

The Sovereign Grace Messenger

A Publication of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship

**“THE LORD HATH PREPARED HIS THRONE IN THE HEAVENS;
AND HIS KINGDOM RULETH OVER ALL.”**

Psalm 103:19

Issue 23

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THE WOUNDED LAMB

Curt Daniel

“He shall feed his flock like a shepherd. He shall gather the lambs with his arm and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.” (Isaiah 40:11)

There are times when a Christian feels like a thirsty deer, weak and weary and in need of the water of life (Psalm 42:1). At other times he is like a whipped dog, yelping and whimpering under the assaults of the Devil or the world. Or he may even feel like a wounded lamb, bleeding and bleating under the most crushing tragedy he has ever experienced. We have all been or will be such a lamb. As a pastor, I have had to help wounded lambs and I often point them to one of my favorite Bible verses: *“He shall feed his flock like a shepherd. He shall gather the lambs with his arm and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.”* (Isaiah 40:11)

The imagery is found frequently in Scripture. *“The Lord is my shepherd.”* (Psalm 23:1) *“We are his sheep.”* (Psalm 100:3) *“I am the Good Shepherd.”* (John 10:11) The Lord Jesus feeds, tends, protects, leads and retrieves His sheep—and more. This precious verse tells us that in extreme cases, He gathers and carries them in His arms. Isaiah says that we are like straying sheep (53:6). Here he says we are sometimes like lambs, that is, young sheep. This could mean new converts, young Christians or immature believers. Or it could refer to Christians who have been hurt and are as helpless as a little wounded lamb. This promise applies to them in a special way.

A Christian sometimes has been wounded so deeply that he is as helpless as a wounded lamb. I am not referring to the more common kinds of problems or afflictions. I mean the really big ones, the ones that not only bruise us but break us. It could include a major physical injury or condition. It could be a devastating emotional experience such as divorce or nervous breakdown. At such times even the strongest Christian will wilt. He will feel like old Job, pounded by wave upon wave of devastating afflictions. It is in those times that he needs the Good Shepherd to carry him in His strong arms of love.

The bleat of a wounded lamb is a pitiful sound. It resembles a baby crying out “Mama”, emotionally emphasizing each syllable so it sounds like “Maa-maa”. Every mother has heard such cries. The wounded Christian instinctively cries out to God his Father like this. Jewish children would cry “Abba”. The child of God bleats out to his Abba in Heaven because he knows that he needs God more than anyone else (Romans 8:15, Galatians 4:6). He doesn’t need a doctor, lawyer or policeman, or even a preacher or parent. He needs God. And like a loving mother with her baby, God hears our cries with the ears of His heart. *“As one whom his mother comforteth, so I will comfort you.”* (Isaiah 66:13)

God is actually touched with our infirmities and afflictions. Just as we instinctively turn to Him in such times, even so God instinctively turns to us in compassion when He hears His children weep and whimper. When you are a wounded lamb, cry out to your Shepherd. You may not even be able to voice the words. That’s okay. Jesus hears the unspoken cry and can understand even the pitiful bleatings of His wounded lambs. He reads their tears. He cares.

When things are going well, we run the Christian life as a race (Hebrews 12:1). When they are not well, we can still walk (Ephesians 4:1). When they are bad, we can only crawl. And in the worst of times, we cannot even crawl. We need to be carried. I recall when I was a boy, my older brother stepped on a nail with his bare foot and had to be carried home. Believers step on all sorts of nails in this terrible world. A lamb may sometimes be sick from eating certain kinds of flowers. We too become spiritually sick when we eat forbidden flowers from the Devil’s garden. Many such afflictions wound us so deeply that we cannot even crawl. We must be carried.

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Don’t miss Kathy Butler’s article, page 22, showing how the Lord carried His own during times of great crises.



Dr. Curt Daniel is pastor of Faith Baptist Church of Springfield, Illinois. He has authored several books as well as numerous published articles.

In Luke 15:5, the Good Shepherd carries the sheep on His shoulders. There are times when we are weak and desperately in need of God's strength. But in Isaiah 40:11, the Shepherd carries them in His bosom, not on His shoulders. Why? Well, ask any mother. She knows that there are times when her baby needs to feel the warmth of her body and hear the mother's heartbeat. When we are utterly crushed we need more than God's strength – we need His compassion. As the hymn puts it, "There is a place of quiet rest, near to the heart of God."

In its mother's arms, the baby senses love and security. Gradually the tears are dried away and the baby is at peace. Commenting on this verse, C.H. Spurgeon said that he sometimes wished he were a lamb again so that he might have a ride in that blessed chariot one more time. Yet even as an afflicted adult he knew what it was like to be a wounded lamb cradled in the bosom of the Good Shepherd.

Most of us have heard the poem "Footprints in the Sand." Whatever its origin, it captures a great truth that is precious to all wounded lambs. Jesus has carried many of us through the most devastating experiences. He never forsakes even one of His lambs. In fact, He is nearest to them when they need Him the most. We should never forget those times. They help us show compassion to other wounded lambs (2 Corinthians 1:4). "*To him that is afflicted pity should be showed from his friend.*" (Job 6:14) We can be the arms of Christ to help carry wounded lambs. Further, the Good Shepherd looks down the road and sees times in our future when we will again be a wounded lamb. He is already waiting for us there. And He will carry us in His bosom across Jordan's chilly waters over to His heavenly sheepfold. We have nothing to fear.

Believers have this wonderful promise in Isaiah 40:11, "*He shall,*" not "He might" carry them. He is there when we need Him. However, this is a promise for lambs, not goats. Unbelievers cannot claim this promise. Sure, by common grace Jesus gives some comfort and strength to His enemies in order to allure them to believe in Him (Romans 2:4). But they do not hear His heartbeat any more than they heed His voice. And if they die lost, they will not be carried as lambs to Heaven but rather dragged away as wolves to Hell. We need to examine ourselves to see if we are Christ's lambs. Calvin said that the Shepherd will not carry a wild beast in His bosom; therefore we should repent and become lambs.

One more point. The Good Shepherd cares for His lambs in a personal and sympathetic way. For you see, Jesus himself is "The Wounded Lamb." Isaiah 53 says He was "*wounded for our transgressions*" (vs. 5) and He was "*brought as a lamb to the slaughter*" (vs. 7). In His dying moments, "The Wounded Lamb" committed Himself to the arms of his Father. Our Jesus has been there. He knows and he cares. He cares and He carries.

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"The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want" Psalm 23:1

"Let them say that will, 'My lands shall keep me, I shall have no want, my merchandise shall be my help, I shall not want;' let the soldier trust unto his weapons, and the husbandman unto his labour; let the artificer say unto his art, and the tradesman unto his trade, and the scholar unto his books, 'These shall maintain me, I shall not want.' Let us say with the church, as we both say and sing, 'The Lord is my keeper, I shall not want.' He that can truly say so, contemns the rest, and he that desires more than God, cannot truly say, the Lord is his, the Lord is this shepherd, governor and commander, and therefore I shall not want." - **John Hull, B.D., in "Lectures on Lamentations," 1617**

"May this sweet title persuade Japhet to dwell in the tents of Shem: my meaning is, that those who as yet never knew what it was to be enfolded in the bosom of Jesus, who as yet were never lambs nor ewes in Christ's fold, consider the sweetness of this Shepherd, and come in to Him. Satan deals seemingly sweet, that he may draw you into sin, but in the end he will be really bitter to you. Christ, indeed, is seemingly bitter to keep you from sin, hedging up your way with thorns. But He will be really sweet if you come into His flock, even notwithstanding your sins. Thou lookest into Christ's fold, and thou seest it hedged and fenced all about to keep you in from sin, and this keeps thee from entering; but, oh! let it not. Christ, indeed, is unwilling that any of His should wander, and if they be unwilling too, it's well. And if they wander He'll fetch them in, it may be with His shepherd's *dog* (some affliction); but He'll not be, as we say, dogged Himself. No, He is and will be sweet. It may be, now Satan smiles, and is pleasant to you while you sin; but know, he'll be bitter in the end. He that sings syren-like now, will devour lion-like at last. He'll torment you and vex you, and be burning and bitterness to you. O come in therefore, to Jesus Christ; let Him be now the shepherd of thy soul. And know then, He'll be sweet in endeavoring to keep thee from sin before thou commit it; and He'll be sweet in delivering thee from sin after thou hast committed it. O that this thought—that Jesus Christ is sweet in His carriage unto all His members, unto all His flock, especially the sinning ones, might persuade the hearts of some sinners to come into His fold." - **John Durant, 1652**

Taken from C. H. Spurgeon's "The Treasury of David," printed by Baker Book House

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Correction from last issue: The date of the next SGBF annual meeting is not the 7th but the 8th of September, 2009. Information is on page 24.

Ministerial Burnout -

is a possibility but not an inevitability. Jim Gables and Dean Olive were given seven identical questions, which, as was hoped and has turned out, give Biblical and practical answers toward the avoidance of “burnout” in Gospel ministry. Each honestly admits his own struggles and adds experience to knowledge. They give challenging answers to each of us whose demanding call also requires wisdom in the way it is carried out. May it serve as “godly counsel” from caring fellow soldiers in the fight of faith. - Editor

In answering the seven questions assigned to me by the editor of this magazine, the reader must realize that my answers are highly subjective due to the nature of the topic. They consist of a blend of wisdom gleaned from natural revelation, some Biblical principles, and illustrations from the Bible and personal experience. Since the location of the material requires brevity, several statements are subject to qualification and explanation which cannot be adequately given. From one who has struggled through forty-five years of Christian ministry, here we go!



Jim D. Gables is president of Grace Abounding Ministries and has a very active speaking and writing ministry

Bro. Staley, I am happy to answer your questions on the subject of burnout in the gospel ministry. I hold no degrees in psychology or counseling but know personally by experience some of the difficulties of pastoral ministry, having served churches as a pastor for 37 years. There are many pressures involved in the work of the ministry that can lead to burnout which I have faced. I hope my answers to your questions may be helpful to others.



Dean Olive is pastor of Grace Baptist Church of Madison, Alabama and is also active in Conference ministry

Q. How would you define the term “burnout” with regard to the gospel ministry?

A. (Jim Gables) The term “burnout” is an occurrence not limited to the gospel ministry. It is common to all professions, especially those in the care-giving fields, such as doctors, nurses, social workers, etc., and usually occurs in those who are the most committed to their field or calling. Noah Webster in his 1828 American Dictionary defines the word as meaning “to burn till the fuel is exhausted and the fire ceases.” He does not use it as a metaphor. In the modern Webster’s it is used as a metaphor. There we are told it means “consumed, rendered unserviceable or ineffectual by maximum use, exhausted or made lifeless through overwork, stress, or intemperance.” I would thus define burnout relating to the gospel ministry as “the loss of enthusiasm, zeal, and excitement one once possessed with the role of the ministry, brought on by the continuous demands and stress of the ministry.”

A. (Dean Olive) Every minister wishes to be like John the Baptist, whom Jesus described as “a burning and a shining light.” But instead of burning for the Lord many ministers burn out in the service of the Lord.

Burnout occurs when weariness sets in to such a degree that a man can’t go on any more. Burnout is a combination of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual exhaustion. It happens in many lines of work or professions, including the work of the ministry. There seems to be a significant number of pastors who wear out and give up the ministry because of overwork or undue expectations.

Q. What are the telltale signs that should be recognized?

A. (Jim Gables) First: the awareness of either/or both physical and mental fatigue. Second: the inability to focus upon the duties of the ministry. Third: guilt feelings over the decline in one’s productivity. Fourth: feelings of sadness and/or anger, depression, loneliness, grief, and despair, etc.

A. (Dean Olive) I have never suffered from burnout before but have been closer to it than I care to be. The onset of burnout can be detected, I think, when the joy of serving Christ in the pastoral ministry is lost. Paul told the Galatians, “*And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not*” (6:9). I have heard it said that while not being weary of the work of the ministry, we can easily become weary in the work of the ministry. I know that feeling. We love the work but there are times when we are weary in the work and need a break. But burnout is close at hand when we become weary of the work. It’s hard for anyone to do a job he no longer enjoys, but to lose a love for the work that is our calling is very serious and needs immediate attention.

Q. What are the major causes of burnout?

A. (Jim Gables) Stress, stress and more stress. This comes in many forms and is always present in various degrees. It may take the form of:

1. **A Social Conflict.** The pastor is constantly in the midst of conflict resolutions. This may be between individuals, between individuals and the church, between individuals and himself, and between the church and himself. The pastor realizes that he is but one business meeting away from being unemployed and his family homeless. This saps the human spirit.

2. **Financial Inadequacy.** Contrary to popular belief, most pastors are grossly underpaid, especially in smaller congregations. This can produce bitterness on the part of the wife and the children growing up in the home. Pastors are often accused of loving money when often they don’t have any money to love.

3. **Unexpected Crisis.** Burnout does not always have to take place over a long period of time. It may take place in a heart attack or severe accident. The pastor’s wife may die or be gang raped. A child may commit suicide. This may render him incapable to continue his present list of duties or destroy his goals in the ministry.

4. **Prolonged Overwork.** The new pastor wants to serve and bless

the lives of people. He soon becomes entrapped with pleasing people. In doing so, he sermonizes, marries, buries, baptizes, confronts, counsels, visits, and carries the church budget on his shoulders. He must organize his staff (leaders), keep up their morale, oversee their areas of responsibility because if anything goes wrong, the pastor is responsible. He must be an inspirer, organizer, motivator, stimulator, and tranquilizer while portraying a composed profile within an assembly of people on the edge of coming apart. He must do this knowing that he is on continuous precarious ground. He is on trial every Sunday morning, evening and Wednesday night. He has his critics before him. Some are more vocal than others. Every sermon he preaches is subject to criticism. After every business meeting there are other "follow up business meetings" as members get together to discuss his performance. He spends many long hours away from his family in meeting after meeting, ("Pastor, if you don't come, many will not show up!") which make him aware that he is losing touch with the treasure of his life - his wife and children. He is baptized into the tension of the ministry. Anxiety slowly creeps in and begins to fan the flame within until something collapses inside. His energy is gone and nothing is left. Burnout has occurred.

A. (Dean Olive) I am not an expert on the causes of burnout but I know what affects me. The lack of evident fruit in the work of the ministry is most discouraging. I am thankful for the comfort and help that belief in the absolute sovereignty of God brings when the results in pastoral labors are few. William Carey, the great missionary to India, rested in the absolute sovereignty of God and was content to labor and leave the results to God. I don't ever want to use the doctrine of God's sovereignty to excuse laziness, but I find it most comforting, that whether the results are big or small, God is at work. Oh, to be like Paul, who could say, "*I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content*" (Phil. 4:11).

Another cause of burnout is physical exhaustion. Jesus took His disciples apart for rest so they wouldn't burn out. On one occasion He said to them "*Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while*" (Mark 6:31). The mind doesn't function well when the body is tired. Pastors need to learn how to rest and relax so the body will be invigorated for ministerial labors. I have found various avenues of rest and relaxation that give me renewed energy for service in the Lord's work.

A constant nemesis that brings me low is the lack of spiritual growth. If I engage in the work of the ministry (study, preaching, counseling, visiting, etc.) without filling my own heart up by reading God's Word and communing with God in prayer, then I am opening myself up for burnout. If a pastor does not maintain a good, daily relationship with the Lord, he is asking for all kinds of trouble, including burnout. John Newton once told a friend, "I am afraid that if I am enabled to fill up my hour [the sermon], and to come off with tolerable acceptance, I am too easily satisfied." A cold heart will cause us to be satisfied with external duties in the ministry and that means the fire is burning low and burnout is lurking.

Q. What are some spiritual and practical means of combating this danger?

A. (Jim Gables) 1. **Understand the God who has called you.** When God calls, He equips. The God who calls gives every

minister whom He calls enough time and strength to do everything He wants him to do. He does not put upon us more than we are capable of bearing. It is we who allow ourselves and others to put upon ourselves more than our gifts and abilities will permit us to achieve. Not every voice saying, "*come over into Macedonia and help us,*" is from God. A minister must learn to say no. He must set boundaries.

2. **Evaluate your own humanity.** "*There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.*" (John 1:6). John was a finite, sinful man - but made in God's image. John received a calling - a task assigned by God. John did what God assigned him - his eye was on pleasing God, not on his own ego. When a man believes that God has called him into the ministry, he should hear God saying, "I want you in my service, but I can do without you." We usually tend to overrate rather than underrate our importance and conclude that far too many things can only be done by ourselves. We develop the mentality that the church will not survive without us. If that is true, then maybe it is built upon us, and it ought to die. When a pastor takes a vacation and he still is thinking about the church issues, he is not in control of the church or himself, but it is in control of him. The church is God's church, and He loves it. But He has not made us into gods, nor does He require us to be supermen. A car may be capable of running one hundred miles an hour, but it was not made to run that fast all the time. If we force it to do so, the motor will soon blow up. God has not promised immunity to those who self-inflict physical and mental abuse for the sake of the kingdom.

3. **Use wisdom in facing the duties of the ministry.** One can easily step over the line from commitment to stupidity in the "service" of God. The ministry is a hard job. Paul told Timothy to "*endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*" (II Timothy 2:3). The ministry is a warfare wherein you must keep your head down or you may get it blown off. John Wayne said, "Life is tough, but its tougher when you are stupid." I would paraphrase it as "The ministry is tough, and its tougher when you are stupid." If you are approaching "burnout" do not add the word, "more" to your thinking. Do not think that what you need is "more" preaching, praying, meditating, visiting, etc. These are good things, but not when they are overextended! Hear Jesus say, "*Come ye yourselves apart in a desert place, and rest awhile.*" (Mark 6:31). In other words, He is saying, "the poor will always be there waiting and there will always be things to do in my service. I have not called you to burn yourself out trying to meet needs that are beyond the abilities I have given you."

A. (Dean Olive) To combat burnout, it is helpful to be sober-minded and watchful, as the Scriptures frequently remind us (1 Thess. 5:6; 1 Pet. 5:8). Awareness of a problem is always the first step in correcting it but without vigilance, self-control, and alertness, we might not know we are in danger. If we are not clear-headed we will become spiritually drowsy and in danger of falling.

Our adversary, the devil, knows our weakest point and will attack us when we least expect it. But do we know what our "weakest link" is? We should! And if we do, then we can guard against spiritual disaster by availing ourselves of the help given by the indwelling Spirit and the sure promises of God. We have been given everything we need for life and godliness. The Scriptures are sufficient to make us strong and the Holy Spirit will shine brightly in those who walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh.

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Q. How can brethren help and strengthen each other when near burnout is detected?

A. (Jim Gables) 1. **Participate in intercessory prayer.** This prayer should not be for God to infuse more strength into the brother just so that he can do more, but that God would give him understanding of his problems and to seek a solution.

2. **Help him understand the difference between problems and facts of life.** A problem is something we have the ability to handle or do something about. A fact of life is something we cannot do anything about. We have to recognize the facts of life, accept them, live with them, and not consider them problems. We cannot solve things that cannot be solved. Therefore, we should not spend time thinking (worrying) about them. Consider Jesus' words in Matthew 6:25-34 dealing with worry and anxiety. Some pastors bemoan the field where God has placed them. They may have had higher expectations when they entered the ministry. Before a man decides on a full time ministry, he ought to realize that God may be calling him to a ministry of tedious, laborious, mediocrity. If this proves to be true, he should accept it as a fact of life and glorify God in the place where He has called him. On the other hand, if there is a light out in the women's restroom, that is a problem which can be solved. Our advice to a brother verging on burnout is to devote his energies to problems, but leave the facts of life to God.

3. **Be a friend who he can call on.** Ecclesiastes 4:9,10 states, *"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falls; for he has not another to help him up."* Every pastor should try to have a friend outside the church with whom he can converse.

A. (Dean Olive) Good friends sound warnings when there is danger. They are not afraid to point out our blind spots. They risk much, for they share information that we don't really want to hear, but nothing is more profitable than rebuke from a friend when it is needed.

Sadly, we are often afraid to speak to a brother lovingly and bluntly. We see disturbing signs that spell trouble ahead but fear pointing it out. Yet *"faithful are the wounds of a friend"* (Prov. 27:6). It is as important to be a good friend and help a brother in need as it is to have a good friend whose trusted counsel can be relied on. A friend loves at all times and will help in time of need (cf. Prov. 17:17).

Q. Should a church be aware of this danger, and how can it be a help to an exhausted pastor?

A. (Jim Gables) Yes, a church can be a help by:

1. **Insisting that their pastor take regular sabbaticals.** Also, a pastor should not fill the pulpit somewhere else while he is on vacation. He needs rest from his labors, not more of the same labors.

2. **Periodically evaluating the duties the pastor is expected to perform.** You cannot find a job description in the Bible like the modern pastor is expected to perform. There is no job in there like

that! We do not have a Biblical model. Instead, we have a job description that has evolved out of human tradition, and ministers have helped develop it. We have created for ourselves a job which nobody can do! Then we wonder why we are worn out. As a personal example of this, one time I gave out a questionnaire to my congregation listing 62 various duties I tried to fulfill in a given week. I asked them to state how many hours a week I should devote to each duty. I did not tell them that there were 168 hours in one week which included 56 hours for sleeping, 3 hours a day for eating, bathing, and dressing, etc. This reduced the number of hours which could be used for ministry to 91 hours. The average response given by my congregation was 100 hours a week, with several responses of between 250 and 300 hours per week! This shows how the average preacher and church is out of touch with reality. Is it any wonder that ministers burn out? They think that hyperactivity is a mark of spiritual devotion. Hyperactivity in the ministry is what junk food is to a nourishing diet. It gives a feeling of satisfaction while starving the person to death. The solution for an exhausted pastor is a change of routine and structure and not a mere change of pastoral locations.

A. (Dean Olive) Churches should be aware of the danger of burnout for ministers but few probably are. But that doesn't mean it is the fault of the church. Sometimes pastors insulate themselves by failing to be honest with their members. Leaders don't want any appearance of weakness so they give the impression that they are always on top of things and that nothing gets them down.

A bit more transparency by pastors about the struggles of the ministry might find a sympathetic ear from the leaders of the church. We are not superheroes. We are ordinary people that struggle with the same difficulties in sanctification as do the members of the church.

Having said that, churches need to make sure that their pastor isn't working himself into early retirement. Preparation to preach week after week, along with the cares of the congregation, can take a heavy toll. Wise are the leaders in the church that don't require a man to do all the preaching and teaching. Wise are the leaders in the church that recognize the need for breaks, even the occasional Sabbatical. Martyn-Lloyd Jones was given six weeks off in the summer and it made him a better preacher. He came back renewed and reinvigorated.

Q. Could you give Scriptural examples of burnout in God's servants and how it was overcome?

A. (Jim Gables) Space will only permit one example - that of Elijah and his encounter with the prophets of Baal, followed by his flight from Jezebel as recorded in I Kings 19:1-18. Ahab is the King over Israel and Jezebel is his wife. She had introduced Baal worship into Israel. Elijah has had a long ongoing stressful relationship with Ahab (political stress). He also is fighting the prophets of Baal (religious stress). This comes to a head in the conflict on Mt. Carmel, which results in the slaying of the 450 prophets of Baal, who were supported by Jezebel. Jezebel places a death notice on Elijah's life and he flees into the wilderness (I Kings 19:1-4). Some believe Elijah was playing the role of a coward. I disagree, because to war against Jezebel was to war against her husband who is the King. Elijah would not touch the Lord's anointed anymore than David would harm Saul. But Elijah was exhausted, both in body and mind. He believed his ministry

was over and that he would soon die (v. 4). God's method of restoring and caring for His burnout prophet is instructive.

1. **He provided rest**, "*he lay and slept*" (v. 5).
2. **He provided a nutritious diet**, "*He did eat and drink.*" (vs. 5-7).
3. **He changed his environment**, "*the journey is too great for thee.*" (vs. 7-9).
4. **He made Elijah clearly define his problem**, "*what doest thou here, Elijah*" (vs. 9,10). Elijah felt he had worked hard but seen little progress.
5. **He shows him how His kingdom is advancing**, "*strong wind, earthquake, fire, still small voice.*" (vs. 11, 12). God's sovereign providence encompasses all things, large and small. He has everything in place, even His "*seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal.*" (v. 18). With God ruling, everything is reduced to a "*still small voice.*" What does this mean? "Don't sweat the small stuff, everything is small stuff when one has his eye on God."
6. **He re-commissions Elijah** to anoint a new king to replace Ahab and to start training a new prophet to take his place when God was finished with his ministry. That prophet would be Elisha, "*So he departed thence, and found Elisha.*" (vs. 15-21). God determines when, where, how, and how long His ministers shall serve Him. May He grant us wisdom for the task.

The story is told of three frogs who fell into a barrel of cream. They all started kicking trying to get out. One soon became discouraged and gave up. He sank to the bottom and drowned. The second frog went into a panic and kicked feverishly until he was exhausted. He also sank to the bottom and drowned. The third frog continued to kick at a steady pace until the cream turned into butter. He then climbed onto the lump of butter and hopped out. The moral is "Keep on kicking brothers!" Do not let discouragement or exhaustion deter you in your labors. Keep your eye on the goal of your high calling and labor in a wise and prudent manner.

This article was written by an old, stupid, preacher who carelessly thought he could ignore the laws relating to physical and mental health only to see both his body and mind severely crippled due to "ministerial burnout." Do as I say, not as I did! Learn to take a break, change your scenery, set boundaries, delegate to others, and thank God for calling you into the ministry!

A. (Dean Olive) Moses is an example that comes to mind. After the great deliverance of the people of Israel from bondage in Egypt, Moses took on himself the sole responsibility of judging disputes among the people (Ex. 18:13-26). The workload was so heavy that he labored from morning till evening. Thankfully, Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, had come for a visit and immediately saw that if Moses didn't get some help he would suffer burnout. On the advice of his father-in-law, Moses delegated authority to settle disputes to qualified men, and he was relieved of the pressure to do all the work himself.

One man can only do so much. Pastors need to entrust to able men and women in the congregation duties that they have been gifted by the Holy Spirit to do (cf. 2 Tim. 2:2; 1 Cor. 12:7). Letting each

member of the body function according to its design is God's will. Moses learned the lesson and saved his ministry. May God help men in pastoral office do the same. ♦ ♦ ♦

From: "Lectures to My Students, Lecture XI, 1856, The Minister's Fainting Fits"

C. H. Spurgeon

"Our work, when earnestly undertaken, lays us open to attacks in the direction of depression. Who can bear the weight of souls without sometimes sinking to the dust? Passionate longings after men's conversion, if not fully satisfied (and when are they?), consume the soul with anxiety and disappointment. To see the hopeful turn aside, the godly grow cold, professors abusing their privileges, and sinners waxing more bold in sin—are not these sights enough to crush us to the earth? The kingdom comes not as we would, the reverend name is not hallowed as we desire, and for this we must weep. How can we be otherwise than sorrowful, while men believe not our report, and the divine arm is not revealed? All mental work tends to weary and to depress, for much study is a weariness of the flesh; but ours is more than mental work—it is heart work, the labour of our inmost soul. How often, on Lord's-day evenings, do we feel as if life were completely washed out of us! After pouring out our souls over our congregations, we feel like empty earthen pitchers which a child might break. Probably, if we were more like Paul, and watched for souls at a nobler rate, we should know more of what it is to be eaten up by the zeal of the Lord's house. It is our duty and our privilege to exhaust our lives for Jesus. We are not to be living specimens of men in fine preservation, but living *sacrifices*, whose lot is to be consumed; we are to spend and to be spent, not to lay ourselves up in lavender, and nurse our flesh. Such soul-travail as that of a faithful minister will bring on occasional seasons of exhaustion, when heart and flesh will fail. Moses' hands grew heavy in intercession, and Paul cried out, '*Who is sufficient for these things?*' Even John the Baptist is thought to have had his fainting fits, and the apostles were once amazed, and were sore afraid."

“Strengthen thy brethren”

Gary Long

“And the Lord said unto Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou are converted, strengthen thy brethren.” (Luke 22:31-32)

When Jesus gave this instruction to Peter, the obvious implication is, his brethren will need to be strengthened and that Peter will have the ability to do so. The setting is the evening of the final Passover supper, the eve of Calvary. The disciples knew both the possibility and uncertainty of the hour. Thousands of visitors have filled Jerusalem and less than a week before, it seemed the whole population had become fully dedicated to their Master Teacher. The whole city seemed electrified with possibilities. Has the hour arrived? Will the Jewish leaders come on board and unify the nation against Rome, with Jesus at the head?

What marvelous possibilities are before the disciples! Yet, there is also much uncertainty that hangs over this same city. The leaders are still openly hostile to Jesus and see Him as an infection that must be eliminated. One of Jesus’ own disciples has seen the situation as hopeless and is about to betray Him. What no human eye beholds is, the archenemy of Jesus has made his appearance before God and is certain of an open apostasy of all of the disciples, if God will but remove the ‘hedge’ that protects them. Satan wants to ‘sift’ them, to prove he can defeat and frustrate God. So the ‘hedge’ is removed and Satan begins his work.

First, the betrayer in their midst is announced and the twelve begin questioning among themselves who it might be (Luke 22:21-23); and yet, a betrayer is a minor distraction as to the real issue with the twelve. What is of real importance at this unusual Passover meal is not which one of them might be the worst and betray Jesus, but which of them is the greatest! (Luke 22:24) Surely Peter, James and John would oppose a ‘casting of lots’ to pick he who will be at Jesus’ right hand and left, as that will disannul their special place they have enjoyed in the past. They all look to Jesus to strengthen their resolve by prioritizing the order of ‘elevation,’ but He explains that in His

kingdom, greatness is measured by humility and service rendered to others, as He himself practices (Luke 22:25-27).

It is at this point in the evening that Jesus makes an unusual reference to the twelve thrones upon which they will sit and rule the twelve tribes (Luke 22:28-30). Maybe this means they will be equally great and each have a tribe to rule and judge, but who will get the tribe of Levi? They have no land inheritance! Most hope Thomas will be assigned to Levi, as he doesn’t have the faith of the other disciples. Peter knows he is the leader and feels confident he will have his choice of any tribe he wants. Jesus turns to Peter, whose confidence and zeal were apparent, and tells him that Satan has requested to ‘sift’ him as wheat. Satan is sure there is not a Job amongst the twelve and that he already has one of them in his shackles of apostasy, and Peter, filled with pride, should be easy prey for the old serpent. Jesus would give Peter great assurance in the prayer He has prayed for him. Peter’s faith will not fail. He will be ‘sifted’ indeed; he will even deny and curse his Lord; he will flee like Elijah; but his faith, though sorely tested, will not fail. Yet, Judas had faith enough to follow Jesus for over three years. He could preach, pray, and heal with the other eleven, but that faith failed. It was the faith of an apostate and was not the gift of effectual, saving faith.

If we compare Judas to Peter, he looks more trustworthy and will be appointed treasurer. Later, we learn he was ‘skimming’ because he was a thief at heart. His last theft was to rob Christ. He stole from His goodness, meekness and kindness, and then betrayed Him for a pocket of silver. Peter will certainly protest Jesus’ assessment of the situation and reminds Jesus of his loyalty and a devotion that will die for Him if necessary (Luke 22:33). Peter means every word he says, despite Jesus’ prophecy of a triple denial before morning. Peter will eventually learn the importance of the prayer of Jesus, as



Gary Long is pastor of Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, Springfield, Missouri and serves as the current Chairman of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship

those few words, “*but I have prayed for thee*” is the difference between him and Judas. The prayer of Christ in John 17 is the prayer that insures every believer’s perseverance and preservation.

The sifting of Peter was the most difficult experience of his life and so in his crisis moment, with blood on his sword, he flees, as did Elijah; and on a very chilly night by a lonely fire, he curses the One he has identified as the Son of the Living God! In the morning the Just One is condemned and hung on a tree to die. Where is Peter? Should he not be on one of those crosses with Jesus, as he promised? We know he is in the cave of his own conscience and if he could remember, Jesus told him of this painful sifting; but he would be ‘converted’ and come forth from the tomb of despair, to be of help to the others. Oh, how he needed that promised change! And reader, you too may know this dreaded place of ‘sifting.’ True you prayed, “*Lead us not into temptation...*” yet you found yourself bruised and defeated and you prayed, “*but deliver us from the evil one,*” and was that not a prayer for your own ‘conversion’? Jesus did not tell Peter to strengthen his brethren if he was converted, but when he was converted, and he finds the way back is much further than the way he left.

It will take a direct confrontation with the resurrected Jesus to bring out the necessary ‘conversion’ in Peter, and that confrontation is in the midst of the greatest success he ever had on Galilee—153 prize fish! Undoubtedly the grandest catch ever made in Galilee by anyone! This test was not so severe as his ‘sifting’ by Satan, but

“Peter will eventually learn the importance of the prayer of Jesus, as those few words, “but I have prayed for thee” is the difference between him and Judas. The prayer of Christ in John 17 is the prayer that insures every believer’s perseverance and preservation.”

it is nonetheless time to bring Peter back to where he should be and so, “In the furnace, God may prove thee, thence to bring thee forth more bright.” It is the furnace of success. Jesus must be first over Peter’s highly successful business. There is no turning back, no more denial, no more boasting, it is either Jesus or the fishing business—God or mammon, not both. Peter is learning how he will strengthen his brethren. We don’t know when Peter’s conversion was complete—maybe there on the shore—but we do know that after the ascension, Peter is back in his role as leader and oh, the day the Spirit came to be their permanent Power!

It is after Pentecost that Peter will strengthen his brethren in speech and epistle. And just how does he strengthen them? The same way we are able to strengthen others still, by word and by our example. The Word is not ours, but His and we must be able to use it as a surgeon’s scalpel or as a pillow of rest. We must be first able to rightly divide the Word and to show the centrality of Christ in the Scriptures. All of God’s Word serves our need: rebuke and reproof if necessary, correction and instruction, and much comfort and exhortation. The only way we can use God’s Word to strengthen others is to be strengthened by it ourselves, and the only way to be strengthened by it ourselves is to know and use it for ourselves. The Word will strengthen only those who know their weakness and need for strength.

In his epistle, Peter strengthens all of us by centering our focus on the Lord Jesus, His

work, His person, His attributes, His love and accomplishments. Peter is no longer the rash and boastful person he was earlier. He is a man healed and returned to the bishop of his soul (I Peter 2:24-25), and so he tells those needing strength to, “*Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.*” (I Pet. 5:6) He has been taught and strengthened himself and now he gives to others what was given to him. His being humbled has taught him humility, and to Peter the way to be strong is to be weak in his own strength. Is not the humility of this great apostle one of the best ways he strengthens his brethren?

Then too, Peter’s example of love and dedication is no longer a boastful expression of self-confidence, but it is there in his exaltation and glorying in His Savior. That example, we are told by secular history, took him to his own cross and crucified upside down. The teaching he gives us in his epistles is seasoned with expressions of human commitment that is divinely breathed upon, to make them binding upon all who would name the name of Christ. They are both divine epistles of strength to be claimed and practiced by we who follow in his train.

When we look at that moment when Jesus told Peter to ‘strengthen his brethren,’ did Peter have any idea that two thousand years later believers in the Christ he loved and died for are still being ‘strengthened’ by him?



Make plans to attend the annual meeting of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship this coming September 8th, to be held at New Hope Baptist Church of Mechanicsville, Virginia. Brother Gary Long is one of the scheduled speakers of the day.

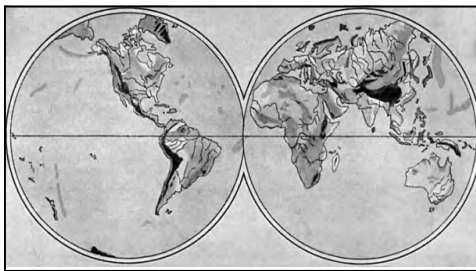
The Quilt Project



The Quilt Project was begun under the leadership of to help Indonesian women who confessed faith in Christ and as a result lost the support of their Muslim families. They make high quality quilts, such as would sell at much higher prices in the U.S. If you are looking for a high quality quilt, this would be a way to help support these converts as well as obtain a fine hand-crafted quilt.

Information on quilt designs, sizes and prices may be obtained by contacting Jeannie Henry in St. Louis, Missouri at (636) 677-6241 or emailing her at bbcinstl@aol.com.

World Missions:



News & Updates

Afflictions and Difficulties of the Missionary

Larry W. Dean

It goes without saying that the work of a missionary is difficult and beset with many trials. Below are some comments from the field.

From Prem Waghmare, India:

“It often feels like preaching in a barren and hostile world - a world which is given over entirely to its lusts, idolatry, darkness, willful blindness and sin unmentionable.”

From Victor Maxson, Africa:

“The holidays are the time for crime in Malawi, and we experienced this intimately on December 23rd when a robbery was attempted at our place. We praise God no one was hurt, and nothing was taken.”

From Johnson, Papua:

“In Indonesia, the world’s largest Muslim country, there is periodic violence against Christians and hundreds have been killed, and hundreds of churches have been burned or closed. Despite all of this, the official statistics regarding Christians are constantly in need of revision, as perhaps over 20 million Christians now exist in this beleaguered country.”

We have over this last year heard of physical difficulties as well., and little Noah have all been seriously ill. Joel Saripalli took a fall and broke his ankle while traveling in the States. Kathy Hunter has struggled with knee problems in Guyana. And others have likewise known hardships on their body.

I have a personal friend whose name I cannot mention because he is laboring in a country that would arrest him if his mission work were known. He lives in constant physical danger simply because he ministers the gospel.

But I personally believe that the greatest hardship on missionaries, the one that

causes more pain than any other, is that their work creates hardship and danger for their families.

I have a little personal experience with this. My father was a local missionary in Northwest Louisiana when I was young. I remember the pain in his voice and on his face while he explained to his four children in December of 1960 that there would be no Christmas for us that year because there was no money. (The organization that had promised to support him on the field was not living up to its agreement.) In God’s grace a kind Christian, sensing our situation, gave him \$20, which he promptly used to buy us some small gifts. It was a memorable Christmas for me but I will never forget the suffering that I saw in him during that time.

In considering the theme of our *Messenger* this issue, I remembered a story that had been shared with me by a dear brother some years ago. He has gone on to be with the Lord now but I contacted his widow who graciously refreshed my memory of the story and granted me permission to use her account.

The brother’s name was Bill Clark. He was mightily used of the Lord in French speaking Africa for many years. He had radio broadcasts over short wave stations that covered almost the entire continent and he made many trips to Africa to speak. Most of the time the settings were very primitive, remote and difficult. Many came to the knowledge of the gospel through him and there are many churches, especially in the French speaking part of Western Africa, because of his work.

But he was not always a preacher of grace. Early in his ministry, he had worked in France with a mainstream evangelical group, proclaiming an Arminian gospel. Here I pick up the story from Mrs. Evelyn



Larry Dean serves as pastor of the Bridgetown Baptist Church of Nesbit, Mississippi and is Missions Editor for *The Sovereign Grace Messenger*.

Clark.

“Bill and myself went to live in France in 1956 supported by a British Missionary Society. Bill’s main work was preaching in tent missions in spring and summer, then indoors in churches during the winter. People attended these meetings in their hundreds, and the preaching, along with missionaries from various countries (American, Canadian, Dutch, Swiss etc.) was to the head and emotions rather than the heart! We even had the Billy Graham team take one mission for us!! My Bill was Arminian like the other missionaries, and did not see the truth of the gospel of grace until studying for himself the book of Romans. He then knew that he could not possibly carry on in this work and wrote a letter of resignation to the mission headquarters in England. This was accepted with much sadness and I can say even anger. We knew that if we left the mission our finances would be completely cut off. All the monies came from the mission and we were not allowed to receive gifts from anyone, even our own families. We had 3 young children then, but Bill was so convinced that he was doing the right thing he was prepared to take a job as electrician, the thing he had been trained to do in Ireland, to support his family. I can well remember the letter he

wrote and the day he posted it saying to me, 'now it is over to the Lord, we shall do what He wants us to do'. The same week, before we had an answer back from the mission, Bill received a phone call in the middle of the night from Houston, Texas, from a pastor there, saying that E.W. Johnson's church had a fund set up for John Thornbury, then in Ashland, to go to the Phillipines as a missionary, but John was not now going, and would Bill be willing to accept this monthly support if we would resign from our missionary

society? Our letter to England had already been sent, and to make a long story short, we received that month exactly the same amount of salary as we had been having with the British mission. We never asked any one for one penny. We truly rejoiced that it was the Lord's doing!"

While this may seem like a small thing to some, I know from my own experience in the ministry, as many of you do as well, that decisions which place our family at risk are not small decisions and the agonies

of mind and heart that accompany such decisions are greater than the physical sufferings we endure.

Please remember to pray for those on the mission field, whether in some far jungle or there in your community (your pastor is a missionary too!) as they labor in the gospel, suffering at times secret agonies for the sake of the gospel of grace.



Bill Clark's Work Continues after his Passing

Ed. - Some years before his death, Bro. Bill Clark asked Jean-Claude Souillot to join him in the ministry of Sovereign Grace to the French-speaking people of the world. Bro. Souillot was originally recruited to labor in translation work because most of the good Sovereign Grace works were no longer available in the French language. They worked with Evangelical Press to bring good books not only to the French people in general but in a low-cost version for the poor people of Western Africa.

With Bro. Clark's passing, some of his work has fallen to Bro. Souillot. In addition, then, to the translation work Jean-Claude now makes regular trips to Africa to check on the work there, take note of the progress and the needs, and minister to the brethren in conferences that are sometimes attended from two or three countries. It is not uncommon for some of the brethren to travel for several days, sometimes on foot, to attend one of these conferences.

The following is an excerpt from Jean-Claude Souillot's year end report for 2008.

February 2008 – Trip to West Africa

For the first time in 6 years, I visited the Ivory Coast. This was a bitter-sweet experience as any who claimed to be in the Gospel are now busy with all sorts of pursuits. Yet, Paul N'Goran, my colleague, and one or two younger men are faithful and are trying to hold the fort. The church in Gagnoa, where Paul is the pastor, is doing well. They have purchased a piece of land and have erected a temporary building. The benches were full when I preached there.

I also went to Lomé, Togo, where we had an open door to preach the Gospel for a whole day to a number of younger men from a Church I had been in contact with for some time. Then we went on to Benin for the annual Preachers' Conference for Western Africa. This was a rich time, but I was concerned at discovering that some men who had been on the Course for a considerable time were still very unclear about the real message of the Bible. So we spent several days as a team, reviewing how we were doing things and trying to find out where this and other problems came from.

New opportunities in France

Early in the summer, I was asked to give a presentation of *Europresse* and set up a bookstall at the annual convention of a

small group of churches, which was to take place in Chalon. We had never been able to make any real contact with these people in the past because of the message we preach. Yet, the Lord had been at work in the hearts of some of the leaders, and they contacted us to invite us ! The response was very encouraging. In a day and a half, we sold over 2,500 euros' worth of books !

Portugal and Cameroon

About three weeks later, I went to Portugal for the first time to speak at a conference organized by a Brazilian Christian publisher. I was also invited to preach in several churches over the week-end before the conference. It was a moving time for me as our late Brother Bill Clark used to go there regularly. It was good to get to know brethren who love the Gospel in a land where religious superstition and secularism hold sway over most people. The conference was also a refreshing time for me. I was asked to bring 4 messages and I felt the upholding of the Spirit. This opportunity to meet new brethren enabled me to discover a whole new aspect of the Lord's work, and we may draw on some of these brethren's gifts in the future for the work in Africa.

After 4 days at home, I flew to Cameroon for our Central African Preachers' Conference. The weather was extremely hot and humid, which made it difficult, especially without running water for most of the time. Following our February discussions, we decided to concentrate on the basics of the faith in our teaching. This was well received by the students present who commented on how this would help them in their ministries. I was also asked to preach to a group of men from churches we had never had contacts with before. This ended up lasting nearly a whole day, expounding the Scripture, and we trust the Lord will have worked in some hearts.

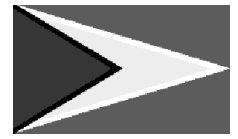
And West Africa again...

I am now planning the next Benin conference in late February 2009. This will be an opportunity for me to see the new building where the Bohicon church, pastored by my colleague Julien Naka, hold their meetings. The radio broadcasts continue faithfully. Although we receive a lot less letters these days, the men on the ground assure us that the message still gets across via about 20 stations all over Africa.

World Missions: News & Updates continues next page



Blessings in the Work and Important Decisions Ahead for John and Kathy Hunter in Guyana



Greetings from Guyana,

The new year is here as a gift from God! **Happy New Year to you!** We here in Guyana had a joint service between the three major groups New Year's Eve: #57 Baptist Mission, Roadside Baptist Church and the Corriverton Baptist Church hosted by Corriverton Baptist. The evening was one of our high points in our time here. The service was well attended. We sang and had 3 specials through the evening. Two from Ellen White and Katie Matthews from Rhinelander, Wisconsin. I spoke from Acts 1:9-11 on the duty of Christians to be witnesses until Jesus returns. Some seemed greatly moved by the message of God's Word. We also had some speak of what they wanted the Lord to do in the New Year as well as some special prayer requests, all of which we then carried to the Lord in prayer. After that we all went downstairs for a typically American meal of spaghetti, home-made dinner rolls, cookies and watermelon. Katie and Ellen worked all day with the help from friends to prepare it. Most really enjoyed the meal. We played games until the New Year and then we took many of the folks home, which gave us more opportunities to speak of Christ's power to forgive and give strength to live for His glory. I could hardly ask for a better New Year's Eve. Katie and Ellen are proving to be a real hit with the people and a great help to Kathy and me. Everyone loves them although they make quite a stir in the market; two very tall, very white girls.

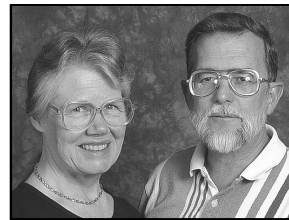
The building at #57 Village is going on well, but prices seem to go up constantly. We have spent over \$4,000,000 Guyana dollars which is \$20,000 US and will probably need another \$10,000 US before we are done. The building is 50' x 22' because of the narrowness of the lot but that is quite common here. We would have liked to go wider but were unable. The people at #57 have had

a real spirit of cooperation in the project for which we give God praise. Our deceased Brother Sonny would have been pleased. He had a real heart for this project and we miss him. But Christ be praised; He does all things well.

The Lord seems to be moving among His people. Please pray that what we desire might prove to be true and much more as the Lord pleases.

Kathy says the girls have taken Guyana by storm and are ambitious and enthusiastic in their desire to serve the Lord any way possible while they are here. They have a real heart for seeing souls saved and being as busy as they can be. Her knees have begun to bother her more but not to the point of needing to return to the States. By God's grace, we will be able to stay until our flight out in April. The Katryans want us to stay until they return the first week of May so we can discuss everything. That would be a major expense as we got our tickets in 2 sections, so it would be 4 penalties plus any change in the cost of the flights. We continue to seek the Lord about our future. We look forward to meeting the newly called pastor at Sovereign Grace Baptist in Anniston, Jon Cardwell from California.

In Christ,
John Hunter



John & Kathy Hunter

Contact Information

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email: j-hunter.gbca@juno.com
Hunter.jhkp@yahoo.com

Victor Maxson Finds Opportunity to Minister to Young Believers in Malawi



Ed. - Victor Maxson, in addition to the report mentioned previously concerning a break-in attempt, sent this:

“We continue to adjust to the new environment. Hannah has picked up walking quite well, and even seems to prefer it over crawling! Beth is looking good, and a great blessing to me! Our new little one is due on March 31st, coming soon! We have been going to Blantyre Adventist Hospital for prenatal checkups, and all is well. Please pray for Beth as her time draws near.

Praise the Lord I was able to apply for a work permit. We trust the Lord will cause it to be approved in His time.

Malamulo Chindongo, an emerging leader in the church, and a dear brother, is working with me in outreach to the local colleges. We plan to hold a Bible study soon at College of Medicine in Blantyre. We recently had a book table there, selling Bibles and literature, and interacting with the students. My brother Nate has been overseeing the book table ministry and the rest of the literature work.

Pray for those attending the services. Most are young believers, and several have encountered persecution from their families who are from Catholic or Presbyterian backgrounds, and are antagonistic toward the doctrinal and practical stands their children are taking. One couple has even forbidden their children to attend the services. Pray for openness in the families and grace in dealing with them.

Please pray for grace to be a witness and to live the life of Christ faithfully in this place.”



Victor, Bethany & Hannah

To contact Victor about the work in Malawi, please use the following email:
victorwmaxson@gmail.com

Donations may be made to their sending church:
Faith Baptist Tabernacle
P.O. Drawer A
Williston, FL 32696



..... Reports on Successes and Challenges



Ed. – Our brother reports some encouraging news as well as some challenges from the missions front. If you have been following his ministry, you will recall that he has been concerned for someone to take on the support of the evangelistic team on the island of Java that he met during his time there.

“Heartry Missionary Society has a heart for supporting indigenous Christians. Praise God that they are now working with Pak Nunu and team *Asih Pamitran*. I have been over-committed and praying desperately now for 2 years, waiting for the Lord to raise up other friends by which the efforts among the Sundanese could be sustained. With the help of Grace Community Church of San Antonio, Heartry Missionary Society, and other supporters, that is now a reality. Pak Nunu also sends his thanks.”

Ed. – is also excited about the potential addition of another couple to labor in Papua.

“.....: This week, I am hostingfrom Bethany Bible Church near Minneapolis, MN. They are World Team Missionaries on their Vision Trip to Papua. They desire to possibly partner with us in the Korowai.”

Ed. - Our brother also remind us that the quilt project continues and is working in the lives of some poor Christians to provide their financial needs. Through quilts, Nunu is able to take care of a portion of the needs of the team and also is able to help dozens of Sundanese families every month. One queen size quilt gives good wages to 10 workers each for 10 days. **ORDER A QUILT, HELP THE MINISTRY IN WEST JAVA:** To order a quilt, contact Jeannie Henry at Bible Baptist Church: bbcinstl@aol.com or contact the **Spurgeon Baptist Association of Churches'** website at: www.sbaoc.org/quilts and use the password “quilt” to gain entry into their quilt site.

But the work is not without its problems either.

“My West Java trip has gone great! In Papua, however, there have been struggles. First, the one mission helicopter (covering an area the size of France) is down for at least a month. And, second, my main carpenter thinks an evil spirit stole his soul! He was evacuated with what appears to be a nervous breakdown from Danowage complaining of demonic disturbance.”

Ed. - is planning to return to the states with his family for a furlough beginning in May of this year. As always, he has ambitious plans for the year and time will be at a premium. He sincerely desires to see as many of his supporters as possible, so contact him at for information about visits in your area.

Continue to pray for him and his family.

Contact Information

email:

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Sending Church

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Some names and picture removed for security reasons.

A Return from the Mission Field in Columbia

Ed. – We are sad and concerned to include the following note from the Paris family. Please pray for them.

God bless each and everyone of you. Attached is our last Update as missionaries in Colombia. After much prayer and counsel, we have decided to resign from the ministry here and return to the States. We appreciate all of you and are indebted to you as a family for your prayers, interest, and support of our labors in Colombia. You can also go to our blog to read our final post as well at <http://christforcolombia.blogspot.com/>. If any of you would like more information about this decision or have questions, please feel free to contact us using the means below.

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parishome@gmail.com

"Christ wants not nibblers of the possible, but grabbers of the impossible." -- C.T. Studd

"If a commission by an earthly king is considered a honor, how can a commission by a Heavenly King be considered a sacrifice?" - David Livingstone

"It is sweet to be nothing and less than nothing that Christ may be all in all." - David Brainard

Daniel Parks Begins his Work Anew in the Caribbean

Ed. – Bro. Daniel Parks reports that he has moved into an efficiency apartment prepared for him by the church at the back of their meeting house until he can find permanent quarters. Mrs. Parks (Sandy) has been able to close the sale of their home in Clarksville, IN and Bro. Parks is considering the appropriate options for them on the island. He should have a land line phone soon, which will include internet access. He has sent the following report:

“I was blessed to minister recently in the West Indies Mission Conference on Saint John, Virgin Islands, fifty miles north of Saint Croix. This conference is regularly conducted by Saint John Missionary Baptist Churches: Cruz Bay Baptist Church on the west end of the island, pastored by Emmanuel Jaggernaut since 1979; and Calvary Baptist Church on its southeast end, presently pastored by Alexander Luke. I rode a seaplane between Saint Croix and Saint Thomas, and a ferry between Saint Thomas and Saint John. I preached on the subject assigned to me, *The Doctrines of Grace*, and dealt specifically with “Their Exaltation of Christ Alone”. I preached also on *The Wedding Garment of Christ’s Bride* (Revelation 19:8).

“Cecil and the church on Tortola have invited me to spend six weeks soon ministering to them in both preaching and teaching. During that time they are to conduct their annual conference. They requested I invite another preacher to minister with me during it.

Don Bell, pastor of Lantana Grace Church of Crossville, Tennessee, has graciously agreed to do so. This will be his second visit to Tortola, as he visited us when I ministered there. I also hope that in the not-too-distant future I will be able to take advantage of an invitation recently received to minister in Guyana, South America. I am awaiting word from the editor of *The Avis*, Saint Croix’s only daily newspaper, regarding my request for a weekly column. (Alexander Hamilton, first USA Secretary of the Treasury, whose likeness is found on the \$10 bill of the USA, was affiliated with this newspaper.) We also have been investigating which of the local radio stations would be best for a weekly radio program.

“All supporters of this mission are reminded to send no more funds to our former addresses in Clarksville, Indiana or Louisville, Kentucky. Rather, they should be made payable to and addressed to Caribbean Mission, 4137 Todd’s Road, Lexington, KY 40509.”



Daniel and Sandy Parks

CARIBBEAN MISSION
PO Box 305 ~ Frederiksted, VI
00841
340.227-5107 ~
RedeemerBC@aol.com

Newsletter #4

Prayer and Contact Information for Other Missionaries

Gospel Light Foundation for the Blind, Inc.

3760 Village Main Street, Loganville, GA 30052
Email: ministries@glfb.org Website: glfb.org

Paul Karstens in South Africa
paulrkarstens@gmail.com

Gifts channeled from the U.S. through:
Grace Baptist Church
510 Susquehanna Ave.
Milton, PA 17847

Dr. Bob Doom and Global Baptist Mission

Russian Bible Society, Director
PO Box 6068
Asheville, NC

Bill and Jennifer Hale in Columbia

First Baptist Church
5304 East Parker Road
Parker, TX 75002
Website: www.thechurchofmercy.org

Danny Roten in Mexico

Website: www.sherwoodbaptist.com/missions/roten/news.php
Email: dan@sherwoodbaptist.com

Pat Horner in India

Raleigh Springs Baptist Church
PO Box 34788
Bartlett, TN 38184
Email: gracemissionary@gracetoasia.com

Joel Saripalli in India

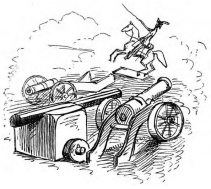
Providence Baptist Church, P.O. Box 786, Moorefield, WV 26836
Field Address: Joel Saripalli, Plot 99, Road 2, Mathuranagar
Colony, Secunderabad—56, AP, India
Gifts: Joel Saripalli, 135 Cedar Lane, Dodson, LA 71422
Email: joelsaripalli@msn.com

Prem Waghmare in India

Sovereign Grace Baptist Church
PO Box 9424
Kansas City, MO 64133
Email: premw@yahoo.com

Kyle White, in support of struggling churches in Siberia

Community Baptist Church
5697 Labus Rd. #1
Elmendorf, TX 78112
Email: cbcelder@cbcweb.net
Phone: (210) 723-6568



EDITORIAL: Battle Fatigue

Ron Staley

Who is most in danger of being overwhelmed in battle? Obviously, those who are actually in the battle! All who are truly in Christ, all who have submitted in faith to Him, giving up their sinful life in this world to follow the Son of God, enter a spiritual battlefield. It is very like the time, so many years ago, when I entered the United States Army. Once my hand was uplifted and the required oath taken, my civilian life was over. Even my appearance was quickly changed. I was given different clothes, some of which were called “fatigues,” and I would soon find out why. The locks of my hair would soon lie on the floor and I would emerge with a “G.I. haircut.” The next shocking thing would be to hear one of the training sergeants say: “You are mine now! You no longer belong to your father and mother! I am your father and mother! You will do exactly as I tell you!” The training that followed was vigorous, demanding and stressful. Some recruits never made it through basic training, much less onto the battlefield. Since our country was then at war in Vietnam, the officers and NCOs were determined that we be able to function in battle and survive it, should we end up on that field of conflict. By the providence of God, even though my unit was on constant alert, we never heard those dreaded words, “Pack your bags, men, and get ready to go!”

All who truly know the Lord know also that He both brought God to us in human flesh and brings us to God by His Cross. Two of the great things we learn by the Cross and come to confess is that, “He died for me and I died with Him.” We are no longer our own; we are to live under another rule; now living in Him, we are to live for Him. This puts every true believer into conflict with forces they never understood before. But the outcome of this battle is not in doubt, because our Great Commander has already won and secured the victory for us, if we are among those who truly follow Him. Although all who follow the Great Commander enter this battle, there are some who stand in the forefront and bear the brunt of the battle while leading others. These are His officers, and to them is given the charge, “*Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*” The only way they can endure the stress of their appointed task is by being “*strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.*” And yet, in the course of this spiritual war they often end up with ‘battle fatigue,’ even if only for a brief time.

In preparation for this editorial, I referred to the “Leader’s Manual For Combat Stress Control – Field Manual No. 22-51, U.S. Army, Chapter 5, Battle Fatigue.” Under this section was written:

“5-1. Introduction

Battle fatigue is the approved US Army term (AR 40-216) for combat stress symptoms and reactions which --

- Feel unpleasant.
- Interfere with mission performance.
- Are best treated with reassurance, rest, replenishment of physical needs, and activities which restore confidence.”

“5-2. Contributing Factors Which Cause Battle Fatigue
There are four major contributing factors which cause battle fatigue. They are --

- Sudden exposure.
- Cumulative exposure.
- Physical stressors and stress symptoms.
- Home front and other existing problems.”

The manual not only gave the symptoms and causes of combat stress but also the most effective ways to manage it. Every true minister of the gospel will identify, in measure, with the symptoms and causes here as being applicable to spiritual combat. But it seems to me the most stress (no pun intended) should be placed on the treatment: “best treated with reassurance, rest, replenishment of physical needs, and activities which restore confidence.”

We have resources that do not belong to the natural man. We have a different warfare and a different ‘Manual,’ for our guidebook is the very Word of God. And everything we need to teach us how to “*stand fast in the Lord*” is in our ‘Manual,’ with which we are “*thoroughly furnished.*” Now there is no doubt that we need “rest, replenishment of physical needs,” and many of us abuse our minds and bodies by imposing unreasonable pressures on ourselves. Surely, if we are to take the promises of our Lord—promises that strengthen, sustain, and encourage us mightily in our warfare—should we think that those promises are to be taken at the neglect of the principles our Lord also gave us? If we did not need rest—time away from the battle—He would not have said, “*Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while.*” These are the words of our Great Commander. It has been rightly said, “Either come apart and rest a while, or come apart.” But take note, our Lord did not say “go ye” but “*come ye.*” Our warfare is spiritual and so must our rest be. There is even access to rest in the midst of the warfare, if we truly understand and by faith lay hold of the great truth that “*The battle is the LORD’s.*” The trusting heart cries, “*Thou art my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word.*” With Him between you and your spiritual enemies, it will be impossible for them to penetrate your armor. But it is a great danger to be so engaged in our labors that we neglect our souls.

The key to our strength for battle is found in one great word—faith. But faith is trust, so that faith of itself is nothing. It must have an object. Not only then are we to employ both the principles and promises our Lord gave us but we must trust, as one grand hymn puts it, “Our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days.” Let us remind ourselves that “*The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.*” - **Editor**

“*Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*” Acts 20:28

“God uses men who are weak and feeble enough to lean on him.” – Hudson Taylor

Gospel Tabernacles

Ron Carr

Since *“all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”* (Rom. 3:23), our only hope is for *“the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, Whose Name is Holy”* (Is. 57:15) sovereignly to make manifest His gracious Presence to our empty, helpless souls. God’s making known His infinite Person and Work is herein termed God’s ‘revealed Glory’! Everything in His creation and His written Word reveal God’s glory (Ps. 19). Both point to God’s greatest revelation of His glory, *“the Word...made flesh and dwell [ing] among us...[in Whom] we [behold] His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth”* (Jn. 1:14).

God’s Glory Manifested in Tabernacles of Flesh

Such a ‘beholding’ of God’s glory is beyond natural man (1 Cor. 2:14). Yet, by *“the preaching of the cross”* (1 Cor. 1:18), *“faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God”* (Rom. 10:17). Spirit-wrought faith is the miraculous root (Job 19:28) of God’s gracious work within a sinner. Saving faith doesn’t act on its own, but always reacts and responds to *“the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth...”* (Rom. 1:16). ...*“The just shall live by faith”* (Rom. 1:17), beholding ever-increasing measures of God’s transforming glory. *“As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God”* (1 Cor. 2:2). In a wonderful way the Triune God manifests His own presence or revealed glory in every quickened believer. *“For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this Treasure in earthen vessels”* [each quickened believer is like a ‘Gospel tabernacle’], *“that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us”* (2 Cor. 4:5-7). This passage is foundational to what it means to *“walk by faith, not by sight”* (2 Cor. 5:7). The risen, reigning Christ is now *“Head over*

all things to [for] the Church” (Eph. 1:22), composed of believers Christ uses as *“lively stones [to build] up a Spiritual House”* (1 Pet. 2:5) through which to reveal His Glory, *“the Church [being] His Body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all”* (Eph. 1:22-23).

The Apostle Paul astounds us when he inquires, *“What? Know ye not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost Which is in you, Which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s”* (1 Cor. 6:19-20). No Spirit-filled saint, *“constrain[ed] by the love of Christ”* (2 Cor. 5:14), can long remain a mere spectator. Nor can he depend on his own finite energy and self-centered cleverness to accomplish anything in this life that pleases God. ...*“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new”* (2 Cor. 5:17). God’s glory is not revealed by well-intentioned, man-made plans of good Christian men and women supported by other well-intentioned good Christian men and women. *“Every plant, which My Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up”* (Mt. 15:13). We are never told we can build Christ’s Church, or that the life of any assembly of believers depends on human strength and wisdom (Zech. 4:6-7)! Whatever man-built ‘Christian’ institution we establish, we are always burdened to protect and provide for by our own finite funds and efforts. That is not the same as the Church Christ builds (Mt. 16:18) – *“when the Gentiles heard [the Gospel] they were glad, and glorified the Word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed”* (Acts 13:48).

God’s Glory Manifested in His Spiritual Temple

Not only is each individual saint indwelt by the Spirit of Christ, but *“from [Christ] the whole Body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the Body unto the edifying of itself in love”* (Eph. 4:16). *“Every part”* should be fed on *“the*



Ron Carr serves as pastor of Free Grace Baptist Church of Luray, Virginia where he has ministered for twenty seven years.

unsearchable riches of Christ [so as to] see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, Who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord...” (Eph. 3:8-11). Realizing that *“by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body...”* (1 Cor. 12:13), the Gospel exhortation to every son or daughter of God in Christ is the same: *“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God”* (1 Cor. 10:31). What an astonishing purpose the Triune God is working out in us – *“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God”* (Eph. 3:17-19).

Throughout the Scriptures, the sovereignly revealed presence of the one true God is the greatest of treasures to God’s trusting children. Until the fall, Adam and Eve delighted in *“the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden”* (Gen. 3:8). God’s revealed glory was wondrously centered in the detailed blueprint, meticulous construction, and biblically-observed services of the Tabernacle [sometimes called ‘the Gospel of the Eye’ because every part spoke of Jesus Christ dwelling with His redeemed people] (Gen. 25:8; Deut. 23:14). So, too,

was the Temple built according to God's revealed "pattern" (1 Chr. 28:12-19). But, "in these last days, [God] hath spoken by His Son...Who [is] the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His Person" (Heb. 1:3). ...*"The first tabernacle...was a figure for the time then present..."* (Heb. 9:8-9). While the Old Testament's revealed dwelling place of God's special presence and glory identified with material structures, everything concerning God's revealed special dwelling place in the New Testament Gospel is inseparable from the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ and every regenerate sinner joined to Him by faith – *"a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands..."* (Heb. 9:11)! Ephesians 2:18-22 summarizes this dwelling place of His revealed Glory. *"For through Him [Christ] we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the Household of God. And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Cornerstone; In Whom all the Building fitly framed together groweth unto an Holy Temple in the Lord: In Whom ye are also builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."*

Gospel truths concerning the sacred dwelling place of God's glorious presence, such as John 1:14, 1 Cor. 6:19-20, 2 Cor. 4:5-7, Eph. 2:18-22, Eph. 3:17-21, Eph. 4:16, and 1 Pet. 2:5, are both staggering and electrifying to our finite minds. Yet, *"because...Jesus [is] glorified"* (Jn. 7:37-39), and *"the Spirit of truth is come"* (Jn. 16:13), every quickened believer "[has] the Spirit of Christ" (Rom. 8:9) so that *"we have the mind of Christ"* (1 Cor. 2:16). This causes the Spirit-filled saint – a 'Gospel tabernacle' – to eagerly respond in faith to the exhortation, *"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove [discern] what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God"* (Rom. 12:2). Just like the minute details of the Old Testament Tabernacle and Temple revealed God's glory in the life of the Hebrew saints, so every aspect of the believer's earthly sojourn now has the highest privilege of being a special manifestation of His transcendent glory as His 'Gospel tabernacle' and a unique part of His living and growing *"Holy Temple"* (Eph. 2:21). Of course, this is totally Christ's doing, *"that He might*

present it to Himself a Glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:27). It's simply our honor to *"live...by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God"* (Mt. 4:4). Every gift, talent, opportunity, challenge, trial, heartache and failure is to be *"clean[ed]"* (Jn. 15:3) and *"sanctified...through [God's] truth: [His] Word"* (Jn. 17:17) and *"prayer"* (1 Tim. 4:5). *"With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible"* (Mt. 19:26).

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It is with this Gospel mindset – *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me"* (Gal. 2:20) – that every page of Holy Writ is to be read. The prayerful goal of the Gospel is always the purpose for reading and living out by faith all Scripture – ... *"that our God would count you worthy of His calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power: That the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in Him* (cp Zeph. 3:16-17; Zech. 2:5; 6:12-13; Jn. 15:3-5), *according to the grace of our God and the*

Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 1:11-12). There is no irrelevant passage of Scripture nor is there even one trivial moment in any given hour, since all is given by our infinite, all-glorious God Who *"is light, and in Him is no darkness"* [wasted passage or moment] *"at all"* (1 Jn. 1:5). As one example, the Book of Psalms is of endless value to each *"lively stone [being] built up a Spiritual House"* (1 Pet. 2:5) who, by the Spirit's indwelling, is being *"conformed to the image of [God's] Son"* (Rom. 8:29).

“Christ in you, the hope of glory”

Psalm 84 can be beautifully unpacked from the Body perspective of the Bridegroom ministering *"where [He] maketh [His] flock to rest at noon"* (S. of Sol. 1:7); *"where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there I am in the midst of them"* (Mt. 18:20). But, going a step further, there is transforming Gospel truth for our individual walk of faith through this wilderness life accompanied by Christ's tabernacled Presence (cp Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11). Better to read Psalm 84:1-2, not as a pre-Calvary saint *"waiting for the consolation of Israel"* (Lk. 2:25), but as a regenerate disciple of Christ in whom God is fulfilling His Word, *"even the mystery which hath been hid from the ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory"* (Col. 1:26-27). *"How amiable"* [lovely, good for my soul] *"are Thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!"* (Ps. 84:1). The primary meaning is not solid church conferences and Sovereign Grace assemblies, but it means each *"body"* [of a Christ-centered saint that] *"is the temple of the Holy Ghost"* (1 Cor. 6:19) whom by Spirit-wrought faith and illumination experientially knows something of the exclamation, *"the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we [behold] His glory, as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth"* (Jn. 1:14). Each circumstance and affliction is part of the Sovereign Builder's gracious shaping and molding of us and it *"worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"* (2 Cor. 4:17). There is no attitude of boredom or self-centered burning out when *"my soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God"* (Ps. 84:2).

continued next page

When soul, heart and flesh are obsessed with the inworking presence of *“the living God,”* the Lord Jesus gives us *“exceeding great and precious promises”* (2 Pet. 1:4), such as those in the Beatitudes, where Christ promises *“theirs is the kingdom of heaven...they shall be comforted...they shall inherit the earth...they shall be filled”* (Mt. 5:3-6). That has everything to do with our family, finances, employment, health, and every other personal burden and challenge! Whether a seemingly insignificant *“sparrow”* or a restless *“swallow”* (Ps. 84:3), when the Spirit opens my needy heart to the *“everlasting love”* of God in Christ (Jer. 31:3), I exclaim from my inner being, *“Because Thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee”* (Ps. 63:3)! Fixed upon Christ as your *“Restingplace”* (Jer. 50:6), His purpose for you is impressed deeper and deeper – to experientially know *“the joy of the LORD is your strength”* (Neh. 8:10), and to prove His law of grace in Psalm 37:4, *“Delight thyself also in the LORD; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.”* We can’t be blessed spouses, parents, grandparents, children, brethren, employees, teachers or students in our own strength. But as Spirit-wrought faith convinces us, *“Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee”* (Ps. 84:5), then *“[we] are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ... written...with the Spirit of the living God...in fleshy tables of the heart”* (2 Cor. 3:3), *“in whose heart are the ways”* (Ps. 84:5) that will prove to be *“a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path”* (Ps. 119:105). So much so that when we are *“passing through the valley*

of Baca” [weeping] (Ps. 84:6), the Gospel promise is that *“out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water”* (Jn. 7:38), *“for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you”* (1 Pet. 4:14). Every saint longing to be a *“vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master’s use, and prepared unto every good work”* (2 Tim. 2:21) gladly responds to the Gospel exhortation to *“work out your own salvation”* [the revealed Glory of Christ] *“with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure”* (Phil. 2:12-13).

God’s Eternal Purpose of Glory and Grace

How eternally wonderful to know that *“in Christ Jesus”* [Christ, Himself] *“is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption,”* followed by the inevitable Gospel exhortation, *“That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord”* (1 Cor. 1:30-31). Why? That the Heavenly *“Potter...might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory”* (Rom. 9:23). Because of His sovereign grace in each believer, *“the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them...and an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness”* (Is. 35:1,8). Christ’s transforming presence enables each saint to *“make [the valley] a well; the rain also filleth the pools”* (Ps. 84:6). When the Lord Jesus Christ has *“the preeminence”* in every corner of our heart (Col. 1:18) so that we *“seek...first*

the kingdom of God and His righteousness” [i.e., Christ Jesus, *“THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS,”* Jer. 23:5-6], the accompanying Gospel promise is *“all these things”* [that are needed in this life] *“shall be added unto you”* (Mt. 6:33). *“The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day”* (Prov. 4:18), so that the strange and mysterious light of God’s Shekinah Glory comes forth *“out of the good treasure of the heart”* (Mt. 12:35) *“to the praise of the glory of His grace”* (Eph. 1:6). To each one in whom *“the Spirit of Christ”* [dwells] (Rom. 8:9-11) as a ‘Gospel tabernacle,’ *“the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD will give grace and glory...”* (Ps. 84:11). Christ’s ‘Good News’ promises that *“all things work together for good to them that love God”* [not those who try in their own strength to accomplish God’s work], *“to them who are the called according to His purpose”* [*“Christ is all, and in all,”* Col. 3:11] (Rom. 8:28). Indeed, *“no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly”* [*“looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith,”* Heb. 12:2] (Ps. 84:11c; cp Phil. 4:4-7, 11-13, 19). While our Beloved Shepherd is *“a Refiner and Purifier of silver”* (Mal. 3:1), how can you and I ever doubt His *“thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give [us] an expected [hope-filled] end”* (Jer. 29:11), since by *“His divine power [Christ already] hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness”* (2 Pet. 1:3)?



Sovereign Grace Camp/Conference

Under the Direction of Northwoods Baptist Church, Rhinelander, Wisconsin

Rick Taillefer, Pastor

August 25-30, 2009



Warren Burrell

Northwoods Baptist Church of Rhinelander, Wisconsin invites you to attend their annual camp Conference. The dates are August 25 – August 30th. Many arrive on the Monday before and leave on the Monday after. As a family camp, the focus is on families coming to the Northwoods to enjoy the preaching of the Gospel, the wonderful Christian atmosphere, and the scenery. Cabin space is allocated as registrations are received.



David King

There is a minimal fee of \$35 per person to a maximum of \$250 per family to cover the cost of all meals at the camp.

Elder Warren Burrell of Sovereign Grace Chapel of Winston Salem, NC and Pastor David King of Grace Baptist Church of West Milton, PA are the scheduled preachers.

See our website <http://www.northwoodsbaptist.com/camp.htm> for further information and to obtain a registration form, or contact Pastor Rick Taillefer at 715-369-2042

Sovereign Grace Bible Conferences

APRIL 21-23, 2009

Spring Sovereign Grace Bible Conference
Bible Baptist Church, St. Louis, Missouri
Holmes Moore, pastor
Tom Henry, assistant pastor



Gene Breed



Larry Dean



Jim Gables



David King



Conrad Murrell



Dean Olive



Ron Staley



Mark Webb



Ken White



Kyle White

Tuesday, April 21

Morning

10:00 AM - Kyle White
11:00 AM - David King

Evening

7:00 PM - Dean Olive
8:00 PM - Gene Breed

Wednesday, April 22

Morning

10:00 AM - Dean Olive
11:00 AM - Ron Staley

Evening

7:00 PM - Jim Gables
8:00 PM - Mark Webb

Thursday, April 23

Morning

10:00 AM - Larry Dean
11:00 AM - Jim Gables

Evening

7:00 PM - Mark Webb
8:00 PM - Conrad Murrell

Devotional and prayer at 9:00 A.M. each day of the Conference, led by Conrad Murrell.

David King will be speaking on April 19, before the Conference. Ken White will be speaking on April 26 in the services of Bible Baptist.

Two meals a day, each day of the Conference, are provided by Bible Baptist Church for all who attend. Dinner follows the morning sessions. Supper is served before the evening services at 5:30 PM.

For information on accommodations in the St. Louis area, contact the church office at: (314) 645-4248

June 23-25, 2009

Calvary Baptist Church, Pine Bluff, Arkansas
Warner Worthan, pastor

There will be two morning services, June 23-25; two evening services, June 23-24 (No evening service on last day); conference ends after Thursday lunch. Recommended Motels: Comfort Inn (870) 535-5300; Super 8 (870) 540-0008; Holiday Inn (two locations), Adjacent to Pines Mall (870) 534-1810, Watson Chapel ((870) 879-3800. Watson Chapel Holiday Inn nearest the ladies' tea and the ice cream social.

For more information, contact Pastor Warner Worthan. Phone: (870) 879-9612 Email: wrwonthan@gmail.com

July 20-24, 2009

Sovereign Grace Youth Camp held in Conway, Missouri at Camp Beth Eden

To see pictures from last year's camp you can go to the group, "Sovereign Grace Youth Camp" on facebook.com which will be updated as information including cost, speaker, activities, and registration forms becomes available.

Contacts: Tim Nehrbass 303-404-8949 or Terry Boyer 636-274-4264

October 26-30, 2009

Grace Baptist Church, West Milton, Pennsylvania
David King, pastor

Pastor David King has announced the dates for the Sovereign Grace Bible Conference at Grace Baptist Church of West Milton, PA as Monday evening through Friday morning, October 26-30, 2009. For further information, contact Pastor King at: (570) 742-8915.

View from the Parsonage:

The Unique Trials and Blessings of a Pastor's Wife

Carolyn Staley

On prominent display in the antechamber of the Interpreter's House, there hangs the portrait of a very special man. Because he has answered a heavenly call, he serves by royal commission in the Kingdom of God. Therefore, he labors tirelessly for time and eternity, not merely from a sense of duty or the desire for worldly honor, but out of love for his Lord and the souls of men. Like Great-heart, this precious servant of Christ is the conductor and guide of those "pilgrims" entrusted to his pastoral care. A watchman standing guard on the "walls" of Zion! An under-shepherd who faithfully oversees and cares for the "sheep" of Jesus Christ! And it is my privilege to be married to such a man.

Metaphorically speaking, the *mantle* of a N.T. *prophet* is not a thing to be put on lightly. Truly, it is a life-altering event. Many men who yield themselves to the call of God must forsake lucrative careers in order to do so. This was the case with my own husband, who was well established in the field of broadcasting and on a career path for immediate promotion when the Lord began to call him to the Gospel ministry. Although Ron did not share his private struggle with me at first, deep down I suspected what was happening to him. And I must confess that I was somewhat fearful of the future, knowing that once he answered God's call, our lives would never be the same again.

That early impression proved true enough! Although the call to the Gospel ministry is the highest call there is, it is also a most solemn thing. Like putting one's "*hand to the plow*," it requires a commitment from which there is no looking or turning back (**Luke 9:62**). Moreover, this call will have a profound effect upon the man's family as well, if he is married. In our particular situation, the Lord did not call Ron to the ministry until a few years after we were married. So you could say that I had no idea what I was getting myself into! And, in retrospect, it was just as well that I did not!

Proper Role of the Pastor's Wife

Although not called in the same sense that her husband is, the pastor's wife has been chosen of God for very special service.

His providence has made her a co-laborer with her husband in the great "*vineyard*" of Jesus Christ. But what exactly is her proper role?

I personally believe that we should take as active a role in the church as we are able, within Scriptural parameters, while understanding that our position as the pastor's wife is not an official one. We are not co-pastors in any sense of the word and have no authority in the church; therefore, we should resist any temptation to unduly influence or, worse still, manipulate our husbands to do as *we* think best. Great mischief can result when the pastor's wife forgets that she is not in control and tries to take matters into her own hands. And yet, this danger does not mean that we must sit in the shadows rather than taking an active part in the assembly. Along with every other church member, we do well when we yield ourselves and our abilities to God to use as He sees fit. And should He place us in a position of more visible service, may we take care to render it in the fear of God and with a spirit of true humility.

Our highest duty, however, lies not in our church responsibilities, but in serving our pastor-husbands and helping them in any way possible. By being wise and prudent managers of our homes, we will relieve our husbands so that they can attend to their pastoral duties without distraction. Many pastors' wives do all of this even though they are also employed outside the home.

This is often necessary due to pressing financial need, especially when the husband pastors a small church. These ladies have my highest admiration. Frankly, I do not know how they do it! But their self-sacrifice is rendered unto the Lord as well as to their families.

Whether she labors outside the home or not, the pastor's wife must usually learn to live and manage her home as frugally as possible. And quite often, this is a change from her former lifestyle. So, in most parsonage families, prudence and economy are the rule of the day. Of the wife who manages her home in this way it may be rightly said, "*The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.*" (Proverbs 31:11)



Carolyn is the wife of Ron Staley, pastor of New Hope Baptist Church, Mechanicsville, Virginia

Unique Trials of a Pastor's Wife

Without question, to be a pastor's wife is a rare privilege, but it also presents some daunting challenges. Not only do we face the trials that are common to all believers, but also some that are uniquely related to our husband's calling. For example, the pastor's responsibility is such that he is never really off duty. The care and concerns of his people are always in his heart and mind. Moreover, whether his study is in the home or not, he is on call every hour of every day. Family plans are sometimes interrupted and days off are seldom. Vacations are occasionally disturbed or shortened due to emergencies that arise while the pastor is away. His attendance may be required without notice. The phone may ring anytime, night or day. Many years ago we experienced one such disturbing incident, although it is amusing in retrospect. A church member called Ron in the middle of the night to confess that she had been talking about him. Her guilty conscience was doubtless relieved after her confession, and she was probably able to sleep. But Ron and I lay awake long afterward and wondered what was brewing now!

Add to all of this a life of strict discipline, constant study and other pastoral duties and it is little wonder that the man of God often suffers from chronic fatigue. This is a cause of great stress and concern to his wife as she watches him spend his strength without adequate opportunity to recover it. He labors while giving little thought to his health and well-being, but she is fearful for him as well as concerned for his ministry. Realizing that he cannot take proper care of his flock if he neglects himself and succumbs to burnout, she attempts to

persuade him to take adequate breaks. But, as I have discovered from personal experience, he is not so easy to convince.

Financial hardship is another challenge that many pastor's families have to face from time to time. Although not unique to the ministry, certain aspects of it are. At times it may seem that we are at the mercy of people who are not very merciful! A situation that arose in our church almost thirty years ago is a good illustration of this kind of trial. We had recently built a new building and sold bonds to finance it when a point of contention arose between two of our members. Since neither man would give an inch, repeated attempts to resolve the conflict proved futile. To make matters worse, both men had relatives who were also members of the church at that time. As hard feelings escalated, both men and most of their relatives finally left the church, leaving us in severe financial difficulty. We were, in fact, faced with the reality that we might be unable to meet our just debts. But that was of little concern to those who had forsaken us. Desperately determined not to default on our obligation, we placed the church building for sale. It was on the market for six months without receiving a single offer. After that time, God's hand of providence intervened in a signal way, for He is faithful and true even though men are not. By His grace, the few people who remained with us agreed together to share the expense of the loan payment as long as was needed. And to make a long story short, every payment was made on time until the loan was completely repaid.

Another aspect of the Gospel ministry that is not often considered is the fact that our pastor-husbands find themselves on the front line of a great spiritual battle. In this conflict, they prove courageous and valiant for truth in the defense of the Gospel and for the souls of men. But, as their wives, we are not far behind; and if we are not very careful, Satan will try to use us to dishearten our husbands. Therefore, we must be on guard against his cunning devices. Fear and unbelief are two of his most effective weapons against us, and what robbers of our peace they prove to be! Moreover, they open the door for such things as self-pity, discouragement and depression if allowed to have their way. We do well not to give place to them!

And then there is the problem of bitterness, which can arise in our hearts when our husbands suffer wrongfully at the hands of

others. In addition, wounds that we suffer over the course of the years—disappointment, loneliness, betrayal, unjust criticism, dealing with difficult people—will accumulate and take a great toll upon us if we fail to commit them to the Lord and let them go. Furthermore, we will tend to rehash these old hurts to our husbands, causing him problems as well by keeping them fresh in his memory. The remedy is twofold and quite simple, but difficult to apply. First, we must remember that God is sovereign over all. Nothing happens to us outside of His perfect will for us. And all is for our spiritual profit and increased fruitfulness in His Kingdom. Second, look unto Jesus! Did He not suffer all of these things and more for our sake? No matter what happens to us in this life, we will never suffer as He did. And to suffer for His sake is a rare privilege indeed, if only we had the eyes to see it (Matthew 5:10-12 1 Peter 4:12-16). But a bitter spirit is a highly contagious thing. It will infect our husbands and children and spread to others as well. We need God's great grace to avoid this terrible snare. How thankful we should be that our sovereign Lord is also our heavenly Father, who regards our human frailty with compassion and pity! (Psalm 103:13-14)

Unique Blessings of a Pastor's Wife

Although the trials faced by a pastor's wife are undeniable, it is a great mistake to dwell upon them. We face particular challenges, to be sure, but the blessings that attend our position far outweigh the trials and difficulties. Do we face financial hardship while watching others prosper, or have we come under opposition from those who would do us harm? Consider how privileged we are to walk by faith and witness God's faithfulness in preparing "*a table before (us) in the presence of (our) enemies.*"

And what about our husbands? What a very special bond exists between us! Our husband is also our pastor, our brother in the Lord, and in some cases, our spiritual father. We are blessed indeed to be married to God's choice servants. Men who are strong in faith, of exemplary character, spiritual leaders in the home, and worthy examples to all who know them. Men with whom we may have sweet fellowship and enjoy the advantage of their wisdom and knowledge. Men with whom we may serve the Lord as fellow laborers in His heavenly

Kingdom, and share the joys as well as the sorrows entailed in doing so.

There are many other spiritual benefits to be received from fellowship with other pastors and their wives. Mutual encouragement and a sympathetic ear from those who truly understand! Wise counsel from those who have faced, and been victorious over, the same struggles! Shared burdens and mutual prayers for one another! Rare blessings, these!

But I think that the greatest and most enduring blessings in the ministry come from our particular field of service—the assembly where God has placed us to labor for Him. Here we experience the day-by-day fellowship of kindred minds with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Here we behold the brotherly love that binds our hearts together as we grow together "*in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*" (2 Peter 3:18). I can truthfully say that this describes our precious flock at New Hope Baptist Church. Although we are few in number, we are a close-knit family who love and serve one another. One in which the members exercise their unique spiritual gifts for the benefit of one another and share their mutual joys and sorrows. My husband and I are greatly blessed to be a part of them!

A Concluding Reflection

It is indeed a high privilege to be a pastor's wife, but the quest to be the *perfect* pastor's wife is doomed to failure. We may feel that we are scrutinized more closely than others, and this can be an unnerving thing. As a result, we may set unrealistic expectations for ourselves or try to live up to what we suppose others expect from us. But in trying to be the perfect pastor's wife, we attempt to conceal our human frailty. Then, we nearly break under the strain of trying to meet an impossible standard. Our goal should properly be to serve the Lord faithfully in whatever He has given us to do. To yield our gifts, however great or small, to Him to use as He sees fit in the service of His Kingdom. To support, encourage, and help our husbands in any way we can. And above all, to look steadfastly unto Jesus, "*the author and finisher of our faith,*" (Hebrews 12:2) living each day by His grace and for His glory.



A Winter Walk through Psalm 61

Kathy Butler

It seems that God destined my family for a rather difficult winter of experience this year. The storm of trials hit early and lasted a long time in the form of serious physical illness and the massive damages of a state-wide ice storm. This account, fashioned around a Psalm that God used to sustain me during this time, is meant to encourage you that during the worst winters that can assault the souls of His children (in the manner of the man pouring water on the fire in the wall), Jesus Christ is "behind the wall", pouring oil on the fire perpetually, keeping the souls of His dear ones burning against the heart-freezing troubles that surround them.

"Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer."

I was catapulted into a **Psalm 61** mindset outside the emergency room door of the hospital in Bolivar, MO, a few days after Thanksgiving. My son Ryan, his wife Mandi and I had been hurried out of the room as their son Eric went into uncontrolled seizures as a result of a severe illness that left him weak and dehydrated. We clung to each other in the hallway, and cried out. There seemed to be no time to take stock of anyone's spiritual condition, or to ask for help in a "proper" way. We needed God right away, and He spared Eric's life. I soon found out that I would live in this state of immediate, demanding need for quite a few weeks! The best of it is, that God came.

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee,"

Four hospitals inside a week. It sure felt like the end of the earth. Eric's seizures were brought under control, and his parents and I followed as he was airlifted from the Bolivar ER to the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) at Cox South in Springfield, where they determined that he had a severe salmonella infection. Three days into Eric's hospital stay, my son Ben called me to say he was taking his dad to the ER at Baxter Regional Medical Center in Mt. Home, AR because of some alarming chest pains. I hurried back to Arkansas, where the doctor informed me that an angiogram revealed that David needed immediate treatment for heart failure – probably a pacemaker/

defibrillator. They put him in an ambulance, and my daughter Rose and I followed as they took him to Arkansas Heart Hospital in Little Rock.

"... when my heart is overwhelmed;"

Our hearts were physically and spiritually overwhelmed. Ryan and Mandi, who were exhausted by now, along with Mandi's parents, Doug and Jody, watched over their very sick little boy in Springfield. Rose and I waited for an explanation of Dave's serious condition in Little Rock. Our children Mark and Anne managed our affairs and chores at home, and Ben and his family began to shuttle back and forth between Little Rock and their home in Yellville. This situation would burgeon into a series of complications and setbacks that included Dave being sent back to Yellville to have a tooth infection cleared up, suffering a heart attack while he was home, and being sent back to the Heart Hospital by ambulance. He suffered there from a very slow adjustment to a powerful new medicine and the pacemaker/defibrillator device, even being shocked repeatedly during frightening fluctuations in his heartbeat! Eric remained in the hospital in Springfield for a week. After he went home, Ryan came to Little Rock to help us. Dave finally went home New Year's Day to an excruciatingly slow recovery full of panic attacks and other side effects from his medicine. As everyone was beginning to get used to being home and adjusting (somewhat) to the newest set of circumstances, northern Arkansas was struck by a phenomenal ice storm that left us blockaded by fallen trees (one fell on our roof and punched a hole in our kitchen ceiling), and without electricity for eight days. Our county was declared a disaster area. Virtually everyone was without power.

"...lead me to the rock that is higher than I."

I am sure there are many people besides me that can tell you that this kind of trial feels like floundering in huge stormy



Kathy is the wife of Pastor David Butler, Summit Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Yellville, Arkansas

waves, trying to keep one's head above water, struggling to breathe. You don't necessarily feel sad, or even terribly afraid, because you are working so hard to stay alive! However, the God we cry out to is a God with a stretched out arm, a God who walks on water and calls us to come to Him and take His hand. Well, I had no choice but to go when He called, in desperation! He pulled me, wet and bedraggled, onto the rock of Faith and held me there, where I had quite a view of how great and marvelous His works are, and how just and true His ways! I found that I could consider the incomparable tribulation Christ had suffered on my behalf, so I could be comforted in this present time, and not be weary and faint in my mind.

"For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in thy tabernacle forever. I will trust in the covert of thy wings."



I can't begin to tell about the many ways God sheltered us from our enemies, which at this time were death and unbelief. I watched our grandson face death. I watched his parents feel utterly helpless. I watched Dave almost die (again). I was given no assurance about the stability of his condition. I got tired out, lost in a variety of cities, bewildered, and frustrated. I watched two days of precipitation create five years worth of clean-up work on our farm. I watched our children and the people at our church become weary with just surviving. I watched (and still watch) Dave work to resign himself to yet another permanent setback in his physical condition. At every turn the very God of the Universe was present, omnipresent!—condescending in love, strong, full of an everlasting supply of the spiritual and material things we needed.

I never had to be concerned about a place to stay, meals or basic needs. God's people at Summit Sovereign Grace Baptist, Fair Grove Baptist in Missouri, Sovereign Grace Baptist in Springfield, and First Baptist in Bull Shoals, Arkansas gave us money for medical and other expenses, helped our children that were still at home, visited us, fed us and prayed with us. God's tender love covered us in such a way that we were never given the slightest opportunity to doubt His care for us. The most startling expression of God's provision was on the day the doctor put in Dave's CRT-D (cardiac resynchronization therapy-defibrillator) device. I was paged in the waiting room, where Dr. Beau met me to tell me the procedure was successful and that there would be no charge for the device, his services or the hospital's!!! (We have no insurance.) Why? I don't know, except for the fact that *"The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want."*

Perhaps the sweetest evidence of God's love for us came from our grandchildren. 3-year-old Aaron came to grandpa's hospital room on Christmas Day with two carefully wrapped presents; a bag of Cheetos for grandpa, and a Reese's Peanut Butter cup for me. Also, soon after Dave and I arrived home from the Heart Hospital on New Year's Day, Ryan and Mandi came to visit with Eric, who was completely well, and he and I got to sit on my living room floor and have a good ten minute belly laugh together.

"For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name."

During the terrible ice storm that followed our hospital ordeal, two young men from Fair Grove Baptist, Joel and Jake, came with chain saws, generators, food and drinking water. They helped our sons Mark and Ben clear trees off our house and out of our driveway. Our friends Doug and Jody, and our daughter Rose offered washing machines, warm places to shower and to sleep. David and I actually began to experience the safety of "abiding in His tabernacle"—if we tried to face our difficulties away from His presence in prayer and the Scriptures, fear would come. When we would swallow our anger and pride and throw ourselves on His mercy and grace, our eyes would be opened to the wonderful ways He was caring for us directly and through His people. What a heritage! What a wonderful family tree! Related to God and each other by the blood of Christ, His wonderful people were glorifying His obedience through their own obedience to Him...and God was confirming these actions with abundant comfort and blessings both spiritual and physical!



"Thou wilt prolong the king's life: and his years as many generations. He shall abide before God for ever: O prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him."

Perhaps one of the most satisfying blessings God has given me through this earthly life of tribulations has been the spiritual heritage He has bestowed on Dave and me in our children. Even when I was the least assured about David's physical life, I saw the mercy and truth that God has

given us over many years revealed and preserved in our children and grandchildren. Nothing reassures me of the everlasting nature of my relationship with them like the godly love and courage they demonstrated as they wore themselves out looking after their dad and me and their own families. God has truly answered my desire for His preservation by His mercy and truth—in this world through many generations, and in the glorious world to come!

"So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows."

I am learning more every day that nothing assists me in walking with God in confidence and obedience like praise and thanksgiving for the certainty of God's purpose, and the incomparable love He has, in and through Christ, for His children. Praise God for His son, Jesus Christ, by whose blood we are ransomed and given a royal inheritance of eternal life! Praise Him for His Spirit, who comforts us, assures us, guides us and prays for us through our earthly trials! Praise Him for His mighty holy creative power!

Spring isn't as far off as it seemed, and we are enjoying a respite from the rapid onslaught of difficulties we experienced earlier. The rainbow of God's promise shimmers. As you undoubtedly have done, we will take a few deep breaths, and plow once again into the trials and burdens of being strangers and pilgrims in a world that is corrupt, suffering and hostile to its Creator. I pray that this account of our most recent season of trouble will reassure you that, as followers of Christ, this is what all of us are called to do, and that we lose nothing in the fiery process of being made holy but our selfishness, while gaining more of grace. Eternity joyously backlights the cross of Christ, so let me encourage you to set your feet in that direction, and to lift up hands that hang down, strengthen feeble knees, and forge ahead on this straight and true path! Be lights on a hill, so those who must walk in the valley of the shadow have the hope of seeing the way ahead!

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)





Purpose of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship

From the "CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS"

"To establish and maintain a Fellowship of Baptist pastors and churches which believe that salvation rests ultimately in the sovereign grace of God; to provide a medium for fellowship and mutual encouragement so that such pastors and churches may be edified in love and grace; to cooperate together in the carrying out of the Great Commission in those areas that cannot well be accomplished alone, namely world missions, church planting, and the education of aspiring, God-called ministers; and to assist one another in the maintenance and promotion of sound biblical doctrine and practice in ways deemed necessary and right in the honest light of Holy Scripture."



"We do not intend to form a "denomination" or any kind of exclusive, sectarian group where some are "in" and others "out." Our aim is to be a friend to all friends of the Grace of God, not to become a tool of division, separating brethren one from another. We hold sincere goodwill toward all, irrespective of their feelings toward our Fellowship effort. We heartily welcome as brethren all who hold the Doctrines of Grace and wish to have part in what we are attempting. We earnestly ask the prayers of all, even of those who, for whatever reasons, do not see fit to join our efforts." - **Holmes Moore, pastor of Bible Baptist Church of St. Louis, Missouri who served as the first chairman of the SGBF.**



The next annual meeting of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship is scheduled for Tuesday, September 8, 2009 at New Hope Baptist Church, Mechanicsville, Virginia. Plan to be with us. This meeting will be held in conjunction with a Sovereign Grace Bible Conference. For information call (804) 321-2110.

Information Available Concerning The Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship

You may obtain a brochure containing the "Articles of Faith" and "Constitution and By-Laws" of the SGBF by writing to the address below or contacting any of the officers of the Fellowship listed on page 3.

Check out our website: www.sovereigngracebaptistfellowship.org

If you are not on the mailing list and desire to receive *The Sovereign Grace Messenger*, add another recipient to the list, have a change of address, or would like your name removed, please send your name and address to:

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