

The Banner of Love

“He Brought Me to the Banqueting House, and His Banner Over Me Was Love” — Songs of Solomon 2:4

“Thou Has Given a Banner to Them That Fear Thee, That it Might Be Displayed Because of the Truth” — Psalms 60:4

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Seven signs for Jonah

By **ELDER MIKE RODGERS**

As a pastor, many times I have been asked how to know the will of God. Sometimes I try to know God's will for my life by using what we might think of as test-taking skills, i.e. the process of elimination.

For example, I can rule out anything that God has already determined to be sinful, like murder! I had a co-worker once who assured me that his infidelity was OK because he and God had a special arrangement. Such a statement warrants a “Ha” and a “Good Grief!” all rolled into one.

Although there are some things that can be eliminated, it seems to me that knowing God's will can, at times, be difficult to discern. This is especially true if I am trying to avoid His will!

Such was the case with one of our better-

known Old Testament prophets – Jonah. The following is a brief discussion of what seems to me to be seven signs that were given to Jonah as he ran from the will of God. The verses are from Jonah chapter 1. Jonah's charge directly from God comes first.

1Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, 2Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me. 3But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.

Well, it's not hard to determine God's
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Elder Mike Rodgers resides in San Antonio, Texas where he is an attorney in commercial and financial transactions, and he serves as pastor of the Bethany Primitive Baptist Church in San Antonio.

Advice to all, but especially the Ministry

(Editor's Note: The following is a sermon delivered September 27, 1739 in England by Mr. John Hill of Hitchin (and later London) at Cambridge on the ordination of a Mr. John Conder as a minister of the gospel. The type size is reduced to accommodate the length of the article; and sub-headings have been added for emphasis and ease of reading. The article is highly recommended as good advice to all, but particularly to ministers – young and old alike.)

By **Mr. JOHN HILL**

This sermon gives much to be considered by both preachers and hearers.

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth” 2 Tim. 2. 15.

This and the foregoing epistle were written by

the apostle to Timothy to instruct him “how he ought to behave himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” 1 Tim.3:15

There was something in his education and temper, as well as the circumstances of his conversion, which made him dear to the apostle above many others, and he being called to office young, the apostle was particularly concerned that he might be thoroughly furnished for it and approved unto God in it.

Exposed to many temptations

Many are the temptations, many the disadvantages, to which youth is exposed, especially in a work which is of so large a compass in itself, so weighty and important, and of so great consequence to others, as the work of the ministry.

Unacquaintedness with mankind in general, their different tempers and constitutions, designs and ends, want of experience and observation in the many branches of our office, and at some times of that gravity and suitable behaviour in conversation which is becoming our characters are things which render us liable to be despised.

I might add, too, our own fears, lest we should stretch beyond the bounds of our office in reproving, exhorting and rebuking, though it be with all longsuffering and doctrine, which are often turned against us for our reproach. Alas! our youth itself, where particular errors are struck at, and particular darling sins are reprov'd, puts an emptiness into our words in the esteem of some, and makes our best endeavours in respect to them fruitless.

This seems to be the great occasion of the

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Worthy Causes

There are many worthy causes in need of consideration.

First priority for giving should always be in support of the local church and its ministry. Once that need has been addressed, the following are listed for consideration by our readers:

LaVernia Primitive Baptist Church, % Brother Doug Wildenstein, 121 Blackjack Road, LaVernia, Texas 78121. Funds are needed to rebuild the church building after the previous one destroyed by fire.

New York City worship services. Funds are needed to offset expenses of once-per-month Primitive Baptist worship services in downtown New York City for the first time in more than 40 years. Most present attendees are young and without sufficient resources to cover meeting expenses. Send donations in care of Mt. Carmel Primitive Baptist Church, Elder Steven Bloyd, 46 Davis Road, Street, Maryland 21154.

Bro. Scott Shamburger. Brother Scott Shamburger of Coleman, Texas, who attends the Primitive Baptist Church at Lawn, Texas, has a tumor which is growing again. Brother Scott is self-employed and is not able to work. The family needs prayers and financial support. You may send a letter of encouragement or support to: Scott Shamburger, 2600 Guadalupe Street, Coleman, Texas 76834.

Elder George Walker family. The wife and family of the late Elder George Walker has high medical bills, expenses and unpaid bills related to the last illness of Elder Walker. Help may be provided by contacting Sister Eleanor Walker, 905 Derting Road East, Rhome, Texas 76078.

MOTHER ENJOYS BANNER

My mother, Alta Lankford, is 98 years old. She still enjoys "The Banner of Love".

She does not remember when she last paid for it, so she asked me to send you a check. Please let us know what her payment status is when payment is due.

Thank you,
Faye Smith
Weatherford, Texas



1953 WEST TEXAS ASSOCIATION – Pictured are the ministers who attended the 1953 West Texas Association held with the Primitive Baptist Church then at Anton, Texas (subsequently moved to Littlefield). Standing, from left, are Elders J. S. Kirkpatrick, George Griffin, Lee

Griffin, Ben R. Howze, George Burt, Oscar Moyer, Bob Moore, Jimmie Bass, Charlie L. Jarrett, and S. J. Ellis. Kneeling, from left are Elders Floyd Griffin, W. G. Bishop, Willie H. Fox, E. J. Norman, Hershel W. Doss, E. C. Morrisett, Jesse Bass, and Sam J. Holt.

God forgives and forgets

Have you ever heard someone say that they can forgive, but they can't forget?

I would say that if that is their attitude, then they haven't forgiven at all.

What if God would have said, "I can forgive my children of their sins, but I won't forget them." How chilling that would be, to know that, even after Jesus' blood covered our sins, God still remembered them.

The Holy Bible teaches us that our sins are blotted out, pardoned, forgiven, not found, separated as far as the east is from the west and remembered no more.

It helps to remember how generously we have been forgiven by God, for when we reflect on how much God has forgiven us, it makes our own little grudges against others seem rather petty. It can be transforming to pray, "Father, forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Forgive and forget, as God has done for us.
— Leon Watson
Farwell, Texas

MOST WELCOME

Dear Elder Don,

Pardon me for being late, but enclosed is my check for two years subscription.

Always enjoy your "editorial" each copy. The articles never fail to give me much to enjoy and feed me.

We were happy to add seven new members recently, five from one family, the Dad and four sons. The other two boys were cousins.

The Banner of Love is most welcome in my mail box each month. Each week would be nice!

May God Bless you and those who may assist you.

Many blessings,
Sister Ruth Bogel
Huntsville, Alabama

VERY ENCOURAGING

Dear ones,

Joshua 24:14-15 also Eccles. 12:13-14 are very encouraging in thinking of this age of time.

May God strengthen and comfort each of you in knowing He will see us through.

In precious hope and love,
Sister Loretta Lilly
Akron, Ohio



1930 ORDINATION – Shown is the ordination presbytery of ministers and deacons for Elder Jim A. Barrington on June 7, 1930. It is believed the ordination was in Crosbyton, Texas. Standing, from left, Brother Henry I Bass, Elder A. B. Morris, Brother Melvin Bass, Elder Jack West, Brother John Guey, Elder Joel H. Aldridge, Elder Tommy A. Dunn, Elder J.C.L. Bolinger, Brother Jeffery, Elder O. Strickland (with hat), ordination candidate Elder J. A. Barrington, and Brother George Aldridge. Kneeling, from left,

Elder A. W. Pyron, Elder W. H. (Hamp) Richards, and Elder Lewis J. McCarty. Elder Jim Barrington was born Jan. 13, 1898 and baptized at age 12 in 1910 at Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church between Brownwood and Goldwaithe, Texas by Elder J. H. Aldridge. He served churches in Portales, New Mexico, Stegall, Texas, Midland, Texas and Robert Lee, Texas. He was killed in an elevator accident in 1943. He was the father of Elder J. E. Barrington.

God's Power

In the still of every hour,
God brings forth His utmost power,
From the shaking of the earth,
To the sound of someone's birth.

He lets us know in strict command,
All the strength that's in His hand.

In the silence of all space,
Is His power in every trace.
And even in the darkest night,
What a comfort to know His might,

Yet of all His powers we see,
We can say, "He remembers me."

– Benny C. Watson
Dallas, Texas

Heavenly Blessings

I was 90 years old today.

I had not been looking forward to this day. Before my 80th birthday I had been promised by my family that they would go to church with me, and they kept my promise.

Today I had no promise, but my church family came and took me to church.

Our pastor was blessed to bring a good message on repentance, and some of the parables of Luke. I also had been permitted to hear a good portion on Luke on CD during the week.

At the end of the singing I had to go to the back, and when I came out a couple called me back to the fellowship where they had a birthday cake for me.

I invited the congregation to help me eat it. I accepted a piece and a cup of coffee before the

main group came out of the sanctuary. While I was eating my cake several of the children came and sang "Happy birthday" to me.

It was such a blessing. Then the whole congregation came and sang to me.

Our Lord is so good.

After they took me home, my daughter came and took me to a restaurant where 20 or more of my family, and some neighbors, dined together.

It is such a blessing when our church family meets together to sing and pray; to hear His words spoken, and to visit about the blessings we have had during the past week.

And to remember to pray for each other.

–Elder Frank Baker
Azle, Texas

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H. G. Richards
Publisher 1932-34



Afton E. Richards
Publisher 1934-84

The Banner of Love

Don R. Richards
Publisher and Editor

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80th Year

Don R. Richards

This issue of The Banner of Love marks the beginning of our 80th year of publication.

The roots for the Banner began with my great grandfather, Elder W. H. "Hamp" Richards in the early 1920's when he started a Primitive Baptist church publication known as The Glad Tidings, which fell victim to the economic crisis of the Great Depression.

The Banner was then created in 1932 by my grandfather, Elder Hard Richards, and named by his wife, my grandmother, Dora Richards.

My father, Elder Afton E. Richards, was the Banner publisher for more than 50 years until his death, and I have tried to serve as publisher for the past 26 years.

New technology

We have witnessed numerous changes in technology in that time frame. My grandparents started in 1932 setting the type one letter at a time, and then printed one page at a time. Over the years, we have not been on the forefront of every new technology publishing gadget, but we have continued to improve our efficiency with new technology as finances allowed.

This issue marks another advance in technology for us, as my son Reid, home for Christmas break from his engineering classes at the University of Texas, is assisting the old man in learning to advance our computer technology to meet changes in printing specifications. He is patiently attempting to teach new tricks to an old dog. We hope our readers will begin to notice a "cleaner" appearing print.

Same goals and purpose

One thing that has not changed over the years is the goal and purpose of the Banner: to provide good news to the Lord's people. We could not attempt to meet our goal without the benefit of our gifted and dedicated writers. We accept no paid advertising, solely meeting our financial requirements from our readers' subscriptions and contributions. Some months we run short on revenue and long on expenses, but the Lord has richly blessed us to continue publication through both good and

tough times.

Another thing that has not changed is the requirement of the "editing" responsibility that comes with the editor title. We certainly are not perfect, making far more mistakes than we should, but remaining ever thankful for a merciful and forgiving Lord.

'Editing' questions

Most recently (in the past year), we have been reminded of our editing responsibilities by reader response to certain submitted articles we have printed. Some readers have expressed a desire that we print submitted articles of controversial issues which we have deliberately declined. Others have objected to our choice, or non-choice, of articles for which they questioned the doctrinal or scriptural interpretation.

Still others voice opinions regarding some of our otherwise "bland" listing of "meeting notices".

While we are extremely conscious of our goal and intent to publish articles of truth supported by scriptural accuracy, we may from time to time allow articles with which we do not necessarily agree personally with a writer's interpretation; or of a church meeting's chosen agenda or speaker. That concept perplexes those who do not agree. Some simply cannot comprehend why we would publish an article or meeting notice unless we were 100 percent in agreement with the content or speaker.

A good reference on this point was an article we published this past year by Elder Ed Kirkpatrick on his interpretation of "The Rich Man and Lazarus" of Luke 16:19-31. We greatly appreciated the wisdom of Brother Ed's opening comment in his article that he understood that all ministers might not agree with his interpretation of the so-called "parable" of Christ (which he contended was not a parable); yet he established that such differences in interpretation did not constitute a breach of fellowship.

As Brother Ed expressed so clearly, we recognize there may be, from time to time,

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Redemption by Christ Alone

By **ELDER MARK GREEN**

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1.7).

Paul here equates redemption with the forgiveness of sins and says that both are through the blood of the Lord Jesus. The Lord himself used similar language: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Mt. 26.28).

Anyone who even pretends to believe that the Bible is God's word must admit that redemption is through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus. Most, however, insist that other things also are necessary in order to make the blood effective in the case of the individual. One religious order is well known for teaching that immersion in water is necessary in

order to reach the blood. On the other hand, Primitive Baptists insist that Christ's work alone - by itself - fulfilled all that was necessary in order to satisfy the justice of God and to make full satisfaction for the sin debt of every individual for which He died, and that God will certainly bring to his heavenly inheritance everyone who was redeemed by the Lord.

So what do the Scriptures teach? Is redemption by the work of Christ alone, or is some action on the part of the sinner necessary to make it legally effective in his case? Brother Paul settles this question in the third verse in his letter to the Hebrews: "When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." What does Paul say? that He purged our sins, and that He did it alone. Anything that is purged is clean

from any stain or corruption. One who has been truly purged of his sins has no sins. He is free from sin. How could a just God fail to justify one who is free from any stain of sin? Paul says, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." Who could lay anything to a man's charge if he is free from sin? Paul goes on to say, "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." When did Christ begin to be at the right hand of God? when he "sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high."

When did He sit down in that place? when He had purged our sins.

If our sins were purged before Christ sat down at the right hand of God, which happened after He ascended back into heaven, then it is too late for something done after that time by the sinner to make actual the purging of our sins. If you and I were embraced in the work of Christ, then when we believed our sins already had been purged and put away. The justice of God already had been satisfied and our home in heaven was secure and assured.

It is true that a child of God may not experientially realize that he has been redeemed and that his sins have been put away until he believes, but there is a vast difference between something being true and our realizing that it is true. We may indeed symbolically wash away our sins in the baptismal pool, but that shadow is not required to make the substance a reality.

When Jesus ascended up to heaven and sat down at the right hand of God, the sins of all the elect people of God had already been put away. Redemption was an accomplished fact.

— Elder Mark Green

Booneville, Arkansas

(Elder Mark Green is editor and publisher of *The Christian Pathway*. Individuals may subscribe to the Primitive Baptist publication by contacting him at P.O. Box 334, Booneville, AR. 72927).

KEEP UP WORK

I am 80 years young so I can relate to some of the adventures I read about.

Enclosed is my payment for the Banner of Love. I enjoy it very much. Keep up the good work.

Sister Bertie Bundrick

Italy, Texas

Elbertine Ware

Lampasas, Texas

80th Year . . .

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valid differences in interpretation of certain matters.

I have noted with interest that our colleagues in the PB publishing field express similar policies:

— Elder Louis Culver, editor and publisher of *In The Master's Service*, in Alabama publishes a policy of: "Ideas expressed by various writers are not necessarily those believed by the editor".

— Elder Billy Mullis, Editor of *The Trumpet of Truth of Georgia* publishes this policy: "The articles in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the position of the editors . . . While we try to edit articles to be sure they express the truth as it is set forth in scripture, differences in interpretation and personal understanding may occur. Also, because we get articles from ministers we do not even know, it is impossible for us to testify to the moral character or overall doctrinal position of every writer."

— Elder Kenneth Clevenger, editor and publisher of *The Old Path Contender in Missouri* publishes this policy: "The ideas expressed or inferred by various writers are not necessarily those believed by the editor."

The Banner of Love's policy is basically the same. We may, and have in the past year, published articles in which the writer did not express a view or interpretation that we personally hold.

Likewise, we may not agree with the format, procedure, or chosen guest speaker of every church meeting that we may choose to print in our "Meeting Notices" section. We do believe our readers need to be informed of such differing views and matters that arise among the Old Baptists, in order that they be knowledgeable. ("My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" Hosea 4:6). Therefore we make the decision to publish certain articles or meeting notices for the benefit of our readers to be fully informed.

We intend to follow the policy of previous editors: we do not intend for *The Banner of Love* to become a "battleground" for controversial subjects. But, like my grandfather and father, that does not mean we may not occasionally present differing sides of a controversial subject in order to provide knowledge to our readers.

We are unquestionably fallible. No doubt we will continue to make mistakes. For these we beg the forgiveness and guidance of our gracious Lord, and our readers.

Our purpose is to serve the Lord's people and provide them the good news of the Gospel, and information of interest among the Old Baptists. We re-dedicate ourselves to that purpose with this beginning of our 80th year.

May the Lord richly bless each of you in this new year.

The Banner of Love

Meeting Notices...

Send in your advance meeting notices

Internet:

banneroflove@aol.com

Mail: P.O. Box 93123

Lubbock, Texas 79493-3123

January 2012

5TH SUNDAY JANUARY MEETING PLANNED AT DIXIE PBC, WHITESBORO, TEXAS

The Dixie Primitive Baptist Church of Whitesboro, Texas will host a 5th Sunday meeting in January.

The meeting will begin at 10 a.m. Saturday.

The church is located on Highway 377 in Whitesboro, Texas. The building is across from the Dixie Cemetery.

For more information contact Sister Darrene Collins at dollmama42@gmail.com.

TUCSON PBC ANNUAL MEETING TO BE 5TH SUNDAY JANUARY

The Lord willing, the Tucson Primitive Baptist Church of Jesus Christ will hold its annual Fifth Sunday meeting on January 27, 28 and 29, 2012.

Services will begin on Friday evening, January 27th and continue through Sunday, noon, January 29th.

Full meals will be served at the Church. There are trailer hook-ups on the property and plenty of space in members' homes. We invite all who are able to join us. Please come praying for a Spiritual meeting and the fellowship of Christ.

We especially want to invite all ordained brethren to meet with us. The Church is located at 5921 E. Lee Street, Tucson, Arizona, 85712. Please feel free to contact our Pastor, Elder Tim Janes at (520) 762-9520 or our Clerk, Br. Buddy Janes at (520) 940-5128 for directions.

— Buddy Janes

NORTH GEORGIA FELLOWSHIP TO BE HOSTED AT DALLAS, GA PBC JAN. 19-21

The North Georgia Fellowship meeting will be hosted by the Primitive Baptist Church of Dallas, Georgia January 19-21, 2012.

Services begin at 7 p.m. Thursday with three services on Friday (10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.) and a 10 a.m. Saturday service.

Breakfast, lunch and supper will be served on Friday; breakfast and lunch on Saturday.

The church is located at 225 Legion Road, Dallas, Georgia. Church website is www.dallaspbc.org.

A number of visiting ministers are expected. For information please contact Elder Marty Hoskins at (404) 831-2753.

February 2012

HOUSTON'S GRACE PBC TO HOST ANNUAL MEETING FEBRUARY 10-12, 2012

The Grace Primitive Baptist Church of Houston, Texas will host its Annual Meeting on February 10th through the 12th, 2012.

The meeting will begin Friday evening and continue through Sunday.

The church is located at 3616 Hurley Street, Houston.

For more information contact Brother Bobby Moseley bmoseley2@comcast.net; or Elder Pat young youngip62@verizon.net; or Elder Mike Moseley mmoseley01@hotmail.com, or Brother Lloyd Cody lloydgcody@yahoo.com, or Brother Paul Smith Paul.Smith@weatherford.com.

2012 FLORIDA FELLOWSHIP MEETING AT LITTLE UNION PBC, LITHIA, FEBRUARY 17-19

Little Union Primitive Baptist Church near Lithia, FL, will host the 2012 Florida Fellowship Meeting.

The meeting will begin on Thursday, February 16, 2012 with services at 7:30 PM. The meeting will continue on Friday with services at 10 a.m., lunch, 2 p.m. service, supper and 7:30 p.m. service. The meeting on Saturday will follow the same schedule as Friday. The meeting will conclude with services at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, followed by lunch.

The church has negotiated discounted rates at The Red Rose Inn & Suites, 2011 N Wheeler St, Plant City,

FL 33563, (813) 752-3141. The rate is \$65/night plus tax, mention "Little Union Church." Rooms at these rates can be reserved until January 16, 2012.

If you have any questions you can view the church website at www.littleunion.com, or contact the pastor, Elder Chris Crouse at (325) 725-6948.

BETHANY PBC, SAN ANTONIO ANNUAL MEETING FEBRUARY 17-19

Bethany PBC, San Antonio, TX will host its annual meeting the 3rd Sunday weekend in February.

They plan to have Elder Mark Wattenbarger, from Oklahoma City with them during their meeting, along with other visiting ministers and guests.

If you need additional information or wish for us to make lodging arrangements, please contact them through the e-mail address ministry@bethanypbc.net or call Elder Mike Rodgers at 210-861-9215.

LITTLEFIELD, TX PBC PLANS ORDINATION OF BRO. SCOTT BASS FEBRUARY 25, 2012

The Primitive Baptist Church of Littlefield, Texas has called unanimously for the ordination of Brother Scott Bass to full work of the gospel ministry.

The date for the ordination services will be the 4th Sunday weekend in February, 2012. The meeting will begin on Saturday morning February 25, 2012, with the ordination set for Saturday afternoon. The meeting will conclude Sunday morning, February 26.

The church is located at Park Street and 9th Street, south of downtown Littlefield. We ask for your prayers for Brother Scott in his service to our Lord. All ordained ministers and deacons, and visitors are welcome to attend.

For more information contact Brother Elton Bass at elmel@suddenlink.net.

EXTEND OUR SUBSCRIPTION

Please extend our subscription for another year. We so much enjoy the articles and church news.

May the Lord bless you in your efforts.

Elder Clyde Farmer
Bettendorf, Iowa

Meetings... Page 2

March 2012

BETHEL PBC, BATON ROUGE, LA TO HOST ANNUAL MEETING 1ST SUNDAY WEEKEND

The first Sunday weekend in March, the Bethel Primitive Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, Louisiana will host its Annual Meeting.

The meeting begins Friday night March 2, 2012, with services on Saturday morning, Saturday afternoon and concluding on Sunday morning March 4.

Elder Heath Williams from Alabama, has been invited to be with the Church during their meeting. Eld. David Cothren is pastor of the Bethel Primitive Baptist Church. Address is 8576 Hooper Rd. Baton Rouge, Louisiana. 8576 Hopper Rd., Baton Rouge, LA 70805. Leave Plank Rd at the airport on Hooper Rd. Go 3 mi to church on right.

For more information, please contact Bro. Shane Burris (225) 654-5346.

OLD UNION PBC TO HOST ANNUAL MEETING MARCH 9-11, 2012

The Old Union Primitive Baptist Church outside of Hot Springs, Arkansas, will host their Annual Meeting the 2nd weekend in March.

The meeting will being on Friday night March 9th, and continue all day Saturday and conclude on Sunday morning. Elder Mark Quarles has agreed to be with the Church at that time.

For more information, please contact Elder Adam Green at 479-965-2080 or e-mail him at adaman-dashlie@centurytel.net.

Directions: Coming in on I-30 take Exit 111 onto Highway 70 towards Hot Springs. Stay on Highway 70 for about 9 minutes until you reach Highway 128. Turn right onto Highway 128 and follow it until it ends at the intersection of Highway 5. Turn left onto Highway 5 and travel about 2 miles until you reach Danville Road. There is a small store on the left where Danville Road is on the right. There is also a small sign reading "Old Union Primitive Baptist Church" at the same intersection. Turn right on Danville Road and follow it 8 miles to the Church.

SHILOH PBC, SULPHUR, OK ANNUAL MEETING MARCH 17-18

The Shiloh Primitive Church Of Sulphur, Oklahoma, would like to announce its Annual Meeting for 2012. The meeting will begin Saturday, March 17, 2012, ending Sunday, March 18.

Meals will be served Saturday and Sunday.

We invite all Elders and Church Members and friends to come and worship with us. You will be graciously received. If you cannot come, please pray for us as we celebrate 115 years of meeting with God's people.

Motels are close by if needed. The church address is 1 block North of Highway 7 at West 18th St., easy to find as it visible from the highway.

If you need more information you can call Clerk at 180-580-223-5180 or

Pastor Jerry Cottrell, at 1-405-634-8722.

Pastor Jerry Cottrell

Clerk Carl Hampton

GULF COAST FELLOWSHIP SET 4TH SUNDAY WEEKEND MARCH, 2012 IN ALABAMA

The 2012 Gulf Coast Fellowship Meeting will be the 4th Sunday weekend in March, 2012 and will be hosted by the Piney Grove Primitive Baptist Church in Headland, Alabama.

For more information contact Elder Clayton Nowel, telephone (334)693-5700, claytonnowel@yahoo.com; or Brother Royce Sellers (334) 693-5385, royces@centurytel.net.

STEPHENVILLE PBC ANNUAL MEETING PLANNED MARCH 23-25, 2012

The Primitive Baptist Church of Stephenville, Texas will host its annual meeting the 4th Sunday weekend in March, 2012.

A sandwich supper will begin at 5:30 p.m. Friday night followed by services. Saturday services will start at 10 a.m. With lunch and afternoon service. The meeting will conclude Sunday morning with service beginning at 10:30 a.m. All are invited to attend.

For more information contact Elder Bill Allen, wallenpb@gmail.com or (254) 967-3970; or Brother Royce Lee rlee@erath.net (254) 968-5877.

LEWISVILLE PBC, TEXAS ANNUAL MEETING SET MARCH 23-25, 2012

The Primitive Baptist Church of Lewisville, Texas will host its Annual Meeting the 4th Sunday weekend in March, 2012.

The meeting will begin on Friday evening, March 23 with supper at 5:30 p.m. followed by worship services. There will be three services on Saturday with the first service at 10 a.m. Sunday morning will begin at 10:30 a.m.

The church is located at 1590 Glencairn Lane in Lewisville, Texas. From Interstate 35E take the Lewisville Main Street exit and go west on Main Street for about two miles to Gardenridge. Turn right on Gardenridge and go one block to Glencairn. Turn right on Glencairn.

Members of the church will open their homes for visitors.

For more information contact Elder Mark Hasenmyer at (972) 874-5591; or Elder michael Ivey at (972) 292-0309.

April 2012

2012 SMOKY MOUNTAIN SPRING MEETING PLANNED APRIL 2-5

The 2012 Smoky Mountain Spring Meeting of Primitive Baptists will be held at the Smoky Mountain Convention Center in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, beginning Monday night, April 2nd and continuing morning and night through Thursday morning April 5th, 2012.

Rooms are available at \$45 per night at the Ramada Inn which is on the same property. The Ramada and the Convention Center share the same parking lot. The Convention Center is on the South end of town on the Parkway. It is just behind the Cracker Barrel.

To make reservations call 1-800-523-3919. You stand a better chance of getting a ground floor room if you call by March 2nd.

For more information you may call Elder Harold Hunt at 865-982-3012.

INDIAN OAKS PBC, FT. WORTH TO HOST ANNUAL MEETING 3RD WEEKEND APRIL

The Indian Oaks Primitive Baptist Church in Lake worth, Texas (west Fort Worth) will host its annual meeting the 3rd Sunday weekend in April.

Services will begin on Friday night and continue Saturday morning and afternoon. The meeting will conclude Sunday morning with regular services.

The church is located at 3229 Shawnee Trail, Fort worth, Texas.

For more information contact Elder Larry Webb larrycarole.webb@charter.net.

WEST AMITE PB ASSOCIATION TO MEET AT PLYMOUTH PBC 4TH SUNDAY APRIL 20-22

The West Amite Primitive Baptist Association will be hosted by the Plymouth Primitive Baptist Church outside of Liberty, Mississippi beginning on Friday night, April 20, 2012 before the fourth Sunday in April. It will continue on Saturday, April 21 and Sunday April 22.

Elder Jerry Williams is pastor of the Plymouth Primitive Baptist Church. Plymouth Primitive Baptist Church is about midway between Gloster and Liberty, Mississippi.

WE WANT TO PUBLISH

Meeting Notices
Meeting reports/pictures
Doctrinal articles
Weddings and Obituaries
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Christian experiences

Meetings... Page 3

April 2012

FIRST PBC DALLAS, TX HOSTS ITS ANNUAL SINGING SATURDAY, APRIL 21

The First Primitive Baptist Church at Dallas will host its annual singing the Saturday embracing the 4th Sunday weekend in April. This exact date will be April 21, 2012.

An invitation is extended to all those who would like to come and sing praises to our Lord. We especially hope to see song leaders of all ages come and join us. This will also be a time where our sisters can lead singing if they would like to, as well as provide an opportunity for fellowship between our local Churches.

If you would like more information, please contact Brother Ronnie Mallow (RonnieM227@aol.com).

NEW HOPE PBC, BROKEN ARROW, OK ANNUAL MEETING APRIL 20-22, 2011

New Hope Primitive Baptist Church of 1550 E College St in Broken Arrow, OK will again hold its annual meeting the fourth weekend in April 2012.

The meeting will begin on Friday night April 20th with a light supper at 5:30 and continue through Sunday April 22nd. Services will begin at 10 a.m. Saturday morning with afternoon services beginning shortly after lunch. There will be no services Saturday night. Lunch will be served Saturday and Sunday.

Elder Sonny Huckaby from Texas has promised to be with us through Sunday during this meeting.

We invite everyone to come and worship with us at this meeting, praying that the Lord will be with us, that His name may be glorified and His Church edified. If you are unable to attend, please pray for our Church.

We have some members who are able to take visitors, a couple of RV hookups at the Church, and several nice motels in the area.

In Christian love and fellowship, New Hope Primitive Baptist Church Elder Mark Green, Pastor, 479-6754406 Sister Lavene Neal, Church Clerk 10517 S 200th EAV Broken Arrow, OK 74014 918-455-6325 gandlineal@aol.com

COOL SPRINGS PBC, LOGANSPOUT, LA 5TH SUNDAY MEETING IN APRIL

The Cool Spring Primitive Baptist Church near Logansport, Louisiana will host a 5th Sunday Meeting in April, beginning on Friday night and continuing through Sunday.

The Church has invited Elder Travis Brown and Elder Danny Wisner to be with them during the meeting and welcome other ministers to come be with them

at that time.

For more information, please contact Bro. Josh McClain (techforester09@yahoo.com), Bro. Buddy Hall (318-932-0652) or Bro. John Stiles (318-697-2386).

MT. PARAN PBC, PARIS, TEXAS TO HOST 5TH SUNDAY WEEKEND MEETING IN APRIL

The Mt. Paran Primitive Baptist Church of Paris, Texas will host a 5th Sunday weekend meeting in April.

Services will begin on Saturday morning, with Saturday afternoon service and conclude with Sunday service.

The church is located at 580 19th Street Southwest, in Paris, Texas.

For more information contact Elder Harley Stripland at stripla@cs.com.

May 2012

FARMERSVILLE, TX PBC ANNUAL MEETING PLANNED 1ST SUNDAY WEEKEND MAY

The Farmersville Primitive Baptist Church will host their Annual Meeting the first weekend in May.

The meeting will begin on Friday night (singing at 7p.m.), with two services on Saturday and it will conclude on Sunday morning – with communion services following morning worship services.

There also will be a sandwich supper on Friday night at 6 p.m. Elder Ricky Harcrow has promised to be with the Church during their meeting.

The Church at Farmersville also has a communion service after Sunday morning preaching services. The Church building is located 2 miles south of Farmersville on County Rd 557, just Highway 78. You will see a sign for the Church about 3 miles south of town on Highway 78. Take C.R. 557 and the Church will be on the right about 1/4 mi. The address is: 1287 County Road 557, Farmersville, Texas 75442

For more information, please contact Elder Owen Rushing at 972.978.6036.

LITTLE VINE PBC, AUSTIN, TX, ANNUAL MEETING 1ST SUNDAY WEEKEND IN MAY

The Little Vine Primitive Baptist Church of Austin, Texas will hold its annual meeting the First Sunday weekend in May, 2012.

The meeting begins on Friday, May 4 with 7 p.m. singing and continues Saturday morning at 10 a.m., with afternoon and evening service. Sunday morning will begin at 10:30 a.m. Meals will be served prior to the Friday evening service, and on Saturday and Sunday.

The church is located at 915 E. 52nd Street, in Austin, just two blocks west of I-35 off the 51st Street exit.

Elder Mark I. Richards is pastor (512) 852-8233. For information you may also call Bro. David Estlack (512) 255-9796; or Bro. Jimmie Oakley (512) 388-3630.

June 2012

CHAMBERS CREEK ASSOCIATION TO BE AT FARMERSVILLE, TX JUNE 28 - JULY 1, 2012

The Chambers Creek Association will be held with the Primitive Baptist Church of Farmersville, Texas the first Sunday weekend in July, which begins on Thursday, June 28, 2012.

The meeting begins Thursday evening. The church is located two miles south of Farmersville on County Road 557, just of Highway 78. There is a sign on Highway 78 directing to the church.

OLD NEW GARDEN PBC, EXCELSIOR SPRINGS, MO. TO MEET JUNE 15-17, 2012

The Old New Garden Primitive Baptist Church, south of Excelsior Springs, Missouri, will hold its annual three-day meeting June 15-17, 2012.

The meeting will begin Friday, June 15 and continue through Sunday June 17, 2012. Communion will be after lunch on Sunday.

Elder Kenneth Clevenger is the pastor (660) 395-9756 or (417) 825-5272.

July 2012

OLD HARMONY ASSOCIATION PLANNED AT LAMKIN, TEXAS JULY 5-7, 2012

The Old Harmony Association will be held with the Union Primitive Baptist Church at Lamkin, Texas the first Sunday weekend in July, 2012.

The meeting begins Friday morning, July 5 and continues through Sunday, July 7, 2012.

The Lamkin community is located on Highway 36 nine miles west of Hamilton or 24 miles east of Comanche, Texas.

For information contact Elder Paul McClain (254) 826-4295; Sister Janice McCullough (325) 356-3173; or Brother Dale Keith (936) 539-2640.

Obituaries

SALLY MORRIS

Nov. 11, 1912 – June 20, 2011

Elk Creek Primitive Baptist Church of Elk Creek, Oklahoma is saddened by the passing of a precious sister, Sally (Naoma) Morris. She was loved by all of us and will be greatly missed by her friends and relatives here at Elk Creek and elsewhere.

Sally was born on November 11, 1912, in western Washita County, Oklahoma to Ann Elizabeth (Irving) and Charley William Jones and grew up on the family farm together with her six brothers and three sisters. She attended school at Waco Star school and helped on the farm until her marriage to Benjamin Franklin Morris on February 21, 1930. They farmed west of Dill City, Oklahoma and the family was joined by a son, Charley Albert, and four daughters, Betty Ruth, Patricia Ann, Veta Faye, and Calla Louise.

Sally was a member of Elk Creek Primitive Baptist Church, having been baptized with her husband in 1954. Also in 1954 they moved from the farm to Cordell, Oklahoma where they both worked for the school system. She began work at the TGY variety store in 1960 and retired in 1976. Sally was a gifted seamstress and painter as well as cook and enjoyed preparing delicious meals for her large family. She was blessed by having her family nearby and looked forward to their visits and phone calls, as well as those of others. Sally was also blessed to be able to remain in her home, with the help of her loving family, until the last several months of her life.

Sally passed from this life on June 20, 2011 at Corn, Oklahoma, and was laid to rest in Lawnview Cemetery at Cordell. She was preceded in death by her parents Charley and Ann; her husband Frank; her son Charley, a son-in-law Ray McCarther, and a great-granddaughter Sarah Faith Macy. Also by her brothers Andrew, Wilce, Guy, John, Francis, and David; and her sisters Artie, Mary, Josephine and Pearl.

Surviving are her four daughters Betty McCarther of Clinton, Okla., Patricia Loftiss and husband Doyle of Dill City, Okla., Veta Sanders and husband Noah of Lexington, Okla., Calla Smith and husband Gene of Cordell, Okla. And daughter-in-law Sherrill Morris of Cordell. Other survivors are 10 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren, 33 great-great-grandchildren and many other relatives and friends.

We here at Elk Creek Church wish to express our heart-felt sympathy to all her loved ones and hope you will find comfort in the knowledge that she is now resting in the presence of her dear savior, Jesus Christ and also by all the fond memories of your years together.

Written by order of Elk Creek Church in conference June 26, 2011.

BOBBIE TYLER

Nov. 30, 1940 – June 7, 2011

Sister Bobbie Tyler, a member of the First Primitive Baptist Church of Dallas Texas, passed from the scenes of this life into heaven's immortal glory on June 7, 2011. She was 70 years old.

On Thursday, June 9th, a Memorial Service was held in her memory at the Claremont in Arlington, Texas. After so many years of poor health and physical struggles, we bow in humble submission to the Lord's will in calling home this sweet sister.

She was born on November 30, 1940. During her life she lived in South Carolina, New York, Georgia, Alabama and finally settling in Arlington, Texas. She was blessed with a wonderful outlook on life, even having the desire to go back and graduate from Parrish High School in Selma, Alabama in 1979.

Though confined to a wheelchair and continually in poor health, Sis. Tyler was not deterred from the answer of a good conscience. We were blessed to see her come forward asking for a home in the Church by baptism, on April 12, 2009. She was baptized by Elder Clifford Gowens on May 24, 2009.

Sis. Bobbie or "Grammie" as her family called her, absolutely loved children. She herself was a loving mother of five. She is survived by her mother Jessie Tyler; her sons David Smith, Donald Adams, and Daniel Smith; daughters Diane Lee and Lenore Scott; her grandchildren Mary Beth, Trey, Jodi, Bobbie, Diana, Tyler, Jennifer, Rebecca, Paul, Nicole, Alex, Danny, Don, Michael, Rachel, Trish, and Zachary; and her great grandchildren Dallas, Seth, James, Chandler, Hannah, Lindsey, Anna, Alyssa, Addison, and Christian. She is also survived by numerous nieces and nephews, as well as many friends and loved ones.

We at the Dallas Church will continue to remember her fondly and the love and inspiration she brought to our little flock. We only had her with us for a short time, but God was so good to us and to her. We give Him the praise for her life and love.

BENTON EDGAR "Ed" DRURY

March 9, 1993 – August 16, 2011

Whereas, it hath pleased our Heavenly Father in his infinite wisdom and power on August 16, 2011, to call our young brother Benton Edgar "Ed" Drury home to his eternal presence, let us bow to his holy will.

Brother Ed was born March 9, 1993 to Tim and Lisa (Hunter) Drury in Altus, Oklahoma. He attended school and graduated from Olustee High School in 2011, and was about to begin studies at Southwestern Oklahoma State University as a part of their Rodeo Team, when he was killed in an automobile accident.

He was a member of the Eldorado, Oklahoma Primitive Baptist Church and had been a member

of the Church since he was 6 or 7 years of age. At an early age he loved to lead singing of the old gospel songs he learned in the Old Baptist Church.

He was a member of the Oklahoma High School Rodeo Association, 4-H, and Olustee Student Council. He played basketball in High school and excelled in the sport and also became an avid team roper while in High School. Ed was active in various mission projects including Youth Force, and took a trip to Guatemala with his best friend, his Dad, and helped to install a water well system in order that a remote village could have sanitary drinking water.

Ed will forever be remembered as a kind young man with a contagious smile. He lit up a room when he walked in and had the ability to make anyone smile and laugh. Ed was a friend to everyone, despite their age, background or personality, because he took time to truly know people. If you met him once, no matter how briefly, you considered him a friend. His zest for life will not be forgotten.

As a young boy he loved to hunt and fish with his grandpa, Brother Lawayne Drury, and he was very close to all of his grandparents. As he grew into High School he began to be involved in team roping with his Dad and others and progressed very quickly in the sport and it became a passion to him.

He is preceded in death by "Grandma Sara" Joann Hunter.

Ed also leaves behind his parents Tim and Lisa, and two sisters, Riley and Bailey, all of Olustee, Oklahoma. A girlfriend, Brianna McGee of Olustee, grandparents Lawayne and Reba Drury of Olustee and Jim and Verna Hunter of Altus. He is also survived by many aunts, uncles, cousins and other relatives as well as a multitude of friends.

Funeral services were held at 5:00 P:M Friday August 19, 2011 at the First Baptist Church in Altus, Oklahoma. Officiating were Jim Willis, Kirby Kelly, Terry Ward and Dale Hirschman.

Burial was in the Boggy Cemetery South of Olustee, Oklahoma. His spirit is now in the presence of our Almighty God and his body is sleeping, awaiting the Day of all Days when our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ will return to redeem the bodies of all of his people and take them to our Heavenly Home to be with him for all eternity.

Written by the order of the Primitive Baptist Church of Eldorado, Oklahoma at it's regular Conference meeting held on November 20, 2011.

Elder Glen Rooker, Pastor
Sister Reba Drury, Church Clerk

ONLY FIVE MINUTES

Take five minutes tomorrow morning, before you start your day. Read one chapter of the Bible.

Obituaries



Doris Elaine Kulms

DORIS ELAINE KULMS

June 23, 1943 – Oct. 28, 2011

Doris Elaine Kulms was born June 23, 1943, to James Edward and Tennie Ola Dorsett, the 6th of their 6 children.

She married Charlie William Kulms on February 21, 1961, in Brownfield, Texas. She joined Charlie and moved to Lubbock, Texas and they had over 50 years of marriage.

Surviving are her husband and two children and their families: Greg and Ladonna Kulms, Lisa and Neal Blackwood; and two grandchildren, Isaac and Isaiah Blackwood. Elaine is also survived by one sister, Marjorie Laverne Murphey, and two brothers James Cleveland Dorsett and Authur Wayne Dorsett.

She was preceded in death by her parents, her sister Artie Mae, and her brother Harold Jefferson Dorsett.

Elaine and her family lived in Lubbock, Texas. Here her life was focused on being a good wife, mother, and homemaker. She also worked outside the home to help support the family as a hairdresser, school cook. She also worked retail at JC Penny and retired from Target. She devoted her energies to her husband, two children, and to her home. Some of her time was spent doing yard work and growing flowers, especially lantana, oxalis, and pansies.

She enjoyed antiques and live entertainment as well as listening to old gospel songs. Elaine's favorite pass time was spent at the beach and reading biographies. Her biggest hobbies were collecting dolls and decorative plates.

Doris Elaine Kulms joined Lubbock Primitive Baptist Church, August 7, 2011. She was a faithful member and loved her Lord and her church. Her greatest desire for the last part of her life was to attend Church services and Bible study.

God blessed her with a revelation of truth in early life. She loved to read the Bible, as she grew older. Although, we know that Elaine is with our Lord and Master, we will miss her pleasant countenance and sweet smile. We rejoice in her life and in the treasures she left for us all, for her strength, and for her firm belief that sustained her throughout her days.

While we are saddened by her passing, we rejoice in knowing that she now and forever is in the presence of her Redeemer, Jesus Christ. We look to that day when we too shall be with our loved ones in His august presence singing praises to His great name.

Her funeral was officiated by her pastor, Elder Kenny Venable. The prelude on bagpipe was by Thomas Campbell, opening prayer Brother JC Dorsett, obituary reading by Elder Kenny Venable; a song tribute was "Where the Roses Never Fade" by Sisters Joyce Dorsett and Ellen Watson. The congregation sang "We Shall Gather at the River" and "Amazing Grace".

Interment was in Ropesville Community Cemetery, Ropes, Texas.

Memorial contributions may be made to Lubbock Primitive Baptist Church. 4401 North University, Lubbock, Texas 79415.

Poem in memory of Elaine:

Lubbock Primitive Baptist Church
Coming together
by means of God
is a beginning;
Keeping together
by way of Jesus
is progress;
Working in the midst
of our Redeemer
is success.

Brother Charlie and Sister Elaine Kulms

L. C. SOOTHE, JR.

Dec. 18, 1925 – Sept. 24, 2011

Brother Lee Cleveland Boothe Jr., better known to his many friends and family as simply, Brother L. C., departed this life on September 24, 2011.

We the members of Pilgrims Rest Primitive Baptist Church of Stratton, Texas Community bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father who has called our Brother in Christ to his final home.

Brother L. C. was born on December 18, 1925, in Cuero, Texas. He is survived by his loving wife of sixty-four years, Sister Evelyn Frisbie Boothe. Likewise he is survived by two sons: Michael

Boothe and his wife Sandy of Houston and Roger Boothe and his wife Linda of Cuero and their families.

Brother L. C. Boothe asked for a home in Pilgrims Rest Primitive Baptist Church here at Stratton, Texas on April 15, 1990, and was ordained to the office of Deacon on December 13, 1997. He was a faithful member of the church and was always available to help when a problem arose or when there was work to be done.

He was generally a quiet, unassuming man who rarely spoke of his harrowing experiences as a coxswain with the United States Naval Amphibious Force in the Pacific Theater during World War II. During his tour of duty, his primary job was to operate a landing craft that transported the troops to the beaches of Japanese-held islands. He was often under deadly fire from the enemy troops and artillery.

Brother L. C. Boothe, our brother and friend, will be truly missed, not only by the members here at Pilgrims Rest Primitive Baptist Church, but also by all those who were blest to have known him.

Written in loving memory by the members of Pilgrims Rest Primitive Baptist Church.

– Elder Bill Walden, Pastor
Norman Miller, Church Clerk

NOTE REGARDING OBITUARIES

Because of the number of obituaries received by the Banner of Love, the patience of our readers is requested in publication of these memorials.

Priority is given each month to more timely articles and meetings notices in the limited amount of space each month. However, we do strongly desire to publish obituaries and memorials, and may, from time to time, delay publication until a later issue; and accumulate them to be published as space permits. Thank you.

ONE-YEAR FREE SUBSCRIPTION TO NEWLY-BAPTIZED MEMBERS

The Banner of Love will provide a one-year free subscription to any newly-baptized member of the Primitive Baptist Church.

Ministers, church clerks or interested members should send to the Banner of Love the names and addresses of your newly-baptized members, and we will add their names to our mailing list for a free one-year term.

TELL US WHEN YOU MOVE

Please notify The Banner of Love promptly when you move or change your mailing address so that we may correct our mailing list and you will not miss your monthly issue of The Banner of Love.

Obituaries



Elder Jim Hue Jackson

ELDER JIM HUE JACKSON

Feb. 1, 1932 – Dec. 9, 2011

Family and friends gathered to celebrate 79 years of life for Elder Jim Hue Jackson on Thursday, December 15, 2011 at Lake Ridge Chapel & Memorial Designers, in Lubbock, Texas with Elder Steven Bloyd, officiating.

Brother Jim was laid to rest next to the love of his life, Barbara (Johnson) Jackson. Private family interment was at the Idalou, Texas Cemetery. Our cherished father, brother, and grandfather passed away Friday, December 9, 2011 in Plano, TX, surrounded by his children.

Jim was born on February 1, 1932 in Bailey, Fannin County, TX to Theodore Roosevelt Jackson and Jenny Mae London Jackson. He graduated from Neosho High School in Missouri in 1950. He moved to Idalou in 1950 and attended Texas Tech University from 1950-1953.

He married Barbara Marie Johnson on December 23, 1953 in Idalou. He proudly served in the U.S. Army, where he was stationed in El Paso from 1953-1955, and served in the U.S. Korean Conflict as a ballistics instructor.

Jim and Barbara moved to Floydada in 1956, where they farmed for 40 years until 1996. Jim served as President of the National Farmer's Organization (NFO) in the 1970's era.

While in Floydada, they served the Floydada New Salem Primitive Baptist Church faithfully for a combined 40 years (1956-1996) as members,

and where Jim served as a Deacon and then as their Pastor.

Brother Jim was ordained as a gospel minister in 1980. Jim was preceded in death by his wife on October 4, 1994, by his parents, and both brothers, Randy and Dale Jackson.

Jim moved to Granbury, TX in 1996, and served as Pastor of the Paradise Primitive Baptist Church in Arlington, TX from 1996-2005. He moved to Frisco, TX in 2005 and focused on religious philanthropy. During this time, Jim focused spending time with his family and the hunting and ranching operations at his family ranch in Madill, OK.

Jim is survived by two daughters, Rhonda Gaye Wong and husband, Dr. Matt Wong, and their daughter, Emily of Oklahoma City, OK; and Nesa Lin Anders and husband, Larry K. Anders, and their children, Adam, Auston, and Allison of Plano, TX; one son, Jimmy H. Jackson and wife, Cherylon, and their son, Jantz of Plano, TX; and one sister, Maxyne Cadenhead of Lubbock, TX.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are suggested to the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA), 12655 North Central Expressway, Suite 230, Dallas, TX 75243 and Juvenile Diabetes Foundation (JDF), 9400 North Central Expressway, Suite 1201, Dallas, TX 75231.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

Our readers are asked to please note that all subscriptions renewals arriving after the monthly issues go to printing will not be renewed until the following month.

The Banner of Love requests, and appreciates, our readers' patience with the delayed deadlines of a monthly publication. Please allow additional postal mail travel and processing time for your mailing label to be updated. Occasionally, your payment may "cross" in the mail with a followup renewal notice from us. If you have already paid, please disregard the second notice.

SEND YOUR NEWS, ARTICLES TO THE BANNER OF LOVE ON THE INTERNET

The Banner of Love welcomes and encourages its writers and readers to send their news and articles in for publication via the internet. Regular mail continues to be used to reach us, but more timely publication can be achieved prior to our monthly deadlines by sending the article through the internet.

– Internet articles may be sent directly to the editor at "banneroflove@aol.com".

– Our postal mail address is P.O. Box 93123, Lubbock, Texas 79493.

A note on articles submitted to BOL for publication

The Banner of Love is filled with news and articles submitted by our readers. We thank our readers for these submissions; and we apologize for the times we receive more than we can publish that month.

We have been asked numerous times about the "format" that is best for submission. We want to get your articles into print as soon as possible, and certain format of articles help us be able to do that quickly.

1. Double-spaced typing is greatly helpful, if handwritten please double-space the lines and write clearly so that there will be no misinterpretation as we re-type for print.

2. News format typing is much easier to read without the use of all capital letters or the all bolding of letters. While writers use all capitals or all holding for persona! emphasis; surveys and studies have shown it is more distracting to the reading eye and actually reduces readership and interest.

3. We enjoy receiving pictures for publication, so long as they are clear black and white or clear, contrasting color pictures. We cannot commit to returning the pictures unless special arrangements are made.

4. Shorter articles will be given priority. While we attempt to print articles full length, we reserve the right to edit for length.

5. Priority is given to articles which may need to be timely published. As such, articles such as obituaries and post-meeting reports, while important, may be delayed in order to allocate space to publish notices of upcoming meetings.

6. Articles may be mailed to P.O. Box 93123, Lubbock, Texas 79493-3123, or emailed to banneroflove@aol.com.

What's in your will?

Do you have a 'Last Will and Testament'?

If so, what's in it? Have you taken this good opportunity to leave a small part of your estate to the church?

A will is an excellent opportunity to help provide for the future needs of the church. A small contribution to the church on the event of your death could be used to offset the church's expenses for funeral, but also provide for long term needs for the church building or assistance to the other church members.

When you have your will prepared, or updated, consider making the church one of your inheritors.

Advice to all, but especially the Ministry

From Page 1

advice I have now read to myself and you. The apostle having given his son Timothy many things in charge which would, in their season, be very disrelishing, lays a special injunction on him in the verse before the text to command and teach them to do it with that authority which the duty itself requires, and in so doing, to magnify his office, as the phrase is explained (Tit. 2. 15).

It is not my design in the following discourse to take in all the observations which arise from this text, but only to give some general directions which, if duly attended to, you and I may know how to behave in that great office wherewith we are entrusted, so as to approve ourselves unto God, while we study to show ourselves workmen that need not be ashamed before men.

Study the heart

The first thing I would recommend to myself and to you is a diligent study of our own hearts. Hold the torch there first, and everyone in the assembly will be the better for our light. "Take heed unto thyself," says the apostle (1 Tim. 4. 16), that is, not only to our outward conduct, but also to our inward frame, and the life and power of religion in our own hearts. Consider, you and I live by the same food we prepare for others, and how shall we know it is good for them if we do not first relish and digest it ourselves?

The word will never come with power from us if it does not dwell with power in us. Alas, what are fine words, and exact periods, a well-composed and a well-delivered discourse? What are these to a wounded conscience, an afflicted spirit, or an overwhelmed soul?

Our own heart is one of the best and hardest texts we can preach from. Here we see the nature and cursed effects of sin; the use of the law to convince of sin; the beauties and glories of Christ as bringing in an everlasting righteousness. We see here why a soul is so often left of God, and the means whereby he is brought back to Him again; what are the causes of spiritual darkness, and what the soul's behaviour under it; how sweet are gospel promises; how precious is new covenant grace and the blood of sprinkling; how needful are the supplies of the Spirit and the quickening power of the Word in the Spirit's hands. These things we see, we feel, and are persuaded of by a careful scrutiny into our own hearts, and a frequent review of our past solemn transactions between God and our own souls.

I own that a natural, unrenewed man may have a notional knowledge of experimental truths; but he cannot say, as the spies did, "The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us unto this land, and give it us" (Num. 14. 7, 8). Experienced truths warm and affect the heart, and give such zeal and fervour to the preacher in his delivery, as all the act in rhetoric, all the studied eloquence in the world, can never come up to.

Preach first to yourself

My dear brother, every sermon you preach to others, preach first to yourself. When you have proved your armour, you may venture to recommend it. It is the trial of faith which is precious. And the improvement of gospel doctrines in our Christian life makes them always savoury and satisfying to the heart. Gospel doctrines lie as the foundation of the spiritual building; gospel grace, derived from Christ Jesus, in whom all centres, carries up the superstructure. Labour, then, after a thorough acquaintance with your own heart. He that is a stranger here errs at his first setting out.

Secondly, having got acquainted with your own heart, study to divide the Word aright for your own and others' profit. This is a special part of Timothy's charge in my text, and a great branch of the work of the ministry. To do this, several things deserve our particular regard.

Preach the Truth

1. We are to see that every text we preach upon has its true meaning. Not only that it be itself the truth, in opposition to error, according to the judg-

ment of Scripture and the analogy of faith, but that it be the truth of that place which we are endeavouring to explain. It is not the sound of words, but the drift and design of the Holy Spirit we are to regard herein. And the best way to know the mind of the Spirit is to call in the help and assistance of the Spirit; to make Scripture the interpreter of itself, by comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

All the articles of our faith are to be taken from the Word, and Scripture is not to be wrested, and so fitted to them. "We are not as many," says our apostle, "which corrupt the Word of God: but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ" (2 Cor. 2. 17). This is a metaphor taken from vintners who, for the sake of their own gain, mix the wine with baser liquors. Let God's truth be dearer to you than any private opinion of your own. Behave as in God's sight, when engaging in His work, and you dare not, you cannot trifle with His Word, much less corrupt it.

Every truth has its due weight

2. As every text is to have its true meaning, so every truth is to have its due weight. We are to keep back nothing that may be "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." The law is of use to show us our wounds; the gospel to direct us to the only means of healing. Doctrinal truths serve to inform the judgment; practical inquiries to settle the conscience and influence the conversation. We are not to be always laying the foundation, nor always to wave a disquisition into fundamental truths. Christians are commanded to grow in knowledge as well as grace, and to be able to render "a reason of the hope that is in them with meekness and fear." Gospel doctrines have a special tendency to gospel holiness. "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men" (Tit. 3. 8).

Never strive to please itching ears. Some love your new, fine-spun notions, which buzz indeed in the head, but never reach or warm the heart. Nothing is gospel, but what comes up to their Shibboleth; and more time is spent in promoting the cause of a darling notion than can ever be spared from the good old savoury truths of the gospel, whereby the soul is drawn nearer to God and transformed into His image. "But thou, O man of God, flee these things." Judge of the importance of a truth by the power and fruits of it, in changing the heart, quickening the frame, curbing the passions and savouring the conversation. When once men begin to give a loose to their thoughts and temper, they often become vain in their imaginations and useless in their preaching.

We can never look back too often to the things we at first received. If ever we are edified, if ever sinners are converted by our ministry, it is by the testimony which the Spirit gives in our hearts to those fundamental truths of the gospel concerning Jesus Christ, and the way of a sinner's justification and salvation by Him. To many these are common things; they are even cloyed with hearing them; but when God brings our souls, or theirs, under the power of them, then how full are they of matter! How full are they of sweetness! How full are they of wonder!

A believer's soul cannot flourish a day without fresh actings of faith upon Christ and His righteousness. Not a step we take heavenward, but it is by the strength and Spirit of Jesus. So that we must be always looking to our foundation, though not always laying it. These are duties to be performed by us, as well as privileges which are purchased for and given to us. The end of principle is practice. Christians need to be told more of the duties of their callings, as well as the duties of their family and closet.

Too much stress, in our day, is laid by the friends of the Bridegroom themselves upon our knowing well; but this is the easiest part of our religion by far;

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there must be doing also. The duties which a man owes to himself, to his fellow-creatures, to his fellow-saints, to the Lord Jesus, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, to the eternal Father and the eternal Spirit, are all to be particularised by us with all plainness and frequency.

General truths are too generally taken or granted by us all. Unless there be a special and particular application, a man may preach the law evangelically, and the gospel in a legal strain. It is a great thing to divide the Word aright; to cut it up with due consideration, as the metaphor signifies, in allusion to the Levitical sacrifices, so that God may have what He claims for His own, and man his proper portion. He that distinguishes well teaches well. A man may be young in years, and yet no novice in the faith: if he distinguishes well between law and gospel, duty and privilege, what God requires of us, and what He has promised to do for us; if he gives to man the things that are his, and to God the glory which belongs to Him.

Rightly divide the Word

3. To divide the Word aright, is to give every one their proper portion. This is the only justifiable sense in which we are to become all things to all men, that by all means we may gain some. We are to endeavour not so much to know the people's taste of preaching as their profit by it; and to commend ourselves to their esteem, no otherwise than by the manifestation of the truth to their consciences.

It is required of stewards to hold fast the form of sound words. Uncertain sounds are empty sounds, which were never yet appointed of God, or owned by Him. "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle?"

Everyone that attends our ministry is committed to us as our special care and charge, and we are to "watch for their souls, as they that must give account." Christ's sheep are to be fed and nourished; those that are not of His fold are to be brought in. Secure sinners are to be roused by the terrors of the law; the weary and heavy laden encouraged by the promises of the gospel and the grace of the covenant; backsliders are to be reclaimed; and such as labour under decays of grace to be quickened, and put in mind of the love of their espousals. Some are to be "saved with fear, pulling them out of the fire"; "and of some have compassion, making a difference." Zion's mourners are to be comforted. And particularly have regard to tempted souls. The tongue of the learned is given for this very purpose, that "we may speak a word in season to him that is weary." It is a sad thing to be left in Satan's snare, or under the power of prevailing fears and despondencies of our own hearts. Heman's complaint is an evidence of this, and perhaps your own experience may bring these things better to your remembrance.

A workman that understands his business can easily turn his hand to any branch of it without hesitation or loss: he has the plan of his whole work before him; and I have often thought, nothing shows more a man's judgment, experience and spiritual skill in dividing the Word than a pertinent and close application of every gospel truth to the vast variety of our hearers. That which is a means of comfort to some may be improved to the reproof of others; and what is spoken to some by way of warning and rebuke may be applied to others for their direction and establishment.

Let no doctrinal point be handled without showing its use and tendency to promote the glory of God and the spiritual welfare and everlasting happiness of souls. Let no practical truth be considered, no case of conscience be unsolved, without leaving something behind you for the confirmation of gospel doctrines, which are the general foundation of all practice. Endeavour so to divide the Word that none may sit under your preaching in vain. Show every man his own face as in a glass, and be very frequent in laying open

heart sins. He that has a talent to ransack men's consciences, and set their secret sins before their eyes, never need be afraid of fighting uncertainly, or missing the great mark of his ministry.

Deliver truth in its proper season

4. To divide the Word aright requires that every truth should be delivered in its proper season. "Wherefore," says the Apostle Peter, "I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though you know them, and be established in the present truth" (2 Pet. 1. 12). The present truth is to be guarded carefully by us in perilous times.

We have no need to raise ghosts or fight with shadows by reviving or opposing obsolete errors. Errors that are out of date have no concern in the controversy of these days, when so many are invented that cast the highest reflection on God's sovereignty, wisdom and grace, and lead the way to downright atheism and infidelity. It is no hard matter to tell what is the course of this world, the fashion of our polite age, when corrupt nature is made the guide in all matters of religion.

Christ has long since been kept out of men's hearts through the binding power of sin and Satan, and now He is shut out of many pulpits; the doctrine of His Person and Godhead is derided and that of His righteousness and Spirit belied. A man is not counted to have any sense or ingenuity if he has not some objections against the covenant of grace, that glorious and wonderful method which God has found out for the salvation of sinners. These things, therefore, do you teach and exhort.

Whenever Christ's righteousness and grace are neglected in your preaching, you may bid farewell to your usefulness and the power of vital godliness in your own and others' souls.

Guard against lukewarmness

Guard against lukewarmness, that bane of true godliness; and never aim to be caressed for "moderate principles": if God he God, serve Him; if Baal, serve him; but never halt between two opinions. You may show the good temper of a Christian while you fight the good fight of faith, and keep the good profession which you have made this day before many witnesses.

And give me leave here, for once, to use the power Christ has given me: I am but showing my heart's zeal or His Person and cause: "I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus ... that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrehukeahie, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." You are self-condemned if you leave these great truths, which you have summed up so well together, and professed with such plainness and holy boldness before us all. I must be a witness against you another day, and so must this great congregation.

I might add here, there are some sins to be reproofed, and some duties to be particularly insisted on, according to the circumstances of the place where you are called to reside, and the particular temper and behaviour of your several hearers. But these things I must leave to your own prudence, putting you in mind only that you act the Christian and the man, without fearing servilely the face, or being awed by the humours of any.

Speak plain, and aim close to people's heart

5. To divide the Word aright is to do it in a suitable, intelligible way. Beware how you shoot over people's heads; aim rather to come close to their hearts. Study plainness of language, and follow, but do not mimic nature. Every man has his particular gift of God in speaking as well as thinking, and this is always most serviceable to the use of edifying. I have observed at some times an itch after the sublime in a plain and ordinary genius, and have heard my

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superiors in age, judgment and experience, condemned as trifling and pedantic, a sure sign of an haughty spirit and a frothy mind.

The plainest language is most powerful and affecting, and the words which the Spirit Himself teaches I have ever found most owned by Him. It is a good observation of one of the writers of the Church of England, in a visitation sermon: "God's Word, when it is most naked in itself, is then most mighty in its operations, most keen and cutting: our art does but take away its edge: and it is said of Christ that He preached not as Himself was able to speak, but as the people were able to hear."

Use Scripture not only to confirm what you assert, but fetch the heart of all your discourses from Scripture. Take heed of the fashionable phrases of the day; they are generally a cover to some latent error. Avoid too many logical distinctions and metaphysical quibbles in contending for or explaining the faith. It is in God's light that we see light. Our own reasonings and closest arguments will not confirm the weak or establish the wavering, without the plain, positive declarations of the Spirit.

Do not look upon your hearers as if all of them were sceptics. Many things in the Christian faith are beyond dispute, and to dispute everything is the ready way (at last) to believe nothing. It is not nice reasoning that relieves a soul under bondage and darkness, but downright faith, and the doubting Christian knows more of its nature and use by one act, than by all the hearing and reading he has attained to.

Let your zeal for Christ be shown

I must here remind you of that zeal you are to show for Christ when you stand in His name to publish His gospel. Dull and lifeless preaching makes drowsy hearers. Show you have a concern for the cause of Christ, not by words only, but by the fervour and earnestness of your spirit.

If you are addressing rebel sinners or drooping saints, labour to make them not only hear but feel what you preach. If your heart be warmed, it cannot be hid from the observation of others; and even here, there may be danger of excess, lest we should take a great flow of natural affections for the spiritual work of the Holy Ghost.

When you defend the truth, do it with clearness, consistency, zeal and love. Avoid all personal reflections while you show faithfully the consequences that attend erroneous principles; but yet do not charge these consequences upon the person that maintains the principle, if he himself disallows them. Take heed of too great a loose to your own spirit in vindicating the truth of God. The wrath of man will never work the righteousness of God.

We may lawfully exercise charity to erring persons while we show a just resentment against the errors they maintain. "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (2 Tim. 2.24, 25).

Know your flock

In order to know the wants of your flock, acquaint yourself with the general state of it. The work of the pulpit is the least branch of the pastor's office. It is a great account that is given of a Welsh minister by one that knew his life and manner of conversation: "Because of the number of his hearers, he was often necessitated to preach in the churchyard; and yet there was not one person in that great congregation whose spiritual state he did not fully know,* neither was there any sermon he preached wherein he taught them not one lesson more than they knew before."

He that would convert sinners, or edify saints, must study souls, as well as hooks. If you would see the fruit of your preaching, always propose some

end in your preaching. "Without this," says an ancient author, "we are like a smith that makes a curious key, but never consults the wards of the lock; whereas a rude and ill-shaped key that is fitted to the lock is of much use, the other of none at all." Study the circumstances and capacities of your hearers. Labour to know their doubts and fears, temptations and complaints, how far religion thrives in the family, and how far they keep themselves unspotted from the world. It is from hence that ministers have the title of shepherds, watchmen, bishops or overseers.

Many cases and particulars occur in the course of our visits which are not fit for public notice. These may better be considered and spoken to in private, and what is delivered in the pulpit may be enforced by such private and free conversation. The tenderest consciences, and those that stand in need of consolation the most, have a sinful shyness of their minister; but by being often in their company, you will slide into their hearts, and draw forth their doubts, before they are aware of it.

One that has been in the valley himself can tell the meaning of abrupt expressions and inexpressible sighs, which are too much the ridicule of our present refiners in religion. Herein follow the example of the chief Shepherd, who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

Keep a compassionate, sympathizing spirit

A compassionate, sympathizing spirit in a gospel minister is very becoming and very endearing. "Who is weak, and I am not weak?" (2 Cor. 11. 29). This will conciliate a lasting esteem of your person and give a special weight to your exhortations and advice as a minister. It is a special gift to be made useful to the comforting of afflicted consciences, and the best way to attain it (as a great writer observes) is not by reading many books for that purpose and determining the case as you find it there resolved, but rather by a thorough understanding of the whole work of the Spirit upon your own heart; by an intimate acquaintance with Satan's wiles; the general deceitfulness of the heart; the conflict between flesh and spirit; the fickleness of frames; and the quiet assurance which a direct act of faith gives to dark and distressed souls.

Oh these direct acts of faith, there is no living well a day without them! Naked faith upon Christ and His righteousness is of more use to stay the soul under spiritual conflicts than looking back to ten thousand former evidences without them. When I can go to Christ as a sinner, I find all the relief I need, though I cannot apply as a saint.

Here I see righteousness, wisdom, strength and salvation, inexhaustible grace and mercy; "a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." Remember this, for your own and your people's sakes. The greater stress you lay upon Christ, the greater strength will you always find from Him.

Take time to attend to your flock

Be willing to attend to the particular cases that are brought to you, and never think them any diversion from more necessary work. You may find yourself comforted by the experience of weaker Christians. Some of the sweetest turns I have been helped to give to Scripture, I have learnt from conversation.

I cannot help advising you here to dwell much upon the writers of the last age [the Puritans]. They dwelt much with God, and there is a savour in their writings which is like ointment poured forth. Their words were plain, but their thoughts were great, their matter solid and substantial and their self-knowledge uncommon. What a zeal do they show for Christ! What an affection for the souls of men! His sacred name shines in every page, and next to their own, the salvation of others lay nearest their hearts. To them it is chiefly owing that the spirit of true godliness is still kept up in the hearts of the common

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afraid to do so, but also partially glad to get rid of the problem. There was none to plead for Jonah; he had been totally rejected. If such is your plight, then maybe God is giving you a sign.

16 Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows. 17 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.

Sign #7 – Routed: Jonah didn't stand a chance against the great fish. Not only was he

on the fish's "turf", but the fish had been prepared by God to fulfill the purpose. Jonah was literally swallowed up. Such are we at times. Life just swallows us up and gulps us down. We don't stand a chance; we are on unfriendly turf; we are overwhelmed. God can and does use even the ungodly to fulfill his purposes. Time after time, all the way to the crucifixion of Jesus, we see God using ungodly men to accomplish His designs. Jonah was routed. Is that how you are in life? Do you feel like you are completely swallowed up by the situation? Then maybe God is giving you a sign.

Seven signs, and yet seven opportunities to realize and repent. And yet Jonah has not yet done so. He sits inside of a great fish and is at the bottom of the ocean. He ponders his predicament for three days and three nights. And then, finally, Jonah prays. Has God been giving you signs? The beginning of the answer is as easy as...prayer: "Lord, I have been running too long, trying to do things my way, but I am overtaken by life. Help me Lord. Show me Your way and Your will..."

—Elder Mike Rodgers
San Antonio, Texas

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people. Their names are precious, and the ransomed of the Lord will ever esteem their works so.

But let not those keep you from serious converse with your people. Bear with the weakness of those that come to you for instruction. To show moroseness or unconcern towards them is to "turn that which is lame out of the way"; to forget the command, the character, the example of your great Lord. When our hearts are warm with a sense of God's love to us, we shall endeavour to pluck others out of the burnings, and show a zeal for Christ, worthy of them who feel the influences of His power and grace within them.

Show a readiness to visit the sick, and give them a portion at home who are disabled from coming to the house of God. Sick chambers and deathbeds have been a great means of enlarging my experience and of quickening my frames. Never make these visits chargeable, as if you expected anything by way of return. It is a thing so mean in a gospel minister that it falls even below contempt itself. To sell prayers is one great means to quench the Spirit.

Never contradict in your life what you hold forth in your doctrine, whether public or private. We may soon pull down in our lives what we labour to build up with our mouths. The sins of the priest cause the offering of the Lord to be abhorred by the people. Would you give no man occasion to despise your youth, then "be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." Be humble and serious, not puffed up with your gifts, proficiency or success. Spiritual pride is the surest bar and hindrance to all spiritual supplies. Cheerful you may be, but not frothy; this will eat up your spirit, and in time take away the relish of divine things.

Personal behavior is important

Set a watch before your mouth. Remember, all eyes are upon you, and oftentimes mouths are against you. Be prudent and faithful. Betray no trust committed to your keeping, and keep yourself clear of personal piques and family broils. Heal if you can, but never widen breaches.

Be very cautious in your choice of friends, and never be desirous of hearing secrets. Study men, as well as things, that you may know how to meet them in a public discourse, who will give you no liberty to do it in a private way. Only remember, that personal reflections always spoil even necessary reproofs.

Despise the practice of those who defame their brethren to exalt themselves. Honour follows them only who flee from it. He that brings you a little story against the rest of your brethren, will be first in raising one against yourself. They that stand high-

est are usually first lashed by the scourge of tongues. Leave your character where you have trusted your soul; your great Master will take care of both.

Be diligent in your studies

Be diligent and industrious in your studies. It was admirable advice which was given by Mr. Nesbitt (in a funeral sermon preached for Mrs. Gouge): "He that does not prepare what to say to the people, tempts God to come out of His ordinary way to his assistance; he that depends upon his own preparations makes a God of his gifts."

Show a becoming love to those who differ from you, and treat them with affability. Brotherly love is very consistent with diversity of opinion. Rejoice in the usefulness of any to spread real religion, and encourage their good design by your conversation, advice and prayers. Avoid party matters, and what you see wanting in others, make up by moderation and forbearance in yourself.

As you have freely received, freely give. You have tried God often; he not afraid to trust Him. A man must have but a cold heart to ask the liberality of his people for Christ's poor, who has not at the same time an open hand to relieve them himself. Sit, as far as may be, loose from the world while you are passing through it: remember that the fashion thereof (all its beauteous outside appearance) passeth away.

Begin, and end, with prayer

Begin and conclude every duty with prayer. Those sermons which are studied upon our knees are most reviving to our own and others' hearts. Prayer for ourselves is the way to make us useful to others, or rather, as Dr. Owen observes, "Study is to make us useful to others; prayer brings the Word home to our own souls and makes it profitable to ourselves."

To preach the Word, therefore, and not to follow it with prayer, constantly and frequently, is to disbelieve its use, neglect its end and cast away all the seed of the gospel at random." Prayer for the church will increase your love to the church. It will give you a great concern to search out their wants, temptations and particular needed supplies. And the return of all will be peace and prosperity, growth and affection, in your own soul.

Abide in the things you have heard; and when Christ, "the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

— Amen.

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will here! Jonah was plainly told to go to Nineveh, and he knew it. But he didn't want to, so he ran. Now, sometimes we don't know God's will when we would like to, but at other times we, like Jonah, know it and reject it. Either way God will give us signs – indications – that we are on the wrong path.

4But the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.

Sign #1 – Restlessness: Do you ever get the feeling that life is battering you? Do you ever get an uneasy feeling in the pit of your stomach? Do you feel tossed around by circumstances that you can't control? This was Jonah's first sign; God sent a storm into Jonah's path of impropriety. Now I don't believe that God "sends" every storm (although He certainly "allows" every storm that He doesn't send), but sometimes – how often I don't know – God does send a storm our way. It doesn't overwhelm us; it just seems like it is going to do so. So, if you are being battered by life, if there is "a mighty tempest" such that it seems your life is headed toward shipwreck, then maybe God is sending you a sign.

5Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep. 6So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.

Sign #2 – Reminder: The reminder wasn't even from a preacher! Instead the reminder came through the unlikely message of a heathen shipmaster. Get up! How can you sleep at a time like this? If nothing else, pray!! How often people – many of them otherwise unconcerned with God – will rise to pray when there is trouble in life. They don't know what else to do, so they then resort to prayer, just in case it will work. In essence that is what the shipmaster said – "if so be" – just in case it will work. The saddest part may be that Jonah – the prophet – had to be awakened and reminded to pray. He

had "gone down" and "was fast asleep". Are others – even unbelievers – having to prod you to prayer, to talk to God? If so, then maybe God is sending you a sign. *7And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah.*

Sign #3 – Revelation: Jonah had eyed the storm. He had been encouraged to turn to his God. Yet still there was no repentance. Too often we try to hang on to our way, thinking it will get better soon – around the next curve, or over the next hill. Then the bad becomes worse still – our sins "find us out" and become public. How many times have we seen preachers who carry on a "secret" life of adultery, only to be eventually exposed. All things are open before God, and sometimes they become open before others. Such was Jonah's lot in life – he was outed by the providence of God. If it is such with you, then maybe God is sending you a sign.

8Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; What is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou? 9And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land. 10Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them.

Sign #4 – Reasoning: The questions came fast and furious in the middle of the raging storm. "We know you are the guilty culprit! Who are you? Where are you from? What have you done? Tell us quick!" Then, after the explanation, the question that cuts like a knife through hot butter – the question with but one answer and yet the one we don't want to answer – "Why have you done this?" The guilt is laid bare and there is no rational answer for our path of iniquity. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord..." Is this how God beckons you? If so, then maybe He is sending you a sign.

11Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the

sea wrought, and was tempestuous. 12And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you. 13Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them.

Sign #5 – Rowing: What shall be done with the guilty party? The law says that the person who is guilty is worthy of death. Jonah suggested that they throw him overboard – but of course we note that he didn't voluntarily jump! I think that he knew that his sin was worthy of a death sentence, but he certainly didn't want to carry it out on himself. How much we are like Jonah! And how different was our Savior who, although sinless, spoke not a word, but willingly went to the cross! The men of the ship, though desirous of the storm to cease, yet did not wish to throw Jonah into the waves. Instead, they went to work, rowing and rowing as hard as they could. These were experienced sailors; if anyone could bring the ship to safety, certainly it was them. "...but they could not..." Why? Because God fashioned ("wrought") the sea "against them". Regardless of how hard we work to force our will, God has the power to hold us back. Do you feel like, no matter how hard you try, you still aren't getting anywhere? If so, then maybe God is giving you a sign.

14Wherefore they cried unto the Lord, and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee. 15So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging.

Sign #6 – Rejection: It is human nature to want everyone to like us. We want to be a part of the group. It is the driving force behind gangs – acceptance. But what God has rejected, so should we. In this case, God had rejected Jonah, not from eternal life, but from his course. Sometimes, in order to get us back on track, God has to remove us from the situation. He causes us to be rejected and ejected. I'm sure the men who took up Jonah to cast him into the raging sea were partially

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