

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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THE GOSPEL

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, 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 (1 Corinthians 15.1-4).

I. PRELIMINARY REMARKS

Defining the Gospel

The Bible definition of the gospel is *good news* or *glad tidings*. Webster agrees, but popular sentiment does not. Popular religion presents the gospel not as *good news*, but as what the carnal mind considers to be *good advice*.

There is a twofold problem in this popular understanding, or rather, misunderstanding, of the gospel. This problem is rooted in the world's free-will religious systems, it is thrust upon us by them, and it is not getting any better. It will never go away by itself. The double issue is a misunderstanding of *what the gospel is*, and *what the gospel does*.

This article will present a few observations on what the Bible says the gospel is. Another article in this issue of *The Remnant*, by Elder Silas Durand, discusses the subject of what the gospel does.

The Gospel, or Talking About the Gospel?

When asked what the gospel of Jesus Christ is, many say it is “the power of God unto salvation,” drawing this from Romans 1.16, as though that verse somehow defines the gospel.

“The power of God unto salvation” is not the definition of the gospel. It is an *attribute* of the gospel and not the gospel itself. “Brown-eyed” is an attribute, but it does not define who and what a person is. If one asks, “What is an automobile?” and another answers, “It is the power of a gasoline engine to get you where you want to go,” he would be talking of an attribute of automotive engineering and not defining an automobile. His answer could as easily be applied to an airplane or to a riding lawnmower. In like manner, “the power of God unto salvation” describes the gospel, but it simply does not define it.

Nor is the gospel how you or I *think* the gospel should be defined. The Scriptures, as their own authority, say the gospel is defined by the Scriptures. Since the Scriptures were divinely originated, designed, inspired, and completed by God, nothing can be added to or taken away from their testimony as to exactly what the gospel is.

And preaching about the power of God, as important as that is, is not the gospel. Many sermons based on Romans 1.16 have expounded on God's power, predestination, sovereignty, and His mighty works. As vital as these themes are, they do not constitute preaching the gospel of Christ Jesus. “The power of God unto salvation” could be applied to election, predestination, or even the omniscience of

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* * *

“But our God is in the heavens: He hath done
whatsoever He hath pleased (Psalm 115.3).”

Jesus, as in the case of Zacchaeus in Luke 19: “...And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down...And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house....”. Such is part of *the gospel account*, but it is not *the gospel*. The gospel’s being “the power of God unto salvation” describes the gospel, then, but it does not define it.

When people say that “the gospel is the power of God unto salvation,” multitudes, because they have been mistakenly led to believe it so, think that this phrase means that the power is in the *proclaimed message* of the gospel. Neither Christ, Paul, nor any other apostle implied such a thing.

Most worldly religionists seem to think of “gospel preaching” as being like a salesman’s pitch: The used car salesman tells the virtues of a car and the benefits of owning it. He invites you to try it and buy it; and, hoping you will do so, he then must leave it up to you. Religionists think of the gospel preacher and his message in a similar manner. They in effect say, “The preacher is one who tells the virtues of Christ and the benefits of believing on Him, he invites you to accept Him, and, hoping that you will do so, he must leave it up to you.” Nothing could be much farther from Scriptural truth.

An automobile is one thing, but a used-car salesman’s patter about it is quite something else. If the message were really what gets the job done, everyone who has heard a car salesman’s yarn would be driving in style. Now, we know that this is a natural example, and the gospel is spiritual, as some will be quick to point out to us; but we mention this because multitudes of “evangelical Christians” see no difference between the natural and the spiritual. That is part of the problem mentioned earlier.

Lest anyone think this is an exaggeration, I’m more than happy to share the following quote from someone who knows all about making merchandise of the souls of men:

Evangelist Billy Graham is as much an American Institution as the stars and stripes...In his crusade to spread the gospel, he’s used nearly every technique known to Madison Avenue.

Says Graham: “We are selling the greatest product on earth. Why shouldn’t we promote it as effectively as we promote a bar of soap?”

—*Dallas Times Herald*, April 9, 1963, page 4 (From a *Saturday Evening Post* advertisement promoting a featured article on Mr. Graham in their then current issue.)

The gospel is a set of specific, witnessed, documented, historic facts. It is neither the preaching *of* those facts nor the preaching *about* those facts. True, a gospel preacher identifies and describes those facts, but his preaching is not the same thing as the gospel facts he is describing.

The facts of the gospel, what Christ hath done, are what have accomplished the salvation of God’s people. It is not the proclaiming of those facts as “the gospel message.” It is not as if the work of Christ is “one thing” and the preaching is “the other,” in the standard Arminian sense, “Christ has done His part, but we must do ours.” No, none of that! Regardless of what anyone says or does not say about it, Christ’s gospel is what He *did*, His finished work, period.

Wars have been won, and treaties have been signed, sometimes weeks and months before the soldiers in outposts, or their folks at home, found out the good news. It was an accomplished fact, freedom for a people had been won, sealed in the blood of the dead and the wounded, whether or not some of the participants and beneficiaries, for a time, had heard the blessed news. The hearing of the message, and for that matter, the believing or disbelieving of what one has heard, neither adds to nor takes away from the facts underlying the message. This is true whether it is a message of a war’s ending in victory or the message of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ’s having won the victory.

The gospel as actually defined in our text is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and why He died, and how: *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.*

Paul declared the gospel in this letter to the church at Corinth. He declared the gospel to be the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, for “our” sins (whoever these “our” are, they plainly must

include Paul, or else he could not say “our”); and *all of that* must be according to the Scriptures. Those facts alone, what Christ has done, constitute the gospel. **There is a vital distinction between the gospel and the proclamation of it.** The two are as different as life and *talking* about life, or death and *talking* about death.

Paul said he had previously received it. He says how he received it: “For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1.12).”

“But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood (Galatians 1.15f).”

God *revealed* His Son in Paul (or Saul) on the Damascus Road. He did not *put* His Son in him then. And Saul of Tarsus did not immediately seek out an apostle or a preacher who could explain the gospel to him.

Saul was already a brother, before he was baptized, when he first met with Ananias, who said, “**Brother Saul**, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost (Acts 9.17).” That statement alone dispells the baptismal regeneration error.

Prior to his writing 1 Corinthians to them, Paul had already preached the gospel unto the church in Corinth. They had previously received it. Steeped as the church at Corinth was in Greek philosophy, man’s wisdom was worth nothing to Paul or to the Corinthian church (See 1 Corinthians, the first two chapters). Paul said, “And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.” The testimony of God was the Old Testament.

“For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.” That is the center of the gospel Paul preached.

“And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” In chapter 1 he had already defined “the power of God” as being **Christ Himself** (1.24).

Their standing, Paul says, is in Christ. That means their *legal* standing was innocent and justified before God. All who are in Christ stand before God's judgment bar legally as innocent, just, and pure as Jesus Christ their head.

Those who are saved are saved by the gospel itself; i.e., *they are saved by the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ*. That is the only "gospel salvation" there is. Hearing the gospel preached is the best "good news" sinners will ever hear in this life, but they are neither saved nor regenerated by merely hearing about it. The message of a work accomplished always arrives after the fact. It is finished.

If and Unless? Believing in vain?

Here we must digress a moment, but only because Paul does. He brings up an *if*, an *unless*, and a *believing in vain* as necessary groundwork to his definition of the gospel. They are saved by it, "IF ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, **unless** ye have believed in vain," Paul says. This *if* and *unless* must be addressed before looking into the gospel as Paul defined it a couple of verses later.

1. The IF: *If ye keep in memory what I preached unto you*: This *if* is a **subjective** element related to whether they keep the gospel in their memory or not. *Subjective* means something within the individual, which you or I feel, think, or believe inside ourselves. This is not a conditional *if*; it is a categorical statement. We either have the gospel in our memory, or we do not. Those in the former category are saved. People who do not have the evidence of the gospel imbedded in their memory, Paul in effect says, have no grounds for a hope in Christ.

2. The UNLESS: *Unless ye have believed in vain*: This is an **objective** element. *Objective* means it is outside ourselves, something in the external world that can be observed, measured, documented, and described by any independent observer. It is an historical fact, true whether or not anyone knows of it or believes it.

(There are some who possibly have not considered how essential the differences are between our objective relation *to* the gospel and our subjective understanding *of* it. Rather than digress further here, this subject is addressed in a short piece immediately following this article.)

3. The BELIEVING IN VAIN: Those who teach that "saved" people can lose their salvation might say this verse proves their point. It does nothing of the sort. Such short-sighted Arminians would do well to read the next dozen verses or so.

What could make our believing to be in vain? Paul explains later in this chapter: "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: **And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain** (verses 13-14)." The bodily resurrection, then, is a necessary part of the gospel; without the resurrection, there is no gospel, and if there is no gospel, believers have believed in vain. That is what Paul has said.

For I delivered unto you first of all: When Paul first went to Corinth, He proclaimed **Christ the power of God** and the wisdom of God (1.24). "Preaching" was not proclaimed to be the power of God, as important as preaching is in God's economy of grace; "the Scriptures" are not the power of God, as important as they are. **Christ Jesus, Himself alone, is the power of God. What He did in His death, burial, and resurrection is the power of God unto salvation.**

That which I also received: One receives things actively or passively. For example: Under God's providence, you might actively go to the grocery store where you actively gather your goods, you actively take them to the checkout stand, you actively unload them, you actively pay for them. Then you actively take them from the clerk and actively take them home. That is *not* how Paul received the gospel.

How, then, did he receive the gospel? It was *delivered* to him, even as he had delivered it to this church, verse 3. Remember: Those groceries might also be passively received by delivery to one's home.

"For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Here, he expressly denies the theory that says he was present at Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2), and therefore "the seed was planted" at that time. He may have been one who heard Peter preach on the day of Pentecost, or he may not; the Scriptures seem to be silent on this point. Even if he was there, however, that is not how he received the gospel. "For I neither received it **of man**, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

To clarify the fact that the gospel came by direct revelation and he did not learn it from the other apostles, he told the brethren of Galatia, "...immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus (Galatians 1.16f)."

Further, when he did go up to Jerusalem, fourteen years later, to confer with the apostles, he went up **by revelation**, and it was not to check with them to see if he was preaching the gospel properly. Instead, he said, I "communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles (Galatians 2.2)."

That which Paul had received, then, was the gospel, of which he now speaks directly.

II. THE GOSPEL PAUL PREACHED

Paul now picks up on his opening phrase, *Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel...how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.*

A. ...Christ....

Christ is not a name; it is a title. *Christ* comes from the same root as our word *christen*. *Christ* is His title, *Messiah* in the Hebrew, *anointed* in English.

Jesus Christ was not the only one who was ever anointed. He was, however, the only one who was THE anointed of God, THE Messiah, THE Christ, in this special sense.

Prophets, priests, and kings were all anointed with a specially prepared, holy, anointing oil. "Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha...shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room (1 Kings 19.16)." "...the high priest, which was anointed with the holy oil (Numbers 25.35. See also Leviticus 4.5, 21.10, etc.)." Priests, prophets, and kings were anointed with this holy oil as a public dedication, a symbol of the Holy Spirit of God having placed them in their respective offices. Before man secularized these three services, prophets, priests, and kings were spiritual offices appointed of God to administer both earthly and spiritual affairs in accordance with His laws.

Oil in the Scriptures always typifies the Holy Spirit. To miss this point, or to misapply it, is to miss a major biblical type. It is not merely a figure of

grace. It is only partly true that God's grace (as well as many other gifts and graces) accompanies His anointing of a person. The anointing itself, however, as typified by the oil, is nothing less than the Holy Spirit, the third person of the triune Godhead.

The Christ's name is Jesus. It is proper to refer to Jesus as THE Christ, as was done in the New Testament gospels no less than nineteen times, by Himself or by others. "Thou art **the Christ**, the Son of the living God (Matthew 16.16)." "Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus **the Christ** (Matthew 16.20)." "...tell us whether thou be **the Christ**...(Matthew 26.63)." "We have found **the Messias** [Messiah], which is, being interpreted, **the Christ** (John 1.41)." "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this **the Christ** (John 4.29)?" "...this is indeed **the Christ**, the Saviour of the world (John 4.42)." "She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art **the Christ**, the Son of God, which should come into the world (John 11.27)."

It must be this man, the God-man, the Christ of God (Luke 9.20), and no other. And to be **the** gospel of Christ, THE Christ of the gospel must be described and identifiable in the Scriptures.

According to the Scriptures, He is the seed of the woman; that is, He was virgin-born (Isaiah 7.14), the one who would bruise that old serpent's head (Genesis 3.15). He is the seed of Abraham, in whom all the families of the earth are blessed (Genesis 28.14). Paul verifies this in Galatians 3.16: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

According to the Scriptures, He was the one whose day Abraham rejoiced to see on Mount Moriah as a vicarious replacement for his only son, Isaac (John 8.56, Genesis 22.14). He is the promised seed of Isaac (Genesis 21.12). He is the seed of Judah, known typically as Shiloh (Genesis 49.10). He is the seed of David, prophesied to occupy David's throne (Psalm 89.29, 36; 132.11).

B. ...died....

It was necessary for Christ to die in order to save His people from their sins by His death. Death is forever associated with sin. From Genesis, "...for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die

(Genesis 2.17)” to “the soul that sinneth, it shall die (Ezekiel 18.4, 20)” to “For the wages of sin is death (Romans 6.23)” to Revelation, “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is **the second death** (Revelation 21.8),” literally from Genesis to Revelation, sin is associated with death. By God’s own dictum, either the individual sinner must himself die, or else, as stipulated by Jehovah Himself, the sinner must be covered by an acceptable death in his law room and stead.

Untold thousands of bulls, heifers, goats, rams, and lambs were sacrificed by a priest’s slitting their throats, draining their blood unto the death, and burning their carcasses on an altar. The blood was then sprinkled in the Holy of Holies on the mercy seat. It was a *mercy* seat only for the sinner covered and protected by the blood; there was no mercy for the innocent sacrifices, all of which typified the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. There was no mercy for Him.

He died a literal, sacrificial death, as surely as died every Old Testament lamb, ram, bull, heifer, and goat that was ever sacrificed to Jehovah.

Enemies of the gospel of Christ say He merely swooned due to shock and the loss of blood; he simply lost consciousness, lapsing into a coma, and he recuperated in the coolness of the tomb. They tell it as if all a crucified man with His heart speared needed was a few days of unattended bed rest on a stone slab. These modernists cannot get a Savior born, for they deny as impossible His virgin birth. They cannot get Him dead, for they say He only fainted from trauma and loss of blood. They cannot get Him resurrected, because they say the resurrection of His body was a physical impossibility. They say, then, He was a liar, an imposter, deluded, the illegitimate son of an experienced young Hebrew woman and a Roman soldier. They say He claimed to be virgin-born to cover His mother’s disgrace and His own resulting stigma. They deny His deity, His virgin birth, His miracles, His wisdom, much of His preaching, His death, His resurrection, His bodily ascension to the right hand of the majesty on high, and His infinite, eternal power. From before His birth to after His

resurrection, they deny all He stands for, yet somehow they find it within their blasphemous hearts to say He was “a good man” and to call Him “the Savior of mankind.”

No, the gospel accounts say He gave up the ghost. I had rather take the word of God-inspired eyewitnesses who were there and observed His death and resurrection than to take the word of the unbelieving modern Sadducees who were *not* there, who did *not* see what happened, and who do not believe the gospel records:

1. Matthew: “Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost (Matthew 27.50).” “Yielded up the ghost” means, in modern terms, He sent away (Greek, *aphiemi*) His soul (Greek, *pneuma*), that life principle which animates the body of flesh. It did not “go,” or “leave,” *as though* He could no longer retain it. By an act of His sovereign will He dismissed His soul and His spirit, sending them away from the body God had prepared Him. Before He did this, He was alive; after He did this, His fleshly body was dead.

2. Mark: “And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost (Mark 15.37).” Mark uses a single word, *ekpneo*, different from that of Matthew. *Ek*, from which we get *exit*, and *pneo*, a form of *pneuma*, breath or spirit. *Pneo* is to forcibly blow or exhale. He blew out His breath and quit breathing. That is death.

3. Luke: “And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, He gave up the ghost (Luke 23.46).” Luke, the beloved physician (Colossians 4.14), uses the exact same word as Mark did, *Ekpneo*.

4. John: “When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost (John 19.30).” “Gave” here is a common Greek word (*paradidomi*), translated into the English Bible as *delivered*, *committed*, or *betrayed*. It is perhaps ironic that the same word is often used for what Judas did, and the double use makes it all the clearer as to what it means. Judas wanted his thirty pieces of silver. Just pointing Jesus out to the mob would not do. To get the money, he actually had to turn Jesus over to the authorities, to get Him safely committed and delivered into their

hands, before he qualified for his evil reward. And when Jesus “gave up the ghost,” the word likewise means He safely committed and delivered His soul into His Father’s hands for safe keeping.

5. The Centurion: Do not forget the testimony of this man who was the commander of one hundred soldiers in the Roman army (for that is what a centurion was). By this fact alone we know he was no novice in his profession. Veteran as he was of countless battles, he should know whether a man was dead or not. He it was who either his own self plunged the spear into the heart of Jesus or had it done at his command. He saw the coagulated blood-clot and serum issue forth. There were not two or more commander-centurions present that day in order to execute three men. This centurion took “a few good men” to hold their victims down, nail them to their respective trees, and hoist them to the vertical. It was no big thing to these battle-hardened men to thus torture and kill condemned men; and these Roman soldiers knew death when they saw it. Death was their occupation.

Joseph of Arimathaea “went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus,” Mark says. “And Pilate marvelled if He were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether He had been any while dead. And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph (Mark 15.43. ff).” Pilate could not believe the young Nazarene who had stricken terror in his heart that morning could be dead by crucifixion by mid-afternoon. He called his expert witness, the captain of the guard, whose testimony was so important. Pilate asked him “whether He had been any while dead.” He did not believe Joseph, but he “**knew** it of the centurion” before delivering the body for burial.

C. ...for OUR sins....

If there is anything plain to the God-blessed reader of the Scriptures, it is that Christ has a specific people, He died for them alone, and His death in their place is acceptable unto God the Father and effectual to them.

There was never a generalized atonement or sacrifice made on behalf of all men and nations. Abel’s sacrifice, a firstling of his flock, availed for himself but not for Cain. On the first Passover, each

family’s firstborn was protected by their own, individual, specific lamb. There was no lamb slain universally, offered to Israelites and Egyptians alike, if they would only accept it. In the Old Testament, offerings were always offered to God. God is never represented as offering love, salvation, grace, a chance, or anything else to the sinner.

The gospel is not “Christ died for sins.” It is not “Christ died for you.” Nowhere does any prophet or apostle say indiscriminately, “Christ loves you,” “God loves you,” or “Christ died for you” to a general audience. The gospel is never “Christ died for **your** sins,” but it entails exactly *how that Christ died for **our** sins according to the Scriptures*. Whoever is included in the **our** along with Paul must be defined by the Old Testament Scriptures, or it is not the gospel. Then, in order to have the true gospel, (1) *Christ*, (2) *died*, (3) *our* and (4) *sins* must all be defined according to the Old Testament Scriptures. Man’s idealistic and often hypocritical “love for mankind,” his desire to offer salvation to all, and his hatred of sovereign election are all part of a false and perverted gospel.

D. ...according to the Scriptures....

The Scriptures, of course, are the Old Testament Scriptures, as the New Testament was only being written when Paul penned these verses to the church at Corinth. Today, the term *Scriptures* includes the New Testament. When Paul penned these words, he was saying the Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures are sufficient to define the gospel of Christ.

The proclamation of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, in order to be His gospel, must be proclaimed according to the Hebrew Scriptures and not according to traditions, wishes, human reasoning, or gushy emotion.

1. The Scriptures tell us **what** the gospel of Christ is: This encompasses the whole of what Jesus the Lord did in saving His people.

2. The Scriptures tell us **who** would die for our sins: We have before seen that it must be the virgin-born Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, the Son of man, the Son of God, His anointed one, who must be the one who thus dies for sins.

“The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and

against His *anointed*, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us (Psalm 2.2f).”

“Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath *anointed* thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows (Psalm 45.7).”

“But thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine *anointed* (Psalm 89.38).”

3. The Scriptures tell us **why** Christ died; it was for “our” sins: “For the **transgression** of my people was he stricken (Isaiah 53.8).” “thou shalt make **his soul an offering for sin** (Isaiah 53.10).”

4. The Scriptures tell us **when** Christ would die for our sins: “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks...And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself...(Daniel 9.25f).” We cannot here go into Daniel’s weeks, which would take us too far from the subject at hand. For now it is enough to say, the time element of these “weeks” proved correct *to the very day*; such is the wonder of God’s predestination as verified by fulfilled prophecy. Daniel’s **Messiah** in Hebrew is the **Christos** in Greek, brought directly into the English as “Christ.” The Christ/Messiah, whatever the language, is **the** anointed of God, Jesus of Nazareth.

The Christ/Messiah, then, would be cut off, but *not for Himself*, the text in Daniel says. Amazing grace. If he did not die for Himself, then He must have been cut off for, or because of, someone else. If He were not dying for His own sins, of which He had none, then Daniel confirms that He died for the same ones Paul said He died for: “**our** sins.”

5. The Scriptures tell us **how** Christ would die for our sins: “His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men... despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief... stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her

shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth... Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin... He shall see of the travail of His soul... He hath poured out His soul unto death: and He was numbered with the transgressors (Isaiah 52, 53).”

“I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting (Isaiah 50).”

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.” “All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, ‘He trusted on the LORD that He would deliver Him: let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him.’” “I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture (Psalm 22).”

“I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away... Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink (Psalm 69).”

“I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people... thou hast profaned His crown by casting it to the ground. Thou hast broken down all His hedges; thou hast brought His strong holds to ruin. All that pass by the way spoil Him: He is a reproach to His neighbours. Thou hast set up the right hand of His adversaries; thou hast

made all His enemies to rejoice. Thou hast also turned the edge of His sword, and hast not made Him to stand in the battle. Thou hast made His glory to cease, and cast His throne down to the ground. The days of His youth hast thou shortened: thou hast covered Him with shame (Psalm 89)."

6. The Scriptures tell us **where** Christ would die for our sins: Mount Moriah was just to the north of the ancient city of **Salem** where Melchisedec met Abraham (Genesis 14). The name of Salem, the ancient fortress city in the land of the Jebusites, through the centuries gradually was changed from **Salem** to Jebu-Salem (as "Salem of the **Jebusites**"), to **Jeru-Salem** to **Jerusalem**. Abraham, referring to Mount Moriah, "called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen." *Moriah* means, "Seen of Jehovah." *Jehovah-jireh* means, "Jehovah will see to it"! It was on this very same mountainside, just outside the northern walls of old Jerusalem, where Jesus the antitype was crucified about two thousand years after Abraham.

7. The Scriptures tell us **for whom**, or exactly who the "our" is for whose sins Christ died: He died for **our** sins, Paul says, according to the Scriptures. Everywhere Jesus Christ is represented as having *a specific people, His elect body*, known collectively as His church. "...thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save **his people** from **their** sins (Matthew 1.21)." Nowhere is His sacrifice represented as being a generally universal sacrifice so as to include the reprobates (that is, any of those not His elect or chosen people). Abel's firstling of the flock was specifically for Abel himself, alone, individually, and not for Cain. Abraham's sacrificial ram was for Isaac, not for Ishmael. The Paschal lamb was for the Israelites, not the Egyptians, Moabites, or Canaanites. The sacrifices in the tabernacle and the temple were for Israel, not for any of the nations round about.

"By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify **many**; for he shall bear **their** iniquities (Isaiah 53.11)."

"For as by one man's [Adam's] disobedience many [those in Adam] were made sinners, so by the obedience of one [Christ] shall **many** [those in Christ] be made righteous (Romans 5.19)." "For as in Adam all die, even so **in Christ shall all** be made alive (1 Corinthians 15.22)."

"For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, **even as many as the Lord our God shall call** (Acts 2.39)."

"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for **many** for the remission of sins (Matthew 26.28)."

"As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth **thy prisoners** out of the pit wherein is no water. Turn you to the strong hold, **ye prisoners of hope** (Zechariah 9.11f)."

"Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, *to take out of them a people* for His name (Acts 15.14)." Note that James did not say "the apostles visited the Gentiles to take the world for Christ."

"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and **as many as were ordained to eternal life** believed (Acts 13.48)."

"...at that time **thy people** shall be delivered, **every one that shall be found written in the book** (Daniel 12.1)."

"For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing **many sons** unto glory, to make the captain of **their** salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He that sanctifieth and **they who are sanctified** are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them **brethren**, saying, I will declare thy name unto **my brethren**, in the midst of **the church** will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in Him. And again, Behold I and **the children which God hath given me**. Forasmuch then as **the children** are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same... (Hebrews 2.10-14)."

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed **us** with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as He hath **chosen us** in Him before the foundation of the world, that **we** should be holy and without blame before Him in love: having predestinated **us** unto the adoption of **children** by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath **made us** accepted in the beloved. In whom **we** have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace (Ephesians 1.3-7)."

The name of the LORD is a strong tower: **the righteous** runneth into it, and is safe (Proverbs 18.10).

“He sent redemption unto **His people**: He hath commanded His covenant for ever: holy and reverend is His name (Psalm 111.9).”

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved **the church**, and gave Himself for **it**; that He might sanctify and cleanse **it** with the washing of water by the word, that He might present **it** to Himself a glorious **church**, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that **it** should be holy and without blemish (Ephesians 5.25ff).”

“I am the good shepherd, and know **my sheep**, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for **the sheep**. And **other sheep I have**, which are not of this fold: **them** also I must bring, and **they** shall hear my voice; and there shall be **one fold**, and one shepherd (John 10.14ff).”

“Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of **thy** people, thou hast covered all **their** sin. Selah (Psalm 85.2).”

“Know ye that the LORD He is God: it is He that hath made **us**, and not we ourselves; **we are His people**, and **the sheep** of His pasture (Psalm 100.3).”

“For this shall **every one that is godly** pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found (Psalm 32.6).”

“And they sung 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).”

“Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be **a worshipper of God, and doeth His will**, him He heareth (John 9.31).” (This is a rough text for those who advocate having “unsaved” people pray “the sinner’s prayer,” because the ones whom God hears are already viewed in Christ as obedient worshipers of God!)

“I pray for **them**: I pray not for the world, but for **them which thou hast given me**; for **they** are thine (John 17.9).”

“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to **all the flock**, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed **the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood**. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves

enter in among you, not sparing **the flock** (Acts 20.28f).” Universalists believe Christ purchased the wolves as surely as He did the sheep of His flock.

“All we like **sheep** have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of **us all** (Isaiah 53.6).”

“for He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of **my people** was He stricken (Isaiah 53.8).”

To summarize this point, the people for whom Christ died, and to whom the gospel of Christ is good news, are called His (God’s or Christ’s) people, many, those in Christ, as many as the Lord our God shall call, God’s prisoners, prisoners of hope, a people for His name, as many as were ordained to eternal life, those written in the book; many sons, of whom Christ is the captain of their salvation; those who are sanctified, brethren, Christ’s brethren, the church, the children God gave to Christ, the righteous, His body, His sheep, thy (God’s) people, the redeemed, worshipers of God, those who do His will, all the flock, the church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood, and many similar names and designations. Each of these specific names and titles implies the exclusion of those not included in such a name and title, or else such language is worse than useless; it would be utterly misleading. “His people” implies the exclusion of all who are not His people. “His sheep” excludes all who are not His sheep. “His body” excludes all who are not His body, and so forth.

8. The Scriptures tell us **how long** His body would be dead: “Then **on the third day** Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place **afar off** (Genesis 22.4).”

It was not “parts of three days.” As they traveled for three days and three nights, in Abraham’s mind and purpose his only begotten son was as good as dead, in a figure: “Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure (Hebrews 11.19).” This is not some preacher’s fancifully making up “types and shadows”; it is the inspired apostle who tells us Isaac was a God-given Old Testament *figure* of Him who was to come.

Moses was to tell Pharaoh: “The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days’ journey into the wilderness,

that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God (Exodus 3.18).” For three days the sacrifice was to be “as good as dead.”

Jesus said, “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth (Matthew 12.40).” How long was Jonah in the whale’s belly, according to the Scriptures? “And Jonah was in the belly of the fish **three days and three nights** (Jonah 1.17).”

E. ...and that He was buried....

He was buried on Wednesday at sundown, and He stayed in the grave for three full nights and three full days, rising again just after Sabbath sundown on the first day of the week. His burial was proof of His death. No man could have survived the bloody ordeal He endured, being cut, bruised, lacerated, mangled from head to foot, stabbed in the heart, and then bound and constricted, mummy-like, and placed in the tomb.

Where do the Scriptures confirm He was buried three days? We cite one place only, as confirmed by Jesus Himself: “Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights (Jonah 1.17).” “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly;” Jesus said, “so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth (Matthew 12.40).”

F. ...and that He rose again the third day....

1. His resurrection was unquestionable: “...also He showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God (Acts 1.3).”

2. His resurrection was bodily and physical: If it were not so, it would not be a true resurrection. *Resurrection* means *a standing up again*. What is it that stands in this life, but the body? The body that lies down in death must stand up again, or there is no resurrection.

3. His resurrection was documented by a great number of witnesses: “He was seen of Cephas [Peter], then of the twelve: after that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are

fallen asleep. After that, He was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time (1 Corinthians 15.5ff).”

4. His resurrection was according to the Scriptures: When Isaiah said, “When thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand (Isaiah 53.10,” the phrase “He shall prolong His days” is a reference to His resurrection. “For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore (Psalm 16.10f)” is a prophecy of His resurrection, quoted by Peter on the day of Pentecost (See Acts 2.24-35).

G. ...according to the Scriptures....

This has been addressed above. Yet, because it is so vital, Paul reiterates it here. In the book of Hebrews, Paul does what we cannot do here: He fully develops all details of the atonement of Christ, both in prophecy and in the types, shadows, and figures according to the Hebrew Scriptures.

After His resurrection, Christ emphasized the Scriptural prophecies of His death, burial, and resurrection: “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?” And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. (Luke 24.25f).” “These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in **the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms**, concerning me (Luke 24.44).” The phrase, “the law, the prophets, and the Psalms” actually includes all of the books of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Peter emphasized it: “Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it [He, i.e., the Holy Spirit] testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow (1 Peter 1.10f).”

Summary

The texts cited in this article are in no way presented as being all that the Bible has to say about the gospel of Christ. Rather, they are only representative of it. To quote all the proof-texts, one would literally need to reproduce the entire Bible. “Then said I, Lo, I come: **in the volume of the book it is written of me**, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart (Psalm 40.7f).”

After that, it would be necessary to reproduce all of the biblical types and figures where a man and a woman typify Christ and His church (Adam and Eve, Isaac and Rebecca, Boaz and Ruth, Hosea and Gomer, to name a few); for they all tell *how that Christ died for our sins*.

After that, we would need to consider all of the sacrificial offerings, from when God Himself skinned the first innocent animal sacrifice to clothe His children (see Genesis 3.21, where “coats of skins” in the Hebrew is literally “*shirts, garments, or robes of hide or leather*”), to Abel’s firstling, the ram for Isaac, and all the complex Levitical sacrifices, for they all tell *how that Christ died for our sins*.

After that, we would need to address all the other types, such as **the manna** (“Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead....I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever...,” John 6), **the Rock** (“...that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ,” 1 Corinthians 10.4), **the Stone** (Daniel 2.34, Psalm 118.22, Matthew 21.42, etc.), **the eagle** (Exodus 19.4, Deuteronomy 32.11ff, Proverbs 30.19, *et al*), and multitudes of other types that show forth *how that Christ died for our sins*.

The gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the most precious thing we will ever hear in time and in eternity. Whosoever perverts it invites a divine curse upon himself: “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed (Galatians 1.8).”

The Lord meant exactly what He said on the cross when He said, “It is finished.” May He bless us to rest only in His completed work.

—C. C. Morris

OBJECTIVE OR SUBJECTIVE?

A Scriptural example might help to clarify the important distinction between our objective relationship to the gospel and our subjective understanding of it.

Jacob’s sons, who had sold Joseph into slavery, led their father to believe Joseph had been killed by a wild beast. Jacob, upon seeing Joseph’s coat drenched in blood, said, “It is my son’s coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.” And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, “For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning.” Thus his father wept for him (Genesis 37.31-35).

Years later, word was brought to the elderly Jacob that his son was alive and was now a powerful ruler in Egypt. His sons “told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob’s heart fainted, for he believed them not. And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived: And Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die (Genesis 45.25-28).” Joseph “went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while (Genesis 46.29).”

Now, the **objective** facts were these: Joseph’s brothers sold him into Egyptian slavery; they then presented their father with Joseph’s blood-soaked coat. By their words and deeds, they misled their father into thinking Joseph was dead, slain by a wild beast. Jacob mourned uncontrollably. These are the observable facts as reported by Moses when he wrote the book of Genesis, but they are so *objective*, specific, and documented that they could have been broadcast by any reporter on the evening news.

The **subjective** facts, as far as Jacob was concerned, were these: At the first, he was panic-stricken; he did not know the situation of his son, whether he was alive or dead; he did not know the future, whether he would or would not ever find out

that Joseph was alive. Assuming the worst, he was filled with doubts, fears, worries, and panic. Later, incredulous, he at first did not believe the good news when he was told that his son was alive and well. Still later, when he was convinced by the new evidence (“when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him”), he then was joyful, relieved, happy. Finally, when he was happily reunited with Joseph, Jacob wept tears of rejoicing.

Doubts, fears, worries, joy, relief, happiness; these are all **subjective** reactions that do not affect the actual objective truth of what has happened. In sum, **objectiveness** has to do with external **facts**, while **subjectiveness** has to do with our inner reactions to, and our opinions (right or wrong) about, our perception of the facts. Jacob’s believing Joseph had been killed, and his later not believing he was alive, did not at all change the objective fact that Joseph was alive.

In applying these principles to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, a number of points must be made:

1. The objective facts as they actually happened did not change, no matter how temporarily ignorant Jacob was about the facts. Joseph was really sold, Jacob really believed an untruth, and finally they were truly reunited.

2. Everything that happened was objectively true, whether for a time Jacob subjectively knew of it or not, or understood it or not, or believed it or not.

3. Suppose, for argument’s sake, upon his hearing the lie about Joseph’s death, terror hit Jacob with such severity that he immediately died of a heart attack. That would not in the least change any of the objective facts of Joseph’s being alive. Objective facts are still as true, if they are never observed or reported, as they would be if they were reported to all the Adamic race. We feel we are safe in saying that there are truths which no one except God Himself knows. They are just as true, objectively speaking, as if they were common knowledge to all mankind.

4. We say again, then: Objective facts are events that may be observed and reported independently of beliefs and feelings, doubts and fears. These, beliefs and feelings, doubts and fears, are our sometimes ill-conceived subjective reactions to the objective events as we react to them.

5. Hope, faith, belief, doubt, fear, love, and all other thoughts, emotions, beliefs, and opinions are subjective. They can be imitated or professed, but

subjective emotions cannot be proved or measured. We look for proof, but that proof can only come in the form of objective actions. At best this proof is in the form of what the court systems of our land call “circumstantial evidence.”

A man may tell a woman he loves her—a subjective thing, this love. How does she know for sure? Perhaps she will never *certainly* know. But he demonstrates his love for her by outwardly observable objective actions—his attention to her, his being with her as much as he can, his showering her with gifts, and his attempting to fulfil her wishes.

A man may say he believes in Christ. Belief is both subjective and unprovable, even to the believer himself. Therefore, we are bid to “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves (2 Corinthians 13.5)” and to “...give diligence to make your calling and election sure (2 Peter 1.10)” —sure, not to God who knows His own, but to our own selves.

Men look for objective evidence of a subjective faith in a professed believer: Is Christ this man’s Lord? How does he demonstrate it? Is the man willing to follow the Lord in baptism? Does he frequent the church and give outward evidence of inward love of God and joy at hearing the gospel?

The objective facts of the gospel are what Christ has accomplished: *how 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*. These facts do not change.

Our relationship to those facts do change, as we are given the spiritual inner gifts of belief, repentance, and faith.

“For unto you it is **given** in the behalf of Christ, not only **to believe** on Him...(Philippians 1.29).”

“Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for **to give repentance** to Israel, and forgiveness of sins (Acts 5.31).” “When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles **granted repentance** unto life (Acts 11.18).”

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, **faith**...(Galatians 5.22).” “For by grace are ye saved through **faith**; and that not of yourselves: **it is the gift of God**...(Ephesians 2.8).”

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article was written over one hundred and twenty years ago by Elder Silas H. Durand, one of the editors who succeeded Elder Gilbert Beebe at the *Signs of the Times*. Elder Durand was also the co-publisher of the Durand-Lester Hymnbook. This article is from *Meditations on Portions of the Word*, a compilation of his editorial writings. It shows exactly what the brethren of the nineteenth century believed about the important subject of the utility of the gospel.

TO WHOM IS THE GOSPEL PREACHED?

Many who are evidently children of God believe that the gospel is preached to those dead in sin for the purpose of quickening them; that the Lord uses the ministry of the word as the ordinary means of bringing his people from death to life. I believe this to be an error, and, like all error, it tends to the discomfort of those among the living family of God who embrace it.

Throughout the Scriptures, living souls are designated as the subjects of gospel address. "He hath annointed me to preach the gospel to the poor;" Luke, iv, 18. "The poor have the gospel preached to them;" Matt., xi, 5. "Children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth the Lord, to you is the word of this salvation sent;" Acts, xiii, 26. "Ho, every one that thirsteth;" Isa., lv, 1. "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;" Rom., 1, 16. All these, the poor, those who fear God, the thirsty, and the believer, are living characters. But when it is said that to such only is the gospel sent, then some will assume that we believe that the minister must be careful to select those whom he knows to be the elect, and speak only to them. The apostles, whom the Savior sent "into all the world," that is, among Gentile nations as well as to the Jews, could not know the elect, until they were manifest by believing the gospel which they preached. They proclaimed the gospel, the glad tidings of salvation, wherever a door was opened in providence, to all that came within the sound of their voice; and so do all the ministers of Jesus Christ. But none

hear it spiritually but those who have spiritual ears; none believe it but those who have faith to believe. Some say it is to be preached to those without faith. In a literal sense, this is true, but not in order to produce faith in them, but to separate from among them those who have faith. Paul tells of some unto whom the gospel was preached, who were not profited by it, because they had no faith; Heb., iv, 2.

If one should be sent with a message from a king to all his subjects in a certain distant land, he would not have to inquire out those subjects before delivering it; for the message itself, proclaimed openly among all the people, would find out those in whose native language it was delivered, and thus distinguish them from among all the multitudes as the ones unto whom it was sent. So the gospel is a message of glad tidings, sent in the language of Canaan, and though proclaimed among all people, none hear and understand but those who have been born of God. Unto these he "has turned a pure language," and by hearing and believing that Sweet message, they are manifest as those unto whom it was sent by the Great King. These are new creatures in Christ, unto all of whom the gospel is preached.

The Savior said to his apostles, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." The expression, "every creature," is acknowledged by all to have a limited meaning. Unlimited, it would embrace the animal creation. But all must acknowledge that it is still further limited, for it could not include infants and those not literally capable of hearing and understanding. This shows that the preaching of the gospel is not necessary to eternal salvation, as some ignorantly imagine, for infants of days, removed from this world, sing in glory through Jesus Christ our Savior. But of those who are capable of hearing and understanding naturally, how very few have ever heard the literal sound of the gospel. If, then, we understand the Savior's command to the apostles to be that they should preach the gospel to every one of the race of Adam, who was capable of hearing and understanding the words, we must conclude that his command has not been obeyed, and that the will of God has not been done. But this can not be, for many scriptures declare that all of his will is done in heaven and on earth that "whatsoever his soul desireth even that he doeth." Also, he declared that "The poor have the gospel preached to

them.” And an inspired apostle has said that this gospel of the kingdom was preached to every creature which is under heaven; Col., i, 23. It has been asserted that the expression, “every creature,” as used by the apostle, does not mean the same as when used by the Savior. But to prove this assertion, the very point in controversy is assumed. It is said that the apostle could not have meant that the Savior’s command was fulfilled, because the gospel had not then been preached very far from the Mediterranean Sea. But the apostle is authority for believing the gospel was preached to every creature which is under heaven in that age, and has been ever since, in full obedience to the Savior’s command, which embraced every creature only in a spiritual sense, every one who is created in Jesus Christ. These only have ears to hear, and the Savior said, Let them hear. These only hunger and thirst after righteousness, and the Savior said, They shall be filled. These only are poor in spirit, and the Savior said, “Unto the poor the gospel is preached.”

How often it is said that the preaching of the gospel is the means of quickening dead sinners. But it is not so said in the Bible. Our Savior said, “As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whomsoever he will.” And again, “It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing.” And again, “The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.” “Yes,” it is replied, “this is true, but the Spirit sends that life or quickening power through the preaching of the word; the dead hear the voice of the Son of God in the gospel, believe and live.” A little more thoughtful attention would cause them to reverse the order of those words, remembering that life must precede both hearing and believing. And in considering all the scriptures, which are presented to sustain the idea that the preaching is instrumental in bringing the dead to life, such as the command to teach all nations, and the apostles’ obedience to that command, and the declaration that many hearing the preaching believed, we must bear in mind that none but the living can be taught, or can believe.

There are no instances recorded where eternal life is said to have been communicated through the preaching of the gospel. But there are instances

where it is known to have been possessed by those who had not heard the preaching by human lips, as the eunuch, the jailor, Saul of Tarsus, and Cornelius with all his house; and in the case of Lydia the power of God is expressly declared as preparing her to attend the things spoken, while Paul was preaching. In my mind, this is expressly to teach that the preaching, and the preparation to hear and receive the preaching, are to be considered as distinct from each other. It was not said that the Lord opened Lydia’s heart through Paul’s preaching. I must, therefore, believe that not only in some, but in all cases, spiritual life is communicated before there is power to hear and believe, instead of being given through and by the hearing. The life must precede the hearing, though it be but for an instant.

It is very often the case that condemnation on account of sin is first felt when not under the sound of preaching, and often by those that never heard the truth preached. Also deliverance from that condemnation is experienced most generally, perhaps, when the poor soul is in secret, trying to cry and beg for mercy. Now, the preaching of the gospel can be heard and understood by that one. If he has sat under the sound of it before, it now has a new sound. It tells what he has felt. He believes because he has the witness in his own heart to prove the truth of what the preacher says. It is to him the power of God unto salvation, because that power has been experienced within him. “This gospel of the kingdom,” the Savior said, “must be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come;” Matt., xxiv, 14. This was done before the apostles had fully finished their work in declaring the end of that dispensation, and establishing the gospel church in all its order in obedience to the command of Christ. Must be preached, not to quicken dead sinners, but for a witness, manifesting those unto whom the dear Savior has communicated eternal life and the glad tidings of salvation. The preacher can tell no one any thing which has not already been taught him by that anointing, which he has received of Jesus, and which teaches of all things; I John, ii, 27. And it is only concerning the work of God’s grace and his power unto salvation, experienced in the heart, that any one is fed with knowledge and understanding by the pastors after God’s

own heart, whom he sends unto them. It is supposed by some, that "Feed my sheep" is not the limit of the Savior's command to the apostles, and of the apostle's directions to ministers; that when Paul said to Timothy, "Preach the word," he opened up a larger field of labor, than when he said to the elders of Ephesus, "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." But did the apostles or ministers ever preach any thing in obedience to his command but the truth as it is in Jesus? And is not every part of that truth always the food which is to be ministered to the sheep and lambs, to the church of God? Did any one but the sheep ever profit by the preaching of the gospel? Then it must be acknowledged that neither apostle nor prophet can go beyond the command given to Peter, "Feed my lambs."

To speak of the Lord using means and instrumentalities to bring his people from death to life, appears to me derogatory to his majesty and power. It seems like limiting the Holy One of Israel. Although many who believe this would not limit him, but wish to honor his name. If such a thing were expressly declared in the Scriptures that would settle it as the truth, but since it is not, it is always an inference. In defending the doctrine of means, one says, "The tool of the mechanic will of itself never accomplish any thing, yet in all the mechanic's purposes the tool and its uses are included." And with this he illustrates how he supposes the gospel ministry has been appointed by God as instruments to be used in severing the stones from the rocks, and in building up the church. But the mechanic is dependent upon the tool. Is the Lord dependent upon the ministry to do that work? The very thought is limiting him. I know it is said that he has ordained the means with the end. But when the Bible talks that way, I will receive it. He has ordained everything, in a certain absolute sense. Nothing transpires but is in accordance with his eternal purpose. He has chosen to feed his people by the hand of poor sinners saved by grace, but he does not speak of them as means and instrumentalities. This is the inference of men, and is calculated to make them appear of some importance. And generally the means are said to be in men's hands, as though the Lord worked by means, but men used the means. He works in

and through them by his controlling and directing Spirit, causing them to preach in such a way that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of man. But not to give life through them or through their preaching.

The same author just alluded to, speaks of the ram's horns as the means by which the walls of Jericho fell down, and implies that the preaching of the gospel is thus represented as the means of quickening dead sinners. But Paul, in presenting the truth concerning this subject, does not even allude to the blowing of the ram's horns, but says, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were compassed about seven days." One might reply that faith enabled them to use the means. Then we must refer to some of the other examples which the apostle gives in the same connection of the character and power of faith to see if this is to be so understood. "By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death." "By faith women received their dead raised to life." Were any means used here? Were the empty pitchers, and lamps, and trumpets in the hands of Gideon's little army means by which the Midianites were overthrown, or were they dispersed by the sword of the Lord and of Gideon? the word of God, which by faith the little company believed. In all these instances the apostle is showing examples of faith as the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen. Faith is the knowledge of God's will and purpose which he gives to his people according to his own pleasure, causing them to desire and pray for the very things he has foreordained for them, and to be absolutely assured of them, so that they will move on in obedience to his commands against impassible barriers, against all the dictates of worldly wisdom, not to effect the fulfillment of his purposes, but to display the power of that faith of which he is the author and finisher, by holding the pitchers and lamps, compassing the walls, blowing the ram's horns, and even sounding the trumpet of victory before the enemy knows of defeat. Joshua did not say, "Shout, that the Lord may give you the city"; but, "Shout, for the Lord hath given you the city"; and after that the walls fell down. The Lord threw them down without the aid of the ram's horns. He overthrew the armies of the aliens. He raised the dead to life, and translated Enoch that he should

not see death. And he gave his people faith as the substance and evidence of these things before they were seen, and by that faith made them overcome the world. They were witnesses of his work. And so are all the Lord's servants witnesses of his work. He sent Paul as a witness both of the things he had seen, and of those things in which he would appear unto him; Acts, xxvi, 16. If any insist that the Lord Jesus opened the eyes of the heathen, and turned them from darkness to light through the preaching of Paul, they must still remember that only the living are blind. That the Pharisees, our Savior said, were not blind in the sense that those were whose eyes he came to open. Those who experience a hope are often left long in the bondage of error and delusion, before the Lord sends the truth home to them, opening their eyes to see it as in accordance with what they have experienced. So when they hear the truth preached, and the Lord manifests its power to them as living souls, their eyes are opened to see it, they believe it, they are turned from the darkness of error to the light of it, and as sheep they feed upon it.

"Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures;" James, i, 18. This is regarded by some as a declaration that the preaching of the word quickened those alluded to. But the apostle James includes himself with those of whom he speaks. What he says of them was true in his case. But we know he was not made alive by means of preaching, for the Savior called him by his own voice, saying, "Follow me." That same voice is heard by all his sheep. By him as the word they are begotten and born; for Peter says, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever." He does not say they are born again by the preaching of the gospel, but he says that this word of God by which they are born again, and which endures forever, is the word which by the gospel is preached unto them; I Peter, i, 23-25. That word is Jesus, whose name in salvation is called the Word of God. "This is the word which was in the beginning with God, and which was God, and which was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we behold his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth;" Jno., i, 1-14. The gospel is not this word, but is glad tidings

of it. This word by the gospel is preached unto the saints who have felt the glorious power thereof, as the apostle John says, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that your fellowship may be with us; " I Jno., i, 1-3. Here is the word of truth, the word of life, the word of God, the eternal life, by which the saints are all begotten and born again. This is the word of God by which hearing and faith come. If that word of God be not in the heart, there can be no power to hear, nor can the faith or truth of the gospel be received. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who hath believed our report." They all heard literally, for "their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." But only those who had been begotten by the world of truth could hear and understand," Rom., x, 15-20.

The gospel stands contrasted with the law. A little consideration of this point will show that the gospel can not be to the dead, but to the living. The Lord's people must first know the law in its condemning power before they can receive the gospel, the glad tidings of salvation. But none can know himself to be a lost sinner, justly condemned by the holy law of God, until he has been made alive by the quickening Spirit of God. Only by the light of divine life can one see himself dead in trespasses and sin. Paul was alive spiritually, or the coming of the commandment would not have caused sin to revive and him to die. It is only to the living soul that the law is felt to be a ministration of condemnation and death. On the day of Pentecost there were many living souls, who, up to that time, had been working under the law. When Peter was inspired by the Holy Ghost to proclaim the end of that dispensation, and the abrogation of all its ritual service by the death of Christ whom they had crucified, and to proclaim him as having been made both Lord and Christ, this word that he preached pricked them in the heart, inflicting a death wound, killing them to all hope of ever again approaching a holy God by the works of the law. Only those who had spiritual life, and were by that

enabled to see the just demands of the law, making its service a heavy yoke to them, and yet knowing no other way of pleasing God but by striving to keep it, only those could be pricked in the heart. No natural man was thus made to feel the sword of the spirit which is the word of God. But those who had seen a necessity for a sacrifice for sin, as Abel did, and who had heretofore known no other than that which pertained to the worldly sanctuary and Levitical priesthood, were made to feel the hopelessness of their case when the end of that dispensation of legal sacrifices was announced, and they were assured that God would never accept them again. Then was fulfilled in their experience the words of Joel, the prophet. The sun, representing all natural wisdom and knowledge, was turned into darkness, the moon, representing the law, was turned into blood, demanding the death of the sinner, and they saw signs of death, destruction, and desolation in those legal heavens and in that legal earth, blood and fire, and pillars of smoke, and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter proclaimed to them the gospel, and its blessings and privileges, and they gladly received his word.

This was apostolic work. Since the last word by the apostles was spoken and written, none can ever do apostolic work again. They are still on the twelve thrones, but it is by the words left on record that they judge the church of God.

But, in the experience of the saints, the same order still prevails. First, a knowledge of the law by the light of divine life, then a knowledge of the death it demands, then an experience of salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord. In this experience the preacher can render no help. But his preaching follows on in the path the Savior leads. He tells the story to the hearer no faster than it is told in his soul by the Savior. His preaching of the truth is sweet, for its sweetness has been felt within. Many have passed through all the order of experience, from the first knowledge of the law's demands to a full deliverance, before they have ever heard the gospel preached by man. Then, from that time, it is a savor of life unto life to them. They are fish that are caught by it. They are sheep and lambs to be fed by it. Wherever they are, among false professors, or in the world of the unbelievers, they can never listen to

it with indifference, but it will have a drawing power upon their souls. By it they are ministered to, edified, perfected in the knowledge of the truth whose power is in the heart, sustained under heavy trials, comforted in affliction, encouraged in darkness, until they have finished their course as witnesses in this world of sin and sorrow. Then tongues will cease, and prophecies will fail. Knowledge will vanish away, and faith will be lost in sight. And love, sweet, holy love, which has been the one never failing light, and comfort, and guide of our souls while here, will open to us the gates of eternal day, and usher us into that world where all is love.

—Elder Silas H. Durand
Southampton, Bucks Co., PA
January 8, 1881

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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.