about him in ours, a century later.

Who was this Dr. Lofton? His credentials are impressive, to those who are impressed by such things. (As for his title of Doctor, we can well afford him that, which he earned, greatly preferring it to that of *Reverend*, which he did *not* earn.)

George Augustus Lofton was born in Panola County, Mississippi, on Christmas day, 1839. As a young man he attended Mercer University in Georgia until 1861, when he entered the Confederate army. Returning to civilian life after the War Between the States, he was active in the fields of education and law until 1868, the year he was ordained to the Missionary Baptist ministry. He then pastored churches in Georgia, Missouri, and Tennessee for the rest of his life.

He received his Doctor of Divinity degree from Baylor University in Texas in 1880, and in 1900 he was awarded his LL.D. degree at the University of Nashville.

He was President of the Southern Baptist Publication Society, Memphis (1873-76). He was also the President of the State Board of Missions from 1889 until his death.

During his active life, Dr. Lofton was Moderator of the Nashville Association of Baptist Churches. He was a member of the Board of Managers, Sunday School Board (Southern Baptist Convention) and of the Nashville Public School Board for five years; and he was an active Mason. He also found time to

write several books: *Character Sketches*, 1889; *Harp of Life*, 1897; *Baptist Reformation, 1611-1641 A.D.*, 1889; and *The Master Wheel*, 1902. He died on December 11, 1914, two weeks before his 75th birthday anniversary.

It is for a single chapter in his first book that we give him this centennial note. *Character Sketches* (1889) was reissued in 1898, one hundred years ago this year. In *Character Sketches*, our Doctor of Divinity "sketched" many types of "characters," devoting a chapter to each. For the most part, he directed his book to pointing out the flaws of his many victims, along with his pompous recommendations for their getting on the right path.

Only one of his chapters, or sketches, has attracted our attention. It is the one entitled, "HARD-SHELLS."

Not content with being a D. D. and LL. D., a Mason, and a ramrod in a multitude of political and religious organizations and activities, the lofty Dr. Lofton also thought of himself as a cartoonist and a wit. With his own pen and hand he illustrated his book. The chapter on Hard-Shells showcases two of his crude editorial cartoons, the first of which he explains as follows:

ACCOMPANYING this sketch are two illustrations which need explanation. The first...represents a preacher before a peculiar and characteristic audience of turtles seated upon logs in a pond of water, with an alligator lying off to one side. The preacher's text, as seen upon the side of the platform upon which he stands, is: "By grace are ye saved;" and the audience, as you will observe, is deeply intent, heads up, and listening earnestly to the preacher. The alligator, with mouth open, and perhaps suffused with crocodile tears, is specially the hypocrite of the congregation. The doctrine of salvation by grace is profoundly interesting to the elect, and the "Hard-shell" preacher, as he is called, seldom dwells upon any other theme except election and predestination or kindred subjects, so far as my observation has gone.

Dr. Lofton's observations were rather limited, and therefore to some extent inaccurate, but we can understand. He was, with all his duties, a busy man. To do justice to his subject, however, he would have

done himself and his fans—as well as the objects of his ridicule—a favor, had he bolstered his comments with further research and more discerning observations. He continues:

...going and giving, living and doing for God's glory and the salvation of a perishing world do not belong to the "Hard-shell's" creed.

As for the Hard-shell's creed, Doctor Lofton should have simply read it. It is called the Bible. Hard-shells are vitally interested in "going and giving, living and doing for God's glory." On the other point—"going, giving, living and doing for...the salvation of a perishing world"—the Bible says nothing about such. Therefore, Hard-shells have no more interest in such an unscriptural occupation than their Lord did, which was no interest at all. "I pray not for the world," Christ said, "but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine (John 17.9)." If a worldly education counts for anything, it would seem that a man with a D. D. and an LL. D. could have seen that.

Dr. Lofton's rambling commentary on his second cartoon is scarcely worth the space to reproduce here. He later makes comments that are far more pertinent to the "Hard-Shells." One is,

You will find but few professedly [sic] anti-missionaries among other denominations.

That is, he observes that anti-missionism is confined mostly to the Primitive Baptists; other denominations are more missionary-minded, like he is. We applaud him for this observation, which he must make, because the "other denominations" to which Dr. Lofton refers are for the most part like his own, Arminian to the core. His testimony bears out what we have said all along: The Missionary Baptist position is far closer to that of Rome and her daughters than it is to the historic Baptist position.

"It may not be amiss here to explain what we mean by the term 'hard-shell,'" Dr. Lofton says, finally getting down to specifics:

There is a sect of our brethren called 'Hard-shells'...The old-fashioned Primitive Baptists, as they call themselves, are professedly opposed to

Missions, to an educated ministry, to a salaried pastorate, to Sunday-schools, and to all effort for the salvation of the sinner or the heathen by direct agencies established for the purpose. They regard missionary and educational boards, missionary appointments, conventional institutions for the purpose of evangelizing and educating the world as anti-scriptural; hence, in the sense in which we foster Missions and education, they stand opposed to what they call "man-made inventions and methods." They hold that if God wants a missionary in Africa or China, he will move him to go, and provide the means for his going and for his operations; and believing, many of them, that the Holy Spirit, without the use of means, will lead the elect to faith and salvation, they naturally hold that all missionary, educational, and Sunday-school effort for the salvation of sinners is not only anti-scriptural, but useless and God-dishonoring.

To all of which we yet happily plead guilty. It would appear that either Dr. Lofton had recently reviewed the Black Rock Address and had copied heavily from it, or else he had obtained a set of minutes from one of our associations and had taken large sections verbatim from the articles of faith and practice. At last, some glaring errors in his snide remarks notwithstanding, he has been given to represent the Primitive Baptists more or less truly, if not fairly. "Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but," like the Assyrian his mentor, "it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations [or *Characters*] not a few (Isaiah 10.7)."

Dr. Lofton then makes some astounding concessions to the Hard-shells:

However erroneous we regard their theory or their creed, they are among the most honest people in the world. They would come nearer, perhaps, suffering martyrdom for Christ than any other denomination I know. I have known them to walk forty miles to be at one of their Associations, and they are much devoted to their Churches, and kind and hospitable to one another in brotherly love. I never knew but one of them to take advantage of the homestead or bankrupt laws, and he was excluded from the Church. Formerly, a letter of dismissal from an old-school Baptist Church was a letter of credit to a dry goods

or grocery merchant; and the payment of an honest debt, or the dealing out of exact justice to his fellowman, was the pride of a “Hard-shell.” They are hard in doctrine, fatalistic in theology; they believe more in “feeding the sheep” than in converting the goats; they do not believe in the use of means and measures for the extension of the gospel to a perishing world; they believe that God does not need to be helped, and that “whatever is to be will be,” as some facetiously say, “whether it comes to pass or not;” but one thing is certain, you always know where to find an “old-side” Baptist, and he wouldn’t deceive you to save your life, if he is as he used to be.

Ah, and may we be counted worthy of being numbered among their heirs! We are unworthy to wash the feet of such stalwarts who in their day so aroused the ire of the good Doctor. “Some facetiously say, ‘whether it comes to pass or not,’” he says? The some who facetiously said it were not the Old Baptists themselves but their carping enemies, Dr. Lofton’s cronies.

A comment should be made on his observation, “Formerly, a letter of dismissal from an old-school Baptist Church was a letter of credit to a dry goods or grocery merchant....” In those pioneer days of which Dr. Lofton wrote, when those hardy brethren went west, they usually came into frontier areas as rank strangers. Many were nearly poverty-stricken. More often than not, their families and their worldly goods would fit into one well-worn wagon. Maybe they had one or two head of livestock tethered behind. Some owned little more than a Bible, a rifle, an ax, and the clothes they and their families wore. Furniture? They would build it when they got there.

Of course there was no Central Credit Bureau in those days, no national credit system where a stranger’s honesty and reliability, his paying of his honest debts, could be electronically verified in a few moments. But all over this young nation, friend and foe alike knew this about the “Hard-shells”: An Old School Baptist’s word was his bond, and he would pay his honest debts no matter what. Thus, merchants commonly granted credit to pioneering brethren who could show little more than a hungry family and a letter of dismissal in good standing from some Old Baptist church back east. “In that saidst thou truly, (John 4.18),” Dr. Lofton.

And he says, “...and he wouldn’t deceive you to save your life, if he is as he used to be.” Doctor, rest assured. By God’s grace, there are some like that still around, as they used to be.

“The old-school brethren have their faults,” Dr. Lofton says,

...but they are rigidly and openly honest...I only regret that a people of such evangelical simplicity, of such sturdy faith and discipline, of such doctrinal integrity and orthodoxy, of such a martyr spirit and purpose, should dwindle in numbers and power every day for the want of a missionary and progressive spirit.

But, then they would not have been a people of “such evangelical simplicity, of such sturdy faith and discipline, of such doctrinal integrity and orthodoxy, of such a martyr spirit and purpose” had they been possessed of “a missionary and progressive spirit,” would they, Dr. L.? By God’s grace, we will take the former, and you may have all you want of the latter.

Dr. Lofton then directs his attention to a lengthy and rousing attack on anti-effort members among his own ranks, the Missionary Baptists, using the Hard-shells as the spit on which he turns and roasts his miserly Missionary brethren. As this internal squabble among the Missionaries does not concern us, we will bypass it, waiting until the pious Doctor returns for his final attack on the Primitive Baptists. He concludes his chapter as follows:

Hard-shellism is an antichristian lie...It is fatalism or the presumption of negation and inertia which makes hard-shellism, and the sooner it dies, or we who have it die, the better for the world. So mote it be, if God will.

Thus Dr. Lofton ended his chapter on Hard-shellism, a twofold diatribe: first, against the Primitive Baptists, and second, against those within his own Arminian ranks who were less enthusiastic than he about using man-made means and measures to convert an indifferent world.

After praising the “Hard-shell” Primitive Baptists for their God-given integrity in both secular and spiritual affairs—these honest, hard-working, loving, orthodox, followers of the Lamb—he can produce

no better solution to the Hard-shellism he sees as a major world problem than this astounding statement: "...the sooner it dies, or we who have it die, the better for the world." Such is his answer to the woes of mankind: **For the betterment of the world, mind you, according to Dr. Lofton, Christian men and women of flawless character should die out, and the sooner the better!**

Dr. Lofton's book, *Character Sketches*, was re-issued a century ago this year. He himself has long since gone on to have his theology corrected.

It was not the "Hard-Shells" who died within the last century, as he would so have liked, but it was George A. Lofton, D.D., LL.D., himself. Now, all of his titles, honors, activities, and degrees notwithstanding, he, like

Imperious Caesar, dead and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.
(Shakespeare, *Hamlet*)

The little flock of Primitive Baptists he so despised is yet here, however, where they will be until their Lord returns, preserved by Him who has called them by His grace. As weak, small in number, and as subject to criticism as they might be, the Old School Baptists are still earnestly contending for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, plus nothing, minus nothing. To quote the learned Doctor one more time, "So mote it be, if God will."

—Elder C. C. Morris

THE SAINTS OF OLD

"...and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. (Hebrews 11.35-40)."

A NEW BOOK
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THE TIE THAT BINDS

by
Cleve Brantley

A Study in Predestination

80 pages
Paper Cover

For those readers that feel associational correspondence and affiliations are more important than truth, do not bother to order this book. To the best of our knowledge, Cleve Brantley was not affiliated with any group of Old School or Primitive Baptists. Doctrinally, Brantley could stand in the company of the soundest among us. He was totally rejected by the Conditionalist order for the same reason. However, he seemed to be one of those brethren that refused the yoke of any man. He was an outsider.

Unless we are totally deceived, Brantley was not an outsider regarding the spiritual body of Christ. His comments in *The Tie That Binds* range through all the holy emotions of a child of God. He speaks of the sweetness and of the bitterness. He relates the highs and the lows. More than all else, however, he promulgated the predestination of all things by a holy God worthy of all praise and adoration. For these and other reasons we are thankful to publish his beautiful dissertation, *The Tie That Binds*.

We leave you, the reader, to determine if the sweet spirit of the Lamb of God is found in the pages of this little book. For us, it has been read through several times with mixtures of joy and sorrow. At times we read with tears flowing. At other times our voice was lifted up in praise to Him Who does all things well. May that be your lot as well.

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CHRIST, THE MAN-BRANCH

...Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, **Behold the man** whose name is *The BRANCH*; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both. (Zechariah 6.12f).

Behold the Man!

Zechariah's "Behold the man" is loaded with implications. This phrase, "Behold the man," occurs six times in scripture. Three we will not here address, other than by way of mention: Samson's mother's use of it (Judges 13.10); the Lord's pointing out of Saul to Samuel (1 Samuel 9.17); and Ezekiel's observation (9.11). The other three occasions, however, are relevant to the subject at hand. They are: God's statement at Eden's gate (Genesis 3.22); Zechariah's text, cited above; and Pilate's declaration (John 19.5).

The term *the Son of man* is rooted in mankind itself, in Adam and all of his sinful race. The first time this phrase is used is found in Genesis 3.22f: "And the LORD God said, **Behold, the man** is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken."

The last time this phrase, "Behold the man," is used in the Bible is in John 19.5: "Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, **Behold the man** (John 19.5)!"

The first time it was the sinless God speaking of a sinful man; the last time was a sinful man speaking of the sinless God!

Sin is a primary issue as to why God took on Himself the likeness of sinful flesh. When considering Christ's advent as the Son of *man*, it must be realized that sin is far more than an issue of the Jews and their law. God's elect are not limited to flesh and blood descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The song of the glorified throngs in Heaven will be,

in part, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood **out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation**...(Revelation 5.9)." John again verifies this by later saying, "After this I beheld, and, lo, **a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues**, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb (Revelation 7.9f)." Such a magnificent scope puts the Jews of Jesus' day, with their petty views of the law of Moses, in the shade. They simply never saw what sin and salvation is all about.

Zechariah's "Behold the man" brings the humanity of Jesus before the beholding eye. Was He indeed the Son of God, God manifest in the flesh? Yes, He was, and He is. Yet it is not as the Son of God but as the **Son of man** that He will return in clouds of glory with all His holy angels (Matthew 24.30). It was as a **man** He sympathized, labored, tired, wept, suffered, agonized, and died. He was not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Since God cannot be tempted, it was as a **man** He "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4.15)." "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and **the son of man**, that thou visitest him (Psalm 8:4)?" is quoted in Hebrews 2.6ff, where it is expressly applied to none other than Jesus Christ.

It must necessarily be so. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, **the man** Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2.5)." Jesus as the Son of man was the answer to Job's heart's cry. Of God, Job said, "For He is **not a man**, as I am, that I should answer Him, and we should come together in judgment. Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both." A daysman is an arbiter, a referee, a go-between, a mediator. A mediator between God and Job—that is what he earnestly desired; someone who could meet with God as His divine equal and satisfy His just and holy demands, but one who would also be Job's sympathetic human equal, satisfying his desperate needs. But Job speaks not merely for himself. He is a spokes-

man for all of God's children in every nation and time. Hence, one of the prophetic names for Jesus is the "Desire of all nations (Haggai 2.7)," because all nations without exception contain His people who echo this, Job's longing.

Mankind could not produce such a one. To be such a mediator, God Himself must become man. "Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things (Ephesians 4.9f)." He must descend, be truly a man, and not merely be God pretending that he is a man.

This is basic, foundational, and in that sense it is so simple it can be expressed in one sentence: To save His people, Jesus must succeed where the first Adam failed, and more. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned (Romans 5.12)."

This is so fundamental to the problem of sin and death that Jesus is set forth as *the last Adam*. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive...And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit (1 Corinthians 15.21f, 45)."

The *last Adam*. There is not a long series of Adams. There will not be another. There have only been two Adams, and, before the eternal God, each is the federal head and representative of their respective children.

Blood Redemption and the Near Kinsman: Further complicating things, and this by His own wisdom and will, God, in establishing the *ceremonial and social laws* governing Israel, put therein two things (among many more we cannot here address) which we would briefly think upon: (1) His requirement of death by blood sacrifice as satisfaction for sin, and (2) the law of the kinsman redeemer.

1. While maintaining the necessity of an **acceptable blood sacrifice** by saying, "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission (Hebrews 9.22)," Paul nevertheless dismissed the untold thousands of gallons of animal blood shed in Old Testa-

ment sacrifices with one swift statement: "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins (Hebrews 10.4)." If remission comes by blood, but not by the blood of bulls and goats, then, by what—or by whose—blood? Abraham prophesied, "My son, *God will provide himself a lamb* for a burnt offering (Genesis 22.8)." This was done by further invoking the law of

2. **The near-kinsman redeemer:** Being literally sold into slavery was a common happening in the days of Old Testament Israel. Today, of course, we rarely have to fear such from a natural or literal standpoint, yet its spiritual application carries over into all ages. Jesus said, "Whosoever commiteth sin is the servant [literally, *bondslave*] of sin (John 8.34)," and, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed (John 8.36)." It is this spiritual slavery which applies to all men. It is in this light we would look briefly at the subject of the near-kinsman redeemer.

Not just any friend or philanthropist could redeem an Israelite who had been sold into slavery or servitude. By law it must be a near kinsman: "After that he is sold he may be redeemed again; one of his brethren may redeem him: either his uncle, or his uncle's son, may redeem him, or any that is nigh of kin unto him of his family may redeem him; or if he be able, he may redeem himself (Leviticus 25.48f)."

Four categories of potential redeemers among his brethren are listed. Again, these were literal, but they each have their spiritual significance:

A. "One of his brethren": We may dismiss this as a possibility from among mankind, because we are expressly told: "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: (For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:) (Psalm 49.7f)." Only Jesus Christ, who in the Spirit is the elder brother of His people, can qualify here.

B. "He may redeem himself": But this again is impossible for any fallen sinner to do.

C. "Either his uncle...": One's uncle is the brother of one's father (or mother). In the spiritual understanding, who is the brother of God the Father? Again, it can only be Jesus Christ in His eternal Being as the second Person of the Godhead. As such He is magnificently set forth by Solomon: "I

was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was...When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth...Then I was by him, **as one brought up with him**: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with **the sons of men** (Proverbs 8.23-31)." *As one brought up with Him*, that is, with the Father, means coexistent and co-eternal. He is as old as the Father, an eternal twin; yea, closer. "I and my Father are one (John 10.30)." And as His delight was eternally with "the sons of men," so He delighted to come in the fullness of time and announce Himself as the Son of man.

D. "...or his uncle's son"—his cousin: And who is the Son of God, one and the same with being the Son of the Father's Brother? Again, it can only be the only-begotten of the Father, Jesus Christ.

Putting these two God-given necessities together can only lead to one inescapable conclusion: For the eternal redemption and ransom of the sinner to satisfy God, a death by blood sacrifice must be provided to Him by the sinner's near kinsman redeemer. To accomplish this the Son of God must become the Son of man, thereby taking on Himself the likeness of their sinful flesh. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh (Romans 8.3)."

The Two Genealogies of Jesus

Luke's genealogy of Jesus is not like that of Matthew, for it is not at all for the same purpose. Matthew traces Jesus' lineage back through David to Abraham to prove the validity of His claim as King of Israel's nation. Luke, however, shows Jesus as a true son of Adam, the Son of man.

Luke's genealogy goes back to Adam and thence to God: "...which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God (Luke 3.38)."

Whereas Matthew's genealogy of Christ properly goes back through King Solomon and King David (to establish Christ's royal lineage) to Abraham (the progenitor of the nation), Luke's genealogy serves another purpose entirely. To set forth Christ as the Son of man, His family tree must establish His relationship to Adam.

But Luke goes further. He traces Adam himself back to his being "the son of God." Christ's genealogy, therefore, begins and ends with God. Seven, the number of divine completeness, bears this out: Abraham was the twenty-first (7 x 3) generation from and including Adam. Matthew's genealogy traces 42 (7 x 6) generations from Abraham to the Christ. Luke gives 77 (7 x 11) names, from Jesus back to God. Stopping at the 76th name, Adam, will not do. To do so falls short of the truth, for, to complete the circle, the Son of God is incarnated as a man in the person of Jesus. God is the seventy-seventh and final name in Luke's genealogy of Jesus Christ.

Luke's genealogy does something else which is highly important: It traces Christ's ancestry back through Mary's line. This is entirely necessary because of the tie between Mary and Eve. God's promise in Genesis 3.15 was specifically that the Savior would be the seed of the woman: "And I will put enmity between thee [the serpent] and the woman, and between thy seed and **her seed**; it [or *He*] shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." God and a woman are at each end of this divine chain: In Genesis it is Jehovah Elohim and Eve; in the gospels it is Christ Jesus and Mary.

It is obvious that Matthew's and Luke's genealogies vary in the generations between David and Christ. While Matthew comes forward from Abraham and David through Solomon, Luke goes back to David through another of David's sons, Nathan. In Luke 3.23, where the text says, "...(*as was supposed*) the son of Joseph," the *as was supposed* diverts the account away from Jesus' *supposed* father's blood line to the true blood line, that of Mary, His mother.

"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man (Luke 2.52)." As divine Wisdom and grace (or *favour*) incarnate, the infinite God, manifest in the flesh of Jesus the Son of man, could not have increased in these areas. This can only be written and viewed from the standpoint of Jesus as a man. A clue to this is, *He increased in stature*; that is, he grew physically, from a babe, to a child, to an adult. Likewise, not in His essential deity, but as a man, He grew in these other areas as partaker of His people's infirmities.

During His ministry as recorded in the four gospels, Christ is referred to as the Son of man in at

least eighty verses. Both friend and foe heard Him publicly apply this title to Himself. In the presence of the Pharisees, especially, Christ delighted in calling Himself the Son of man. This title finally provoked the High Priest and his Sanhedrin to condemn Jesus to death: "...the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see **the Son of man** sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death (Mark 14.61ff)."

As children of Adam, those who have a hope in Christ may be thankful that He was indeed the Son of man, for, it is by His being so that He bore their griefs, carried their sorrows, and was wounded for their transgressions and bruised for their iniquities. No mere mortal man could have done what He single-handedly accomplished. In Him, the prayer of David—"Let thy hand be upon **the man of thy right hand**, upon **the son of man** whom thou madest strong for thyself (Psalm 80.17)"—was answered.

(To be concluded, the Lord willing)

—Elder C. C. Morris

FEAST OF FAT THINGS

A Review

The title of this little book is taken from Isaiah 25.6: "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined."

Readers in good health, spiritually, will digest and enjoy this seven-chapter *Feast*, but the spiritually anemic may find it too rich and a bit hard to swallow. Those with a stomach only accustomed to a free-will diet may lie awake for nights on end, tossing and turning with a bad case of spiritual indigestion.

1. Leading the *Feast's* Table of Contents is "The Black Rock Address," bearing the auspicious subtitle: "Minutes of the Proceedings, and Resolutions

Drafted, by the Particular Baptists, Convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28th, 1832" at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School, and the New School Baptists."

Must reading for anyone serious about Baptist history, the Address covers the reasons fellowship was withdrawn from the New School (Missionary) Baptists. Among other things, it clearly covers the major New School innovations—"tracts" and tract societies, Sunday Schools, the newly contrived Bible Society, Missions, Bible colleges and theological seminaries, and protracted meetings (revivals). The brethren who met at Black Rock pointed out *the one radical difference* between the Old and New schools: "they [the New School] declare the gospel to be a system of means; these means it appears they believe to be of human contrivance; and they act accordingly. But we believe the gospel dispensation to embrace a system of *faith* and *obedience*, and we would act according to our belief...." No one who is interested in sound Biblical doctrine and practice should be without a copy of this historic document.

Also of historic interest, the Address is prefaced by a short history of Black Rock Old School Baptist Church of Baltimore County, Maryland, where the meeting which produced the Black Rock Address was held.

2. "Everlasting Task for Arminians," by William Gadsby, is alone well worth the price of this book. Based on a letter to a Rev. Edward Smyth of Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland, who had attacked the doctrine of unconditional election, this treatise presents a series of trilemmas and dilemmas unanswerable by the shrewdest Arminian. The first trilemma (Does salvation depend wholly upon free grace, wholly upon man's free will, or partly upon each?) is solidly, patiently, and scripturally developed, and the *Task* only builds from there to its devastating conclusion.

3. "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven," by Elder H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio. This satirical piece explores Arminianism's various theories of how people get to "go to heaven." The arguments of those who believe in salvation by "infantile purity," as well as the supporters of Sunday schools, foreign mission boards, and temperance societies are examined and carried to their logical conclusions. Almost anyone could be found in the

Arminian's Heaven, it seems, except Jesus Christ and those who depend upon His grace for their eternal welfare.

4. "Fatalism," also by Elder Curry, examines the true meaning of the word, its history, and the preposterously ignorant charge that Old School Predestinarian Baptists are "fatalists." "Chance" is also addressed. Elder Curry surprisingly and logically proves that the Arminians, who so falsely accuse predestinarians of being fatalists, are themselves the true fatalists! He also proves that predestination is the only alternative to a fatalistic universe.

5. "The Celestial Railroad," by Nathaniel Hawthorne, an allegory after the style of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, was written "to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his [Bunyan's] day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Most of the places visited and characters met by Bunyan's Christian are updated by Hawthorne, one of America's greatest writers.

6. "A Riddle," by Elder Gilbert Beebe, is a short parable involving two men living together in the same house. This is far more than an account of social or family strife, a feud between neighbors, or tenant-landlord disagreements. Those with a hope in Christ will quickly recognize the uncomfortable predicament the New man finds in such an arrangement. Others, occupying only the quarters of the Old man, may miss the point entirely. Hence, Elder Beebe's pertinent question: "Reader, do you understand the riddle?"

7. "Absolute Predestination," by Elder Gilbert Beebe, is short (about 4 pages) and to the point. After briefly defining *absolute* and *predestination*, he addresses the principal question that rankles every Arminian and Conditionalist: whether or not God's predestination extends to the wicked actions of men and devils. This brief piece, from Elder Beebe's earlier writings, abounds with scriptural examples and furnishes a rich dessert to round out the sumptuous *Feast of Fat Things*.

Information on ordering *Feast of Fat Things* or other God-honoring books available through this publication will be found on page 19.

Editor

A QUESTION ABOUT REGENERATION AND BELIEF

I agree that God regenerates His people by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. But does that mean to you that some regenerate people go for a period of time without hearing the gospel? And is belief of the gospel a necessary and immediate result of regeneration?—M. C.

First, we need to define our terms. By *regenerate people* we mean people who are spiritually born from above, born again, or born of the Spirit of our God.

By *hearing the gospel* we mean neither merely the outward hearing with the natural ear nor hearing what the world calls the gospel. Hearing in our context means a spiritual inner hearing with understanding and reception: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches (Revelation 2.7 *et al*)."

The gospel is the good news of the salvation accomplished by Jesus Christ. Paul defined the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15.1-4 as, "...how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

To hear the gospel entails (but is not limited to) an inner conviction of personal sins, a belief in Christ's atoning death for those sins in accord with the scriptures, a belief in His burial and literal resurrection as set forth in the scriptures, and a personal, spiritual hope in His finished work. Such a combination of conviction, belief, and hope is not simply a historical head-belief. It is a Spirit-wrought work in the sinner's renewed heart.

But does that mean to you that some regenerate people go for a period of time without hearing the gospel?

It certainly does. Some regenerate people do go for a time without hearing the gospel:

(1) **Nicodemus'** coming to Jesus was evidence that he had a prior hungering and thirsting which only Jesus, as the bread and water of life, could satisfy. Christ's statement to him, "...ye must be born again," is plural, not singular. (If it had been singular, the King James Version's translators would have ren-

dered this as, “You must be born again.”) Nicodemus was a representative of the group—God’s elect—which must, as a class, be born again.

(2) Christ’s words to **Saul of Tarsus** on the road to Damascus, “It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks (Acts 9.5 and 26.14),” shows that Saul was experiencing the same spiritual pricking of conscience which the converts experienced on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2.37). There is no telling how long he had had spiritual life and had struggled against the Spirit’s jabs and barbs before that day.

(3) **John the Baptist** was quickened by or born of the Holy Spirit before his first or natural birth of his mother Elisabeth. To say otherwise, one would have to take the position that an unregenerate person was filled with God’s Spirit (see Luke 1.15).

Many more scriptural examples could be given, such as the rich young ruler (Mark 10.21f), Zacchaeus (Luke 19.1ff), the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8.27ff), and others, but we must forbear.

An account from the experience of Elder John Leland would also bear this out. An African man, years before his being captured and sold into slavery, belonged to a certain tribe that worshiped a charred stump of a tree that had been hit by lightning and burned. Convicted in his heart of the futility of such worship, he secretly vowed not to pray to the stump, but rather he would pray to the unseen God who controlled the lightning that had burned the tree to the ground. Wrestling with a sense of his sinfulness and helplessness before such an almighty God, he would secretly go into the forest, kneel by the stump, and beg the invisible God in the heavens for forgiveness and mercy. Then, the slave boats came, and he was taken to the United States where he was sold.

One day, Elder Leland was preaching on a town square. This particular slave was there that day with his master, who gave him leave to listen to the preacher. As Elder Leland spoke powerfully on the subject of conviction for sin, conflict of soul, conversion, and salvation in Christ Jesus, suddenly the slave cried out, “Lord, that’s me by the old black stump!” Soon after this, Elder Leland baptized him.

The question might be asked, just when did this man receive spiritual life—when he heard Elder Leland preach, or while he was yet in Africa, when he was first given the desire to pray to the God of

heaven? The evidence is for the latter. One does not hear in order to be born again; he is born again so that he can hear. Yet it was many years after his experience in the African jungle before he heard the gospel which explained his experience to him.

May I also refer briefly to my own experience? I certainly dare not rank my own experience with the above illustrations, but, if I am not completely deceived, my spiritual experience, conviction for sin, and hope in Christ began when I was a child, as early as nine years of age, if not much earlier. Yet I did not hear the gospel preached in its purity until I was twenty-one. Between the ages of nine and twenty-one, I labored in Egyptian darkness, struggling futilely against my depravity, trying to overcome it with all the will-worship and Arminian effort a young man could muster. In that respect, I “profited in...religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers (Galatians 1.14).”

For what it is worth, I cannot deny that my spiritual birth, if indeed I have had such, began at that early age. Because of the twelve years of spiritual warfare preceding my hearing the gospel in its purity, I also dare not say I received spiritual life (if I indeed have it) only when I actually heard it preached. The gospel answered a hungry longing that I had had for many years. This hungering for Christ, if genuine, is in itself a mark or evidence of life in Him, for those who are (spiritually) dead do not hunger. Therefore, both by the scriptures and by experience I must answer your question affirmatively: Yes, some regenerate people go for a period of time without hearing the gospel.

And is belief of the gospel a necessary and immediate result of regeneration?

It is a necessary result of regeneration, but not necessarily an immediate one, as many of the above examples indicate. It is a necessary result in that it is given unto God’s children to believe on Christ (Philippians 1.29). The Christ His children are given to believe on is the Christ of the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15.3f), and not the perverted gospel and the false Christ of Arminianism (2 Corinthians 11.4, Galatians 1.7-9). They will believe in God’s own good time, when He works effectually in them to that end, and not before.

—CCM

EXCERPT FROM A LETTER

What you said about church got me to thinking. You said, "I am still so thankful the Lord brought V. & I to this church where they preach and teach the Lord Jesus." What a coincidence! We are probably just as thankful, if not more so, that the Lord brought us to the Primitive Baptists, where they teach and preach about the Lord Jesus. I am truly glad you brought the subject up. I've been thinking about these things for years.

You said, "We are strictly fundamental independent Baptist." That got me to thinking even more, because the Primitive Baptists are strictly fundamental, independent Baptists. The Primitive Baptists proclaim Baptist *fundamentals*, as compared and contrasted to **fundamentalism**, which, while emphasizing the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, the virgin birth and deity of Jesus Christ and His literal bodily resurrection, and other important points, nevertheless ignores many major fundamentals.

I doubt if you remember, but while I was still in Missouri, for a short while I edited a paper called *The Gospel Defence*. In it, on May 16, 1959, I wrote:

The need is plain: If one would be a "Fundamental Baptist," then one must RETURN TO BAPTIST FUNDAMENTALS.

I sent that issue to over eight hundred pastors of fundamentalist churches. That (and my being baptized by the Primitive Baptists) was enough for Mr. V. to bid me never again set foot on his campus for as long as I lived. As you well know, while I did not return to his campus, I did return to Baptist fundamentals, going back to what Baptists were, what Baptists believed, what Baptists taught, preached, and practiced, before there ever was such a thing as a Missionary Baptist. Let's look at something for a minute or two. It will not take much time:

With a little effort, one can trace back a very few hundred years to when virtually all Baptists believed in the all-powerful God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God that sitteth in the heavens, "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou?"

Back then, Baptists believed and preached that all men were born into this natural life spiritually dead in trespasses and sins, totally depraved, at enmity with God, without God, and without hope in this world, unable to do the least thing toward their own salvation, and utterly unconcerned about their desperate situation. If God had left them to their own just damnation, God would not have been the lesser for it. But in His infinite grace, forbearance, longsuffering, mercy, and love, before He ever created this world, He appointed Jesus to be the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. He elected or chose in Christ Jesus a great multitude of these sinners out of every nation, tribe, and tongue. He gave these elect vessels of mercy to Christ Jesus in covenant love. Christ took them as His charge, fulfilled all righteousness on their account, removed their sins as far as the east is from the west, saved them from their sins, announced on the cross, "It is finished," and sealed the covenant with His blood. He arose bodily the third day, and ascended back to the right hand of the Majesty on high where He ever intercedes for His people according to the will of God.

Now, is that what you mean by "preaching and teaching the Lord Jesus"? That is what we mean by it. Is that what you mean by "strictly fundamental"? That is what I mean by it. The things enumerated in the preceding paragraph are only some of the many Biblical, Baptist fundamentals I am talking about. In the better sense of the word, Primitive Baptists *are* the fundamental Baptists.

It is good to know you say, "I am reading the history of the church." Continue to do so, and you will no doubt soon see that the above is correct.

As for being "independent," our churches are independent of any group, organization, board, or central headquarters that would try to control or to dictate policy to any local church or any person. Whenever I hear the word "independent" applied to any group, I always think of what a Primitive Baptist preacher said when he was asked, "What is the difference between the Missionary Baptists and the Primitive Baptists?" He answered, "The Missionary Baptists have an independent people and a dependent God. The Primitive Baptists have an independent God and a dependent people."

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A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES:

The following is an outline of principles the readers of *The Remnant* may expect to see maintained in this publication. Under no circumstances do the publishers or writers for *The Remnant* seek to delineate herein a standard of doctrine or views to be imposed upon the readers. Rather, we set these principles before the readers that they may know what general principles guide our efforts. All attempts at declaring articles of faith will be marred by prejudices and frailty, and ours are by no means any exception.

We believe these principles are, in the main, harmonious with the articles of faith published by predestinarian associations and churches of the old order of Baptists known as Primitive, Particular, or Old School Baptists the world over.

1—The eternal existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence, and perfections of Jehovah God; He has revealed Himself as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and these sacred Three are One; Jesus Christ was and is God manifest in the flesh, and in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

2—The Old and New Testaments in their original languages are the verbally inspired word of God, and they are the complete and only valid guide of faith and practice; the King James Version is the preferred English translation;

3—The will of the eternal God is the first cause of all causes;

4—The absolute predestination of all things;

5—The eternal personal election of the redeemed in Christ, before the world began, and their eternal, vital union with Him; their number is fixed, certain, and sure, and can neither be increased nor diminished; their fall in their federal head Adam into spiritual death, total depravity, and just condemna-

tion; their utter inability to recover themselves from this fallen state;

6—The blood atonement and redemption by Jesus Christ are for the elect only, and are both efficacious and effectual in accomplishing the will and purpose of God to reconcile His people unto Himself;

7—The sovereign, irresistible, effectual work of the Holy Spirit in quickening the elect of God; the new birth is by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit without the use of any means;

8—The final preservation, perseverance, and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace alone;

9—No works are good works other than those which God Himself has so designated; none of the works called good are left up to men to perform or not, at the creature's discretion; nor do the works of the creature, either before or after regeneration, result in merit accruing to his account in God's sight;

10—The peaceable fruits of righteousness are the certain result of God's working in His people both to will and to do of His good pleasure, and His people will be found walking in paths of righteousness for His name's sake;

11—The separation of church and state;

12—The principles outlined in the Black Rock Address of 1832;

13—The bodily resurrection, first of Christ, and also that of all the dead;

14—The final and eternal judgment; and,

15—The bliss of the redeemed and the torment of the wicked are both eternal and everlasting.