

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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FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE

*He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths
of righteousness for His name's sake. Psalm 23.3*

The name of the Lord is unspeakably important. His name is so holy that the commandment against taking it in vain comes before all commands pertaining to humanity: the command to honor our parents, and the commands against murder, adultery, bearing false witness (lying), stealing, and covetousness.

He has revealed Himself by many names, and each name has a meaning about His relationship to His creation and to His people.

No truth is more profound than the fact that the Lord saves His people for one reason above all else. He saves them for the honor of His holy name. He has made a commitment of grace and mercy. If He were not to honor that commitment, He would lose far more than the sinners who hope in His salvation would lose. They certainly would lose their souls, getting the eternal punishment they so richly deserve, true enough; but He would lose His honor and His good name, and with that (perish the thought!), He would lose His claim to deity: for we are “In hope of eternal life, which **God, that cannot lie, promised** before the world began (Titus 1.2).” What then of His truthfulness and His promises? “When God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself (Hebrews 6.13).”

“A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold (Proverbs 22.1).” Since a good name is so valuable even among men, how much more so is “a good name” to the God that cannot lie?

We speak of someone as having a good name. That is far more than “John” or “Mary” being a good name to have. To have a good name is an idiom meaning to have a good reputation, one of honesty and integrity. When their reputation for being trustworthy is gone, they are still “John” or “Mary,” but they no longer have “a good name.” Now they have a bad name, a bad reputation, one of being untrustworthy.

The same would apply to our God, *if* He were able to lie or to go back on His promise, which can NEVER happen.

The Lord Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh. He came to fulfill God's eternal will and purpose, which He did. The night before His crucifixion He said, “I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do (John 17.4).” Since God's predestinated purpose is eternal, above and beyond time, He could speak that night in the past tense as having already finished the shedding of His precious blood on the cross even though that death was yet to be accomplished in time on the morrow. Likewise, as the High Priest of His people, His intercession on their behalf was as sure in Gethsemane as it was in eternity; “...the works were finished from the foundation of the world (Hebrews 4.3).”

His name is JESUS. It means, “Jehovah saves,” or “Salvation is of the Lord.” The meaning of His

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Elder C. C. Morris
Editor and Publisher
P O Box 1004
Hawkins, Texas 75765
Phone 1-903-769-4822

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to all interested persons.

Address all correspondence to:

THE REMNANT PUBLICATIONS

P O BOX 1004

HAWKINS, TX 75765-1004

Phone 1-903-769-4822

E-mail: remnantlink@gmail.com
or ccmorris@the-remnant.com

Web sites: www.the-remnant.com
and www.primitive-baptist.com

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name is fundamental to the name and what He came to accomplish: "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins (Matthew 1.21)." So the salvation in Christ Jesus must be fully accomplished, or Jesus would have a bad name, a bad reputation. Whatever the reason or excuse that might be given for His not doing so, this is the truth: By Himself, He must fully and freely save His people from their sins. He must not merely *try* to save them, and He cannot only *offer* to save them, but He must actually *save* them in order to live up to His good name. When He stands in glory with His redeemed bride, He will say to His Father, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me (Hebrews 2.13)." "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name: those that Thou gavest me I have kept, and **none of them is lost**, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled (John 17.12)."

There are many more things involved in His bringing His many sons to glory other than His shedding His blood and giving His life on the cruel tree as a ransom for many. The work He wrought on Calvary must be effectually applied to every single one of His redeemed ones. Not one of them can be lost or fall short of the predestinated glory they are to inherit: "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified (Romans 8.29-30)." You will note that again, due to the

eternal predestinated purpose of His will and council, He speaks in the past tense—He is said to have already glorified them. It is not that they have been foreknown, predestinated, called, and justified, all in the past, and they will be glorified in the future at the resurrection; the glorification, too, is so sure and certain that it can confidently be spoken of as an accomplished fact.

There are many things involved in His bringing His people through grace to glory, many things involved **for His name's sake**.

1. *“He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake (Psalm 23.3).”* Man is a tripartite being; he consists of body, soul, and spirit. He must be so to be created in the image of the Three-One God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and man is body, soul, and spirit.

The soul and the spirit are not two words meaning the same thing. Hebrews 4.12 tells us that Jesus Christ, as **the Word of God**, the Word made flesh, “is quick [living], and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to **the dividing asunder of soul and spirit**, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner [literally, *critic*] of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” Two things that are **the same thing** cannot be divided asunder. Joints and marrow are not the same thing; how then would **the soul and the spirit** in man be the same? (That the Word here is Christ the Word of God—John 1.1ff—and not the Bible Scriptures should be evident, because a critic must be an intelligent being and not a book. The book may provide the guidelines for criticism, but Christ is the **critic**: “Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead (Acts 17.31).”

Finally under this point, “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and [~~I pray God~~] your **whole spirit and soul and body** be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it (1 Thessalonians 5.23f).” I have stricken through the added phrase, “I pray God,” because it is not in the original text. Do not ask me why the translators put that in there, because one's whole or entire sanctification does not depend on prayer, other than the prayer of Jesus Christ Himself as their intercessor. Their preservation and sanctification does not depend on the prayer of the

apostle Paul (as wrongly implied in this text; Paul neither said it nor implied it); nor does it depend on the prayers of one's godly parents, or friends, or relatives, preachers, pastors, or fellow church-members. It depends solely on the One who calleth you: “Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it.” He sanctifies His people wholly, in addition to His saving them, and He does it **for His name's sake**.

In Psalm 23.3, the restoration of the souls of His people is foundational to His leading them in paths of righteousness. Then, His leading them in paths of righteousness follows His restoring their souls as surely as day follows night. He does it all because the honor and integrity of His name is at stake. Anything less would be a blot against the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. **Their steps are ordered:** “The steps of a **good** man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way (Psalm 37.23).” The reader will note in the King James Version that “good” is italicized, meaning it is another supplied word, not existing in the original language. The steps of **all** men are ordered, not merely the steps of “*good*” men. The steps of Judas were as ordered as the steps of the apostle John; the steps of Saul of Tarsus were as ordered before his conversion as the steps of the apostle Paul were after his conversion on the Damascus road.

Their steps are directed: “A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps (Proverbs 16.9)” is a general principle applicable to all, everywhere; none is exempt. “O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps (Jeremiah 10.23).” Since man does not direct his own steps, who directs them, if not our sovereign God? It is He alone who directs the steps of His people, so Jeremiah adds (verse 24), “O LORD, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing.” In His directing their steps, He directs them in paths of righteousness for His name's sake, as David said. Hence in Psalm 31.3 David prays, “For Thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore **for Thy name's sake** lead me, and guide me.”

David, in his fears and trials as he fled from king Saul, said to his friend Jonathan, “...truly as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death (1 Samuel 20.3).” That is the way things appeared to David as he fled from Jonathan's

father, the king. Yet, with God directing his steps (and the steps of Saul), king Saul was never able to close that one step between David and death.

3. “*Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Thy name: and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for Thy name's sake* (Psalm 79.9).” The purging away of the sins of God’s people is for His name’s sake, not theirs. They are the beneficiaries of God’s acting to protect the honor of His name, Jesus, which means **JHVH saves, or Salvation is of the Lord.**

4. Along with the purging away of our sins must come the pardon of the sinner’s iniquity, so the Psalmist also prays (in 25.11), “**For Thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.**”

5. “*Our fathers understood not Thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of Thy mercies; but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red sea. Nevertheless he saved them for His name's sake, that He might make His mighty power to be known* (Psalm 106.7-8).” One of the most gracious words in all of the Bible is *nevertheless*. That the fathers understood not the wonders in Egypt made no difference in their salvation; God had undertaken to redeem them. No matter what those sinners for whom Christ died have done or will do, their actions will *never* make His undertaking for them *the less*.

6. “*For the LORD will not forsake His people for His great name's sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you His people* (1 Samuel 12.22).” Remember, He made His elect His own because it pleased Him to do so, for His own sovereign satisfaction of saving them freely, thereby manifesting His pure, unadulterated grace, in honor of His name.

7. “*But do thou for me, O GOD the Lord, for Thy name's sake: because Thy mercy is good, deliver Thou me* (Psalm 109.21).” The Lord God’s mercy, His deliverance of His people, and what He does for them is for His name’s sake, not theirs, except secondarily. His primary consideration is the commitment He has made in and for His own name.

8. “*Quicken me, O LORD, for Thy name's sake: for Thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble* (Psalm 143.11).” Those who would criticize the Lord for saving sinners, accusing Him of “winking at sin,” forget (if they ever comprehended) that it is a righteous act for Him to forgive sins, quicken His people, and bring their souls out of trouble on the basis of the blood sacrifice of Christ. To do anything else

would be unrighteous. The poet was correct when he said,

If Christ hath my discharge procured
And freely in my place endured
The whole of wrath divine,
Payment God cannot twice demand,
First at my bleeding Surety’s hand,
And then again at mine.

9. “*Moreover concerning a stranger, that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for Thy name's sake* (1 Kings 8.41).” In Solomon’s prayer dedicating the first temple in Jerusalem, he anticipated the time when Gentiles would come to worship the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David, and it would be that they came for the sake of Jehovah’s name. Israel was chosen to be a nation of priests, pointing the Gentiles to the Lord God of Israel (see Exodus 19.1-6). This is the earthly role and destiny of Israel, which they will fulfill when the nation is converted by the return of their Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is echoed in the text parallel to the above, found in 2 Chronicles 6.32: “*Moreover concerning the stranger, which is not of Thy people Israel, but is come from a far country for Thy great name's sake, and Thy mighty hand, and Thy stretched out arm; if they come and pray in this house.*”

10. “*For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another* (Isaiah 48.9ff).”

Those who believe Israel has been cut off forever from being a nation before the Lord have never truly seen the eternal commitment God has made to this chosen nation. The point Jehovah makes here by the pen of Isaiah is that, although Israel would be chastised, they would not be altogether cut off. God will defer His anger. He will refrain; He will restore. His name would be polluted, not if He saves and spares them, but if He does not! Thus He later says of Israel in their rebellion, “*But they rebelled, and vexed His holy Spirit: therefore He was turned to be their enemy, and He fought against them. 11 Then He remembered the days of old, Moses, and His people, saying, Where*

is He that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of His flock? where is He that put His holy Spirit within him? That led them by the right hand of Moses with His glorious arm, dividing the water before them, **to make Himself an everlasting name?**

13 That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble? 14 As a beast goeth down into the valley, **the Spirit of the LORD caused him to rest** [recall, if you will, "**He maketh me to lie down in green pastures**"]: so didst Thou lead Thy people, **to make Thyself a glorious name** (Isaiah 63.12ff)." Jeremiah repeats this theme: "Thus saith the LORD, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went **to cause him to rest** (Jeremiah 31.2)."

11. And, speaking of Jeremiah, he also said, "*O LORD, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for Thy name's sake: for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against Thee. 8 O the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldst Thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night? 9 Why shouldst Thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man that cannot save? yet Thou, O LORD, art in the midst of us, and we are called by Thy name; leave us not* (Jeremiah 14.7ff)."

This is a most amazing prophecy of how the Arminians present their "Jesus": First, Jeremiah acknowledges our backsliding and sin, and that Jehovah is both the hope of Israel and their Savior in the time of trouble. But then he raises the question: Why should Thou be [presented] AS a poor wafaring stranger that turneth aside to tarry for a night, holding up a lantern, waiting, knocking in vain, as their portrait depicts Him, at someone's door with no latch ("The latch is on the *inside*; you must open it," says the Arminian); AS an astonished man, AS a "mighty man that CANNOT save"? Note Jeremiah does not say Christ is an astonished, perplexed man or a man who cannot save. That is only the way the Arminians present Him. That is the point of Jeremiah's question, *Why shouldst Thou be AS a man astonished, AS a mighty man that cannot save?*

He immediately sets forth the helplessness not of the Savior but of the people: *yet Thou, O LORD, art in the midst of us, and we are called by Thy name; leave us not.* And the Savior's answer is, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee (Hebrews 13.5)."

12. But Jeremiah has more to say about this later in the same chapter. "*Do not abhor us, for Thy name's sake, do not disgrace the throne of Thy glory: remember, break not Thy covenant with us* (Jeremiah 14.21)." Jehovah cannot abhor those whom He loves, those for whom Christ Jesus gave His life as a ransom. It would disgrace both His name and the very throne of God, because the salvation and deliverance of these people for time and eternity is rooted in the eternal covenant He has made not only with Himself, but with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

13. Ezekiel bears out what Isaiah and Jeremiah have said, namely, the sin, rebellion, and idolatry of Israel would not keep the Lord from saving them as a nation and as His earthly people. Something is far more important than the salvation or damnation of a sinful nation; it is the name and reputation of the God who has sworn to that nation's fathers that He would forever save and preserve them. Ezekiel records the words of ADONAI JEHOVAH, "the Lord GOD":

"21 *But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went. 22 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. 23 And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. 24 For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. 25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. 28 And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. 29 I will also save you from all your uncleanness: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. 30 And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine*

among the heathen. 31 Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. 32 **Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel.** 33 Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. 34 And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. 35 And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. 36 **Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the LORD build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the LORD have spoken it, and I will do it.** 37 Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock. 38 As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that I am the LORD (Ezekiel 36.20-38)."

The above text is far too lengthy to go into in detail. Here is only a brief summary of some of the things involved: Israel was guilty of sin, idolatry, and polluting the name of God even among the Gentile nations where they were scattered. God nevertheless has committed Himself by an eternal, unconditional, covenant promise to save them anyway; His honor and the reputation of His name is at stake should He do otherwise. He specifically says He will bring them back into the promised land a final time, never to depart again. When they are there, He will cleanse them from their filthiness and idols, give them a new heart, put His Holy Spirit in them, cause them to obey His statutes and judgments, be their God, and SAVE them from ALL their uncleannesses! He will bless their land to be fruitful and return it to the pristine conditions of Eden itself. All of this is NOT for their sakes, but FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE. The result will be—in part—that both Israel and the nations (that's a synonym for "heathen") round about will KNOW the Lord for His infinite grace and for what He has done.

Why anyone with a hope in Christ would want to deny that same hope to the Israelite nation is an

unfathomable mystery. We have all heard this text from Ezekiel 36.25-29 applied to the church; I have tried to apply it that way myself. May God forgive me this wrong. There are indeed things in common between Israel and the church that God does for both (regeneration, a new heart, the indwelling Holy Spirit, sanctification, the producing fruit in the lives of God's people, etc.), as may be seen in this text, but this text is to and about Israel, not the church. To steal this text away from Israel and say this is *only the church*, that "God is through with Israel," that "the church has replaced Israel," the church is "spiritual Israel," is "figurative robbery" of the highest order.

14. Moving into the New Testament, "for the sake of the name of Jesus" is the same as "for the sake of the name of Jehovah." Christ prophesied of persecutions that would come upon His people: "*If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. 20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for My name's sake, because they know not Him that sent me (John 15.19-21).*" This is twofold:

(a) Those who hated and persecuted Christ to the death (and their kind) will also hate and persecute Christ's people even to the death. "They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service (John 16.2)."

(b) BUT as it was in those days, with evil so entrenched in the upper levels of religion and politics, even so will it be in the days of the coming of the Son of man; we expect therefore that the highest men in worldly religion will have the power to ostracize any who disagree with their politically correct view of what proper religion is: "*Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at His word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed (Isaiah 66.5).*" This is different from the persecution against Christ in (a) above; this text says they will claim to be representing God and Christ when they cast you trembling ones out. They will cast you out and say they are doing it for the

sake of the name of God and/or of Christ. These would be saying that what you represent is not glorifying to the Lord. The promise to such victims is, *He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.*

15. *“I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake (1 John 2.12).”* This is a straightforward statement of exactly why the Christian's sins are forgiven; it is for **His** name's sake, and again we say not for the sake of the sinner, although such sinners benefit secondarily in all eternity because of His finished work in their behalf.

16. *“Because that for His name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles (3 John 7).”* One of the chief complaints the Gentiles have against the church is brought about by money-grubbing Arminian Pharisees and hypocrites. The Gentiles say the church is “always begging for money.” It is not the church that begs for money. It is the ones who, in the name of the church, and for a pretense, beg for support from the church or from anyone else who might have enough of a magnanimous streak about him that he would donate to their cause, which is the business of making proselytes. “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.” It takes money for the Pharisees to compass sea and land, so they solicit money from wherever they can find it.

A mark of the early church was, *they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles*, and they did so **for His name's sake**. That was for several reasons; one was because they realized the very charge that would be aimed at them would be that they were “in it for the money,” as is said about preachers by unbelievers to this day. Another reason is that in the case of false ministers such an accusation is often true; they *really are* in it for the money. A third reason they did not solicit among the unbelieving Gentiles was that unbelievers have no part whatsoever in the spiritual affairs of the church. Simon Magus thought he could purchase the spiritual gift of the Holy Spirit for money. Peter rebuked him soundly: “But Peter said unto him, **Thy money perish with thee**, because thou hast **thought** that the gift of God may be purchased with money. **Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.** Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray

God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that **thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity** (Acts 8.20ff).” Although the message is plain, there are probably millions who think, as did Simon Magus, that by making “charitable donations” to the church they can buy some sort of favor with God—either temporal blessings or eternal life. To stop such spiritual nonsense in its tracks, these early brethren had a simple rule that they would not receive contributions from non-believers lest those non-believers would gain any advantage within the church or believe they actually had bought favor with God.

A case of such corruption came up in the early Missionary Societies; they are condemned in the Black Rock Address of 1832, as “...Mission societies; they are so organized that the unregenerate, the enemies of the Cross of Christ, have equal privileges as to membership, &c., with the people of God, and money is the principal consideration; a certain sum entitles to membership, a larger sum to life membership, a still larger to directorship, &c., so that their constitutions contrary to the direction of James, are partial, saying to the *rich man, sit thou here*, and to the *poor, stand thou there*...the mission administration is all lodged in the hands of a few, who are distinguished from the rest, by *great swelling* titles, as Presidents, Vice Presidents, &c....”

Such abuses are a clear evidence of why the early church recorded that the brethren went forth taking nothing of the Gentiles, and that it was for the sake of the name of God and of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ; and such abuses are clear evidence of what happens when this principle is ignored.

SUMMARY

*“He sent redemption unto His people: He hath commanded His covenant for ever: **holy and reverend is His name** (Psalm 111.9).”* The name of God is holy and is ever to be revered and defended. His integrity and honesty are bound up with the integrity of His name. His reputation—past, present, and future—is integral with His redemption provided for Israel as a nation and His church from among all the Gentile nations. Let no person take these things lightly. “And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and **His name** one (Zechariah 14.9).” —C. C. Morris

1866 Circular Letter Delaware River Association

[NOTE ADDED by Elder Stanley C. Phillips, January 4, 2009: Ministers present at this session were: Elders Thomas Barton, Gabriel Conklin, Philander Hartwell, Gilbert Beebe, R.C. Leachman, J.L. Purington, J.H. Wallingford, G.W. Staton, and D.L. Harding.

Associations seated: Warwick, Baltimore, Baltimore River, Delaware, Corresponding Va., Salisbury, Western N.Y., Maine Predestinarian Conference, Maine Predestinarian Association, Lexington NY, Chemung, NY, Licking Particular, Ky, Others not present due to post- Civil War conditions: Ocmulga, Ga, Uharley, Ga, Yellow River, Ga, Kehukee, NC, Contetnea, Va.]

The Delaware River Association, to the several churches of which it is composed, Greeting:

Beloved Brethren:- From the very many interesting subjects that might be made the theme of our Circular Letter, we have selected that of the:

IMPORTANCE OF SEARCHING THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

Written by Elder Gabriel Conklin

Nothing can exceed in importance this imperative duty—this blessed privilege given to the saints in dark and trying times like the present falling away; and the great and only object should be, to see and hear what God says, in order that we may glorify Him in what we say and do as His professed disciples.

The importance of searching the Scriptures will appear from the following considerations:

1st. The Savior Himself, and by His servants the prophets and apostles, has enjoined it upon us by the solemnities of His word, His precepts, His example, and so shall we prove to those around us that we are His—that we belong to a Kingdom which is not of this world.

2d. They, the Scriptures, testify of Him. Moses, the law, the prophets, the Psalms, and the New Testament—all with one accord testify of Him; the Spirit

of Christ was in the prophets of old, and so it is said the testimony of Christ is the “spirit of prophecy”; the prophecies of the prophets in old times was therefore the testimony of Christ Himself. As then, Christ is the “all in all” to His people; how important that we search the Scriptures touching Him and His salvation!

3d. The truth and veracity of the Scriptures is a very important argument in favor of searching them—they are reliable—all good citizens esteem these points (truth and veracity) very important to the well-being of worldly society, and so absolutely necessary that it cannot exist without them; if so, how much more so in Christian society. Well we have them (truth and veracity) in their pristine purity and excellence in the Scriptures. The apostle Peter speaks of a more sure word of prophecy, evidently meaning the Scriptures—2nd Epistle of Peter 1:19—for he speaks directly after of the prophecy of Scripture. He not only speaks of the surety, certainty, and veracity of the Scriptures, but he brings them in contrast with seeing and hearing with the natural faculties, and declares that they (the Scriptures) are more sure. This testimony of Peter as to the veracity and reliability of the Scriptures is weighty, and may well draw our attention to a close examination of them from time to time.

4th. Another unanswerable argument in favor of searching the Scriptures, is that they are not the writings of men or the production of the wisdom of the world, but are of divine origin, and of that wisdom that comes down from above, and upon this fact Peter founds his testimony, as above noticed, in their behalf. Hear him saying, Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation; that is, no person by his own wisdom and research has brought or can bring those things forth, and as Peter would say, let this thing be known and established first of all and remembered. For the prophecy came not in old times by the will of man. But holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Let us search them constantly then, brethren, for we shall not be deceived by them.

5th. The Scriptures are to God’s people as a light that shineth in a dark place, so says the Apostle. If so, how encouraging to study them. We may have known, some of us, something of the inconvenience and unpleasantness of being shut up in a dark place, and if we have not experienced it, we can form some idea of it in imagination, and what a relief to have the light let

into our cell, or better still, we brought out into the light. This is but a faint illustration of the invaluable blessing of the Scriptures to the people of God in this dark world of sin and sorrow. They feel very often that the night is thick and dark, and are ready to cry when will it be gone and the light once more appear. Again and again they have been led to inquire what should we do, where should we go, what would become of us were it not for the Bible, the blessed word of God?

Again, the Scriptures, being a revelation from God Himself, as such claims our careful, prayerful, and unremitting attention. In them He has revealed Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, thus manifesting and shewing Himself a God of mercy as well as of justice—that He can save the vilest of the vile through Christ and yet be a just and holy God. In the Scriptures all necessary rules and regulations are given for the government of His Kingdom, by the King Himself, until He, Christ the Son, the Mediator, shall deliver it up to the Father.

The organization and order, therefore, of the gospel church are embraced in those regulations as found in the Scriptures. Do we delight in the order and ordinances of Christ's house, the worship of His courts, the cheerful songs and solemn praises of the solemn assembly? Let us search the Scriptures in order that we may be conformed in all things to the pattern shewed us by the Savior, and by His apostles and prophets. Do we meet with embarrassments in our pilgrimage journey? Let us search the Scriptures and look to the Lord that they may be removed. Do we encounter enemies, opposition to ourselves, or the doctrines, etc.? Let us search the Scriptures that they may be overcome. Are we in doubt in regard to any point of Gospel doctrine? Let us search the Scriptures that we may be established. Are we unsettled in our minds in regard to any point of order or any ordinance of the Gospel? Let us search the Scriptures that we may be settled, rooted and grounded in the Truth. Are we in the dark as to the meaning and application of a Gospel sense, of any part or portion of Bible Truth? Let us faithfully and prayerfully examine the Scriptures with a special view to this matter, that we may be enlightened; and we shall not search in vain, for God is His own interpreter and will make the matter plain. Are we tempted by the world, the flesh and the devil, to do wrong and thus wound

our brethren, and destroy our own peace by sinning against the God we love? Let us search the Scriptures and look to the Lord that we may overcome the temptation, be delivered from the evil, and enjoy that peace of mind that makes its possessor happy, and without which the child of God is miserable. Peter tells us we do well to take heed unto this more sure word of prophecy. Is it our desire to do well, then let us be careful to take heed to the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments. But if we do not take heed to them, we shall certainly do ill, or evil, for without a knowledge of them by the Spirit of God, we are in ignorance and darkness; but they, when taken heed to, are by the Spirit of Christ, full of instruction and serve to make one wise, and are as a lamp to our feet and a light to our path through the darkness of this world; for with all the wisdom of this world—with all the light of science of other ages and countries, and of this age and country, and notwithstanding the great accumulation of knowledge and great boasting of the onward march of civil and religious freedom and light, darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people—religious intolerance stalks abroad, and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey. The apostle (2nd Epistle of Peter, 2 Chapter) goes on to say that there were false prophets in old times as well as true prophets of the Lord, and as there were false prophets among the people then, so there will be false teachers among the people now, bringing in privily or privately damnable heresies, etc., and many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of Truth shall be evil spoken of.

This prophecy of Scripture is being now fulfilled, and will continue to be fulfilled to a hastening degree until it is completed. But how do we know this? By taking heed to the Scriptures; the sure word of prophecy of the prophets and apostles of our Lord, and it is so sure and plain, that we have no doubts in the least about it. We know it is so, we cannot be mistaken.

In closing, suffer a word of exhortation. Dear brethren, laying aside all malice and all guile and all evil speaking, let us as new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. Let there be no evil surmisings and perverse disputings among us: these are unbecoming our profession and contrary to the spirit of Christ, and if we possess that, we shall be one, perfectly joined together. It can't otherwise be.

Finally, dear brethren, let us give the more earnest heed to the Scriptures, lest at any time we should let them slip. Let us search them diligently, and ask the Lord to give us an understanding of them, and with one heart and one accord abide their decision in all cases and under all circumstances. Thus shall Zion be found to be a peaceable and quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down.

Philander Hartwell, Moderator.

Elijah Leigh, Clerk.

ISAIAH 57.15-19

15 For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. 16 For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made. 17 For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. 18 I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners. 19 I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him. (Isaiah 57.15-19)

To return to this text in Isaiah 57, referred to in part in the March-April issue, we see that while the chastised sinner did nothing to redeem himself, or to correct his own ways, to repent, or to otherwise straighten out his own life, the Lord had nevertheless begun a good work in him that He was not about to abandon. “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1.6).”

The promises of God in Isaiah 57 continue in parallel language and in perfect harmony with Psalm 23: *I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners.*

“*I will lead him...*” “He **leadeth** me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake (Psalm 23.3).”

“*And restore...*”: “He **restoreth** my soul (Psalm 23.3).”

“*And restore comforts*”: “Thy rod and thy staff they **comfort** me (Psalm 23.4).”

May we not conclude that the one of whom Isaiah speaks as stubbornly going on “frowardly in the way of his heart” is one of the Lord’s sheep who can finally say with the Psalmist, after God has given him repentance, “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want”? “I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments (Psalm 119.176).” “And other sheep I have, which are not of this [Israelite] fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd (John 10.16).”

Of such an one God assures us in verse 19, “I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off [Gentile elect], and to him that is near [elect Israelites], saith the LORD; and I will heal him.

Whether the child of God is one who is “far off” (from among the Gentiles) or “near” (from among the Jews or Israelites), the Lord speaks peace to every one of them, creating the exact proper words (“the fruit of the lips”) at His own appointed time.

—C. C. Morris

Ah sinful nation...

...a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. **Your country** is desolate, **your cities** are burned with fire: **your land**, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers... And I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them. And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable... As for my people, **children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths...** (from the words of Isaiah, chapters 1 and 3).

AN INQUIRY FROM THE PHILIPPINES

Dear Brother Morris,

Short commnet and question: I dont see any reason for us to divide because of that labeling Absoluters and Conditionalist. I had read the letters of Silas Durand to James Oliphant. They are both have points in their views. For you my beloved brother what is our difference?

REPLY: First, we are already divided. We need to be divided. What you call “*that labeling*” only identifies us as parts of that which is divided.

Second, may I say that I personally wish you well in all things. I do not oppose you or any man as an individual. However, I am totally opposed to the evil, God-dishonoring system identified by the name of “Conditionalism.” Both Absoluters and Conditionalists should know what the issue is, who is on which side of this issue, and why we are divided; but it is clear that there are some who do not know or understand these things.

I am surprised that those who bestowed the title of **Elder** upon you would have given that title to any man among them who did not already clearly and plainly know the answer to your question, “*What is our difference?*”

I am surprised they would ordain any man who does not “see any reason for us to divide” along the lines of Absoluters and Conditionalists. I am made to wonder: If you do not understand the difference between Absoluters and Conditionalists, then *from the human standpoint*, why did you not try to join the Absoluters instead of the Conditionalists, if you can detect no difference?

From the divine standpoint, we know you **could not** have come to the Absoluters, at least not yet. It was not predestinated for you to have done so at that time; the Lord had not given you the discernment and understanding to see the difference. That is one of the fundamental differences between the two camps. “**Man's goings are of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?**” This text (Proverbs 20.24) is Absoluter doctrine, not Conditionalist doctrine.

We are glad you are well-informed enough to have read the correspondence of Elders Durand and Oliphant. You say they “both have points in their views”; I suppose you mean they both have points that support their views. Since you think so, and you still cannot discern from their correspondence or from anything else you have heard or read which one’s points outweigh the other’s, you and I can both be glad that you are affiliated with the Conditionalists. I do not know of any Absoluter who could not easily discern between the writings of Elders Durand and Oliphant, as to which one had the more scriptural position. “...How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him (1 Kings 18.21).”

Some, like yourself, have lately come among the Conditionalists and are unfamiliar with the issues. You said in some of your correspondence that you recently came from among the Charismatic people. Almost all the Charismatic denominations are notorious Arminians, preaching a god limited by man’s free will. (I know **one** Charismatic who is not a free-willer; there may be others who are not, but most of them are.)

Ordinarily, Arminianism is filled with Conditionalism, and Conditionalism is filled with Arminianism. For all practical purposes they are one and the same, with both teaching that salvation is a joint venture, a cooperation between God and man to save whoever will obey God. Whether Conditionalists want to call it “*time* salvation” or “*eternal* salvation” makes no difference. Jonah made no such distinction when he said, “Salvation is of the LORD,” nor did Christ, nor did any of the other prophets or apostles. **ALL** salvation is of the LORD.

All free-will Arminian Charismatics preach and teach that **God’s children must meet certain conditions by obeying His commands in order to earn blessings and to escape chastisement, exactly as do the Conditionalist “Primitives.”** If I am wrong about that, please show me where they differ on this point.

I do not condemn you or any man for his background or for which denomination from which they came, or for whatever religion you or they were raised in or otherwise came to believe. All I am saying is this: With your Arminian-Charismatic *background*, you quite naturally might have accepted Conditional-

ism among the Conditionalist “Primitive” Baptists as *conditions to be met for earning blessings and for avoiding God’s chastisement, even as you believed while you were with the Charismatics*. That would be expected in any other Arminian denomination. You have come to the Conditionalists, perhaps happily attracted by their superficial preaching of the “five points of Calvinism” and “the sovereignty of God,” and you have accepted their freewill dogma exactly as you would naturally expect Missionary Baptists, Campbellites, Methodists, or any other modern denomination to teach. You therefore are not properly horrified by the Conditionalist doctrine.

Third, some Conditionalists have lied to you to make you think all Absoluters believe God is the author of sin. I do not believe such, the people with whom I am affiliated do not believe such, and **it is not at all necessary to believe God is the author of sin in order to be an absolute predestinarian**. We believe God controls evil every bit as much as He controls righteousness. That is far from believing evil positively proceeds from His nature as is implied by the term “author of sin.”

Our God could prevent any or all sin and evil at any time, should He so desire. Since He does not prevent it, it follows that it is here because He wills to have it here; **not** because He enjoys it or approves of it—God forbid! for He does not!—but for good and wise reasons known to Himself and to be revealed later, when and how He sees fit.

His reasons certainly include the fact that He will show His righteous hatred and wrath against all evil by destroying it, which would be hard for poor finite beings to comprehend if no evil existed for Him to publicly hate, to visibly punish, and to utterly destroy. **“For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3.8).”** According to this verse, if there were no works of the devil, there would have been no purpose for the Son of God to have been manifested, would there?

Most people believe that living above sin or living without sin would be a commendable achievement; at some level that might be so. Yet John also says, “And ye know that He was manifested **to take away our sins**... (1 John 3.5).” According to this verse, if we could live without sinning, there would again have been no need for Christ to have been manifested, for we would have no sin for Him to remove.

Moreover, Paul says: **“For scarcely for a righteous man will one die (Romans 5.7).”** The point Paul is making (*in context*) is: Why would Christ die (*to save and to atone*) for a righteous man? There would be no need.

If any one person could be righteous without the Lord’s intervening in his or her behalf, then why could not we all do the same and all be righteous, thereby eliminating the necessity of Christ’s atoning death to save His people from their sins?

No; such was not meant to be. When He has destroyed evil from His creation, sin will have served its purpose for being here, and it will be banished forever, gone eternally.

Those Who DO Say God is the Author of Sin

I know there is at least one Filipino elder who says he is an Absoluter and he teaches that God is the author of sin; or that was so the last time I heard from him. That fact cannot be used to brand all Absoluters with his error, especially since we of my affiliation would withhold fellowship from him for that very reason—because *he does* say God is the author of sin.

And because I insist that God is NOT the author of sin, that man, along with some of his affiliation, has attacked *The Remnant* and me about as severely as anyone has ever done.

The Filipino Conditionalists look at him and think they see me. The Conditionalists look at me and think they see him. They are wrong on both counts.

He and those like him look at me and in their mind they see the Conditionalists. He and they look at the Conditionalists and in their minds they see me. Again, they are wrong on both counts.

I am quite comfortable exactly where I am, between him and the Conditionalists, and being attacked by both.

There was an elder in Texas years ago who told people that I was an Arminian because I did not believe God is the author of sin. By his saying that, he had far more problems than I did. He has since gone where all false views are permanently corrected.

I will try to answer your question from my personal viewpoint, as I see it. That is all I can do, only as the Lord is pleased to give me the mind and words to do so. I speak for no one other than for myself, but there are many brethren and sisters in the faith who agree with me.

My Background

You might better understand some of the differences that exist between Conditionalists and me if you know a little about my background. From the time of my birth I grew up in a Missionary Baptist church. In the 1950s I went to their Bible College in Missouri, thinking I might one day be a missionary to some other country or perhaps a pastor in America. I was a total Arminian, hating the doctrine of free sovereign grace, election, predestination, and the related doctrines of grace.

While I was attending their college, it pleased the Lord to reveal His grace to me, to show me my utter depravity and helplessness, and to effectually convince me the **only hope** for a needy, helpless, rebellious sinner such as I am is the all-sufficiency of the Lord Jesus Christ, His shed blood to wash away every sin, and His glorious righteousness imputed as the **only way** to fit a sinner to stand in the presence of His Father.

If I am not deceived, He gave me to hope and believe He had taken away my filthy rags, fully and freely pardoned me, and had given me HIS robe of righteousness. He also gave me a love for His grace, His doctrine, His complete and perfect salvation provided in God the Son, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." I was enthralled at His eternal purpose and grace given to His people in Christ Jesus the Lord before the world began.

When I was given to believe these things, I could no longer abide with the Missionary Baptists or with any other Arminian denomination.

I had heard that Primitive Baptists believe the same things I had been made to believe. What I did not know about was the Conditionalism that was masquerading under the Primitive Baptist name and banner. Mistakenly, I joined the first "Primitive Baptist church" I found. It was what we call **Conditionalist**.

About a year later, the Conditionalists with whom I was affiliated in Missouri in the 1950s excluded me for what they called "heresy" because I believed God controls *all things*, I believed He has predestinated *whatsoever comes to pass*, and I believed *He has all power in our lives*. I still believe those things. I believe He has all knowledge and power. Both His

knowledge and power are so all-sufficient that, if He desired to have anything in my life, your life, or anything in all creation different, He would have no trouble having it so, for "what His soul desireth, even that He doeth. For He performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with Him (Job 23.13-14)."

As Jerome Zanchius said so eloquently in his book, "Absolute Predestination," "**No one can deny that God permits sin, but He neither permits it ignorantly nor unwillingly, therefore knowingly and willingly** (*vide Aust. Enchir. c.96*)."

Here is an example of what the Conditionalists in Missouri were teaching and why I left them: They said that the rich man in hell (Luke 16) was "an unfaithful child of God" who went to hell because he did not treat his spiritual brother Lazarus right. They taught that the rich man would burn in hell to pay for his sins until the judgment day. Then, they said, he would be one of those who would be "...saved, yet so as by fire (1 Corinthians 3.15)." You might believe that; I did not believe it then and I do not believe it now. I told my Conditionalist pastor, "You are teaching nothing more than a PROTESTANT PURGATORY, and as far as I am concerned, I had rather have nothing than what you have!"

So they excluded me for what they call "heresy." I still think of their exclusion as one of the three highest honors ever conferred on me in my life. The highest two honors granted this unworthy worm of the dust are (1) Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, and her affiliates, have allowed me to be a member among them since 1960; and

(2) the old Absolute Predestinarian Primitive Baptists ordained me and have tolerated my going into their stands since 1966.

Number (3) of all high honors bestowed upon me is to be called an excluded heretic by the Conditionalist "old liners." Right along with that, the number (4) honor was when my former Missionary Baptist pastor, who was also the president of the Bible College, told me to get off their campus and to never set foot on their property again as long as I live.

Some of the differences that exist between Conditionalists and me are:

I do not believe the child of God can earn blessings and rewards or avoid punishments and

chastisement by his independent "obedience," or otherwise. I do not believe that the child of God can choose to obey or disobey God as he sees fit. The Conditionalists do believe they can choose to obey or disobey God as they see fit, and they believe they will suffer for making the wrong choice.

I believe the steps of a man are ordered of or by the Lord, not by the man himself. Conditionalists do not.

By their system of teaching free-will obedience or disobedience, Conditionalists replace the blood of Christ with their own works to pay for their sins. To my understanding, such a doctrine is a blasphemous attack against the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ and against His gospel.

I cannot obey God in my own strength, for I am an ungodly sinner who has no strength with which either to obey or to disobey. "For when we were yet *without strength*, in due time Christ died for the ungodly (Romans 5.6)." Christ's death in the place of ungodly sinners is my only hope. I find no hope in having Arminians and Conditionalists tell me to work harder, try harder, pray more, do more and more. My only rest is rest in Christ. As the hymn-writer Berridge put it:

"Run, run, and work," the law commands,
Yet finds me neither feet nor hands;
But sweeter news the gospel brings:
It bids me fly and gives me wings.

Conditionalists teach that we can and must obey by our own efforts, or we will suffer loss of blessings God "wants" to give us. You should be familiar with that fact. You should also be aware of the fact that such is Arminian free-willism.

Not long ago I heard a well-known Conditionalist preacher on the radio say that God "wants us to be filled with joy." Yet joy is not something you and I can generate or not, as we see fit; we would all be completely joyful all the time if we could. Would we not? Who would willingly be sorrowful?

Joy is the fruit of God's Holy Spirit along with love, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance (Galatians 5.22f). I can neither be joyful nor refrain from being joyful any more than I can generate saving faith or divine self-sacrificial love, both of which are effectually wrought

in God's children by the Holy Spirit who is freely given unto them.

There is no difference between the conditional "rewards and punishment" systems set forth by (a) the "Old Line Primitive Baptists," (b) the Missionaries among whom I was raised, or (c) the Charismatics you left. If there is a difference between those three conditional systems, could you please tell me what the difference is?

On that I must add a comment: The Missionary Baptists have a far better grasp of the doctrine of **sanctification** than the Conditionalists do. Conditionalists deny the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit; they deny that God leads His children in paths of righteousness for HIS name's sake. Instead, they teach a free-will "it's up to you to clean up and sanctify your own life" instead of teaching the cleansing, saving power of Christ applied by God's Holy Spirit to save a guilty, helpless, hell-deserving sinner.

Even the missionary Baptists among whom I was raised would not have Conditionalist doctrine as preached in so-called "Old Line Primitive Baptist" churches. What we have heard from "Old Liners" is often far closer to Campbellism than it is to Primitive or Missionary doctrine.

I believe, as Samuel Richardson (1646) said,

The Scripture says, "We are justified by his blood," Rom. 5:9; Isa. 45:25 and 53:11; Rom. 5:19, which could not be true, if He had not taken away and destroyed all our sins, and "presented us to God without spot, and made peace by the blood of his Cross, now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy, and unblameable, and unreprouable in his sight," Col. 1:20-22.

For this end "Christ gave himself for his Church, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it might be holy without blemish," Eph. 5.

Therefore, the Scriptures say, all our sins are removed—cast behind His back: "Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back," Isa 38:17.

"They were cast into the depth of the Sea," Mich. 7:19.

"As far as the East is from the West, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us," Psalm 103:12. This is something, but this is not all, they are covered: "Whose sin is covered," Psal. 32:1. Yet the soul is not satisfied, because a thing may have a being that is covered; therefore God says they are blotted out, "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sin," Isa. 44:22.

This is more, for now they are not, they have no being. But God can remember that which is not, this is answered, for God says, "I will not remember thy sins," Isa. 43:25. "I will remember their sins no more:" Jer. 31:34. (Copied from Ken Wimer's Newsletter and edited—CCM)

The Conditionalists will have none of that. They cannot explain how Christ has presented (or will present) His church to God "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, holy and without blemish (Ephesians 5.25-27)," and yet explain how at the same time she is somehow still spotted, wrinkled, and blemished, and He has left it up to the individual members of that inglorious church to cleanse themselves. Briefly, Conditionalists teach:

1. God the Father elected His people;
2. God the Son redeemed His people;
3. God the Holy Spirit regenerates His people;
4. AND THAT IS ALL God does for His people.

They make no mention, to speak of, of the ongoing, cleansing and sanctifying work of God the Son and the Holy Spirit. All rewards and punishments, obedience or disobedience, they say, are UP TO YOU.

If the Springfield Missouri Conditionalists had not *baited* me with the first three points above, I would have never joined them. When I joined them, I did not know they believed and taught the fourth point; I had not even heard either of the terms "Conditionalism" or "Conditionalist."

Before I left them, I told them I was looking for the Primitive Baptists who endorsed Jerome Zanchius' book, "Absolute Predestination."

They said, "There are none around here." I asked, "Then where are they?" They said, "We

don't know. We've heard there are some in Texas." They also told me, "But you wouldn't like the Absoluters. They believe God is the author of sin."

I said, "If they believe God is the author of sin, then I *wouldn't* like them!" That was fifty years ago, in 1958 and 1959. I have never changed my position from then until now. Yet the Filipino Conditionalists have a slandering Elder among them who is using e-mail to spread the lie that *The Remnant* taught "God is the author of sin" until 2008. He should know that the entire July-August issue in 2002 was devoted against that ugly heresy. **Is lying and slander the way the Filipinos are being taught to earn God's blessings and to avoid God's chastisement?**

In 1959, the Missouri Conditionalists told me, "Well, they do believe God is the author of sin."

I said, "Lord willing, I will find out for myself." That is how, by God's providence and why, humanly speaking, I came to be in Texas—looking for the "Absoluters." When my steps were directed to the Absolute Predestinarian Primitive Baptists in the summer of 1960, I questioned their elders on this point. **They all denied that God is the author of sin.** They cited *the Fort Worth Council of 1902*, which they endorsed, as specific evidence and proof.

In contrast with the so-called "Old Line Primitive Baptists," the Missionary Baptists (even with all their Arminianism) have a far greater concept of **salvation by grace** than the Conditionalists do. I can say that from personal experience; I know both the Missionary Baptists and the Conditionalists, having been affiliated with them both. Remember, I was born and raised in the Missionary Baptist church. I left the Missionaries because of their rotten Arminianism, thinking I would find free grace being taught among the Primitive Baptists. *Real* Primitive Baptists believe the free grace of God saves His people from all their sin. *Conditionalism* is not the historic Primitive Baptist doctrine.

In Missouri and in Texas I found that Conditionalism is far worse Arminianism than the Missionaries I had left. It is no better than Roman Catholicism, practically the same as Campbellism, and worse than all other Arminians combined, because Conditionalists *profess* to teach free sovereign grace, thereby deceiving unwary souls; but they cannot hide their fleshly works system from anyone who has been given a glimpse of Christ's glorious finished work.

“They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.” In my considered opinion, they are reprobate to every good work because they, as any reprobate would, offer what they consider to be their good works, their own filthy rags, as “righteousnesses” to God in an attempt to bribe God to bless them instead of His chastising them. Those who do so may profess that they know God, but they do not really *know* Him. “But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our **righteousnesses** [that is, our “good” works, not our *unrighteousnesses* or “bad” works] **are as filthy rags**; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away (Isaiah 64.6).” Isaiah is not speaking of our *unrighteousness*, our “bad deeds,” as being filthy rags; it is our *righteousnesses*, our “good deeds” that are as filthy rags. The filthy rags of self-righteous deeds are what Conditionalists depend upon to earn rewards and to avoid chastisement.

As *The Remnant’s* Principles (see page 20) state, which I believe with all my heart:

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.**

The Conditionalists I know will have none of those points of doctrine. If the Conditionalists believed those things, AND believed that God has from all eternity controlled all things, whatsoever comes to pass (what we call “the absolute predestination of all things”), then (humanly speaking) I would have been content to stay among them. But in the wisdom of God such was not meant to be.

The Missouri Conditionalists were good, kind people, and they were good and kind to me; but therein lies the rub: **Were they good to me for**

Christ’s sake, as expressed in our principles and beliefs, or were they good to me merely in order to earn blessings and to avoid punishment?

This writing has been in answer to your comment, “*I dont [sic] see any reason for us to divide*” and your question, “...*what is our difference?*”

As for your comment, I believe you, that **you do not see any reason** for us to divide. There is a reason why you do not see a reason for us to remain divided. And I, on the other hand, can see no reason for us to try to unite or get together.

Can you tell me, if you do not believe what I have set forth above, why you would want to be united with the Absoluters? But if you do agree with what I have said, then tell me how you can stay united with the Conditionalists? “*Can two walk together, except they be agreed (Amos 3.3)?*”—especially when the fundamental differences are as great as (a) whether or not the blood and imputed righteousness of Christ is the sole basis for a sinner’s salvation and sanctification in time and in eternity, and (b) the Conditionalists’ discarding of Christ’s imputed righteousness and telling God, “Please, God, I’d rather do it myself!”

As for your question, “...*what is our difference?*” I have tried to answer it. You either see it or you do not. Almost all in the Absoluters’ camp can see what the difference is; almost none of the Conditionalists can see it. *It is not at all a question of whether or not God is the author of sin, for we do not believe that*, although Conditionalists continue to slander us with that false accusation, a smoke-screen to hide the real issue. The real question is about what Christ did on the cross when He shed His blood to save His people from their sins. He either saved them fully and completely, or He did not. Either God sanctifies them, or they sanctify themselves, or they are not sanctified. I know of no other reasonable conclusion. Either the Lord Jesus Christ told the truth when He said, “It is finished,” or He did not. Absoluters believe He told the truth. Conditionalists do not believe it, so they continue trying to add their works system to His finished work. That is the real issue.

I hope and trust I have addressed your comment and question sufficiently for now. Due to the weakness of my flesh and my proneness to err, I may have left something amiss, for which I apologize. If you have any other question or questions you want addressed, please let me know. —CC Morris

ABOUT OUR NEW PRINTING AND MAILING SYSTEM

God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform.... The loss late last fall of our printer, Tommy Vance, who had so ably produced *The Remnant* for around five years, was disconcerting to me. I do not like surprises or changes. When I find something that works, I am satisfied, and I strive to maintain the *status quo* and to keep things as simple and as straightforward as I possibly can. This loss of a good print shop with its cooperative owner and staff came as both a major change and a total surprise.

For a couple months I followed every lead I could get, looking for a reliable printer who could keep producing *The Remnant* the same way Tommy had done. We have made very little change to the magazine's format since we began publishing it in 1998. All I asked for in a new print shop was more of the same: good quality work without having to pay double the price we had been paying for the magazine's production.

The first round of bids was discouraging, but at Tommy's recommendation, I believe we have found the printer we need: **Pro Printing and Graphics** in Lindale, Texas. There, however, I was given another change and surprise; this time, both were pleasant. Working with **Pro**, I can now e-mail the magazine to them in a PDF (Portable Document Format) file instead of having to first print and then hand-deliver a camera-ready proof set to the print shop. This new way of doing things will definitely save gasoline, paper, ink, and time.

While we were still looking for a new printer, we were providentially directed to **Global Mailing** who now prints our mailing labels directly on the magazine for us, along with the bar-codes (as the US Postal Service prefers). **Global Mailing** also does an automated, certified, zip code sort that will save *The Remnant* some postage money in the long run, lowering our overall postage expenses by giving us the lowest possible mailing rates and prices.

Further, by using **Global Mailing**, (1) I no longer need to print addresses on gummed labels (another expense). I can now simply e-mail our mailing list to **Global Mailing**, and they do the rest; (2) the faithful brethren at Saints Rest Church no longer need to donate a Sunday afternoon putting labels on the magazines each time we print and mail another issue;

(3) we no longer need to manually sort, count, and bundle the magazines; and (4) I no longer must carry the magazines to the Post Office for mailing. **Global Mailing** now does all this for us, and more.

A Major Side Benefit

The PDF files are so easy to make, I was able to convert all of our back issues, beginning with the July-August 1998 issue, to PDF files in what amounted to about two minutes per issue. Currently there are sixty-four of these files, which means that I had the entire set of files completed in one afternoon.

What makes this development so exciting to me is, the PDF files are fully compatible with our two web sites. **That means we now have all sixty-four of our back issues on both of our web sites,**

www.the-remnant.com

and

www.primitive-baptist.com

Now, at last, our readers (old and new alike) who have computers with internet access can go to either of the above sites and read any or all of the last ten years of our back issues.

For instance, on page 15, column 2 of this issue, I refer to our **July-August issue of 2002**. Anyone who does not have that particular issue may now go to either of the above web sites and read it or any other issue we have printed since the summer of 1998.

As each new issue is released, it will be easy enough to add new issues to our web sites, making all current and future issues available worldwide to anyone who has access to the Internet. We trust we are thankful to our sovereign God Lord for this unforeseen blessing.

In closing, for now, may I express our thanks first and foremost to Almighty God for His blessings on our feeble efforts during the last ten, almost eleven years. We must express our thanks and appreciation for the brethren and sisters in **Saints Rest Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas**, who have faithfully helped with many of the behind-the-scenes tasks, including putting the mailing labels on the magazines. And thanks to each one of you subscribers who have contributed financially to help with our printing and mailing expenses. We appreciate all that God and His people have done to make this magazine available to our readers.

—CC Morris

THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His name whereby He shall be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS** (Jeremiah 23.5f).

In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. 16 In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, **The LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS** (Jeremiah 33.15f).

But of him are ye in **Christ Jesus**, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and **righteousness**, and sanctification, and redemption: 31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord (1 Corinthians 1.30f).

For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made **the righteousness of God in Him** (2 Corinthians 5.21).

BOOK: "PAGAN FESTIVALS OF CHRISTMAS AND EASTER"

The book, "Pagan Festivals of Christmas and Easter," by Shaun Willcock, is available. This is a much-appreciated book among *The Remnant's* readers since we first advertised it a few years ago. Now, this concise, 64-page booklet is available once more. Copies may be ordered directly from *The Remnant* at

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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 condemnation; 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.