

ROCKY MOUNT CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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The Effectual Call and The Gospel Call

The effectual call is a call to eternal salvation; the gospel call is a call to repentance and faith. The effectual call is a call to sonship; the gospel call is a call to discipleship. God speaks directly in the effectual call; God speaks through men in the gospel call. The effectual call is always obeyed; the gospel call may be disobeyed but is met with chastisement. The effectual call is a creation; the gospel call is a communication. The effectual call is directed to the dead; the gospel call is directed to the living. The effectual call is an internal call; the gospel call is an external appeal. The effectual call produces life; the gospel call produces light. The sinner responds, like Lazarus, involuntarily in the effectual call whereas the gospel calls for a voluntary, decisive response. The conclusive testimony of Scripture is that the effectual call precedes the gospel call; the effectual call gives a man spiritual life, while the gospel call gives a man knowledge and understanding. This is the distinction between regeneration and gospel conversion. **Matt Jordan, Pastor**

Announcements

On a recent Wednesday night, we were greatly blessed in our assembly as we listened to words of instruction and exhortation from three young brethren in our congregation. Although they would say it was not necessary that I mention their names, I will anyway... Luke Tatum, Seth Tatum and Seth Kelly. There are young men among us (and some older ones) who have been blessed to grow in knowledge, in wisdom and in grace, and who are very willing to share their gifts of exhortation with their brothers and sisters. What a blessing it is to be encouraged and strengthened by these gifts. We look forward to having Brother Ron Crocker with us Wednesday, August 3rd, service beginning at 6:30.

Lord willing, Brother Chase Harrison from Union PB Church in Union City, TN will be with us the First Weekend in September. On Saturday evening beginning at 6:00, we plan to observe Communion Service and washing of the saints' feet, followed by a time of fellowship. Brother Chase will be preaching for us Sunday morning with lunch following the worship service.

The Annual Meeting of the Mt. Zion Association will be held with Pilgrims Rest Church, Attalla, AL with Bethlehem Church assisting as co-host. The meeting will begin Friday morning, September 9th and continue through Sunday morning, September 11th. No services are scheduled for Saturday night.

Salvation By Grace

Salvation by Grace Alone

The Scripture teaches the total depravity of man. We read in the book of Genesis of the creation, everything which God had made was good and very good. God created all things. He made men good and upright. Through the deception of Satan, in rebellion against God, Adam sinned, and death passed upon all men. Our existence, through inheritance, is sin.

The Devils doctrines today still deceive many. The popular teachings of men uplift the man and therefore deny the righteousness of God. We are told to hold ourselves in high esteem, and then men wonder why things are in the shape they are in.

David, in Psalm 51 acknowledges his sin and begs God to cleanse him. Verse five states "*Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.*" We are born, yea conceived, being in sin due to our

father Adam.

The 14th Psalm declares the nature of man. *"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good."* All are corrupt! None doeth good! Not only is our nature and inheritance sin, but so are our works. Genesis 6 tells us that our hearts are wicked from the days of our youth. Our walk and our works are sin. In our natural being, we deny God, and say He is not. We rebel and fight against him. To give us any claim to righteousness, and goodness by our own being and goodness is a lie. We are in a state of death (Ephesians 2) and cannot love God, we cannot see God, we cannot come to God, we cannot please God. We live in a world in which evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. As they deceive, they are deceived, denying God, while living in, and loving the death of sin in the world.

It is of the sovereign grace of God, in his son Jesus Christ, that we have life. Ephesians 2 *"and you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."* The son of God was born into this world to SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS. That He did, leaving nothing undone, or for us to do. We have life eternal in the grace of God. John 1:17 tells us that grace came by Jesus when He died, and laying down His life on the cross of Calvary, He bought eternal life for every elect child of God. Ephesians 1, 1st Peter 1, Romans 8.

We love God because He first loved us. When did He love us? Psalm 14 states *"the Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God."* This was before He created the world in his foreknowledge. There were none. God loves us so much that he gave his only begotten son to suffer and die for our sins. On the cross, the Lord Jesus Christ bore our punishment for our sin, and God was satisfied in that. His body became sin for us. He bore our curse, cursed is everyone that hangeth upon a tree. It is by grace, there is no other way. There is nothing that man can do to gain it. There is nothing that man, nor the devil can do to take it. We are promised eternal life, Titus 1, and God cannot lie.

It is also of grace that we know God. In His death and resurrection, He made us holy and without blame before the Father. He gives us knowledge of the Father. He draws us to him, and teaches us of His way, that we might have joy in this world of death and sorrow. The grace of God is so overwhelming, it cannot be understood, nor fully revealed in this world of sin. When by his grace we stand before Him, and are in His likeness, we shall be satisfied and fully understand His great love. What a precious hope is ours.

Now, why do we neglect so great a salvation? Let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, come hear the preached word of God, pray and sing songs of praise to our loving Master. Come feel the love which God has for us as we love each other in Christ. By His grace we have a kingdom. Let us occupy the kingdom, and have peace in this world.

Pray for Zion, please pray for me.

Elder Vaughn Winslett

Sick of love

"Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love."(Song of Solomon 2:5).

There is a song in the Sacred Harp that takes the words from this chapter. I have heard this song sung all my life and pondered over this thought. I decided the writer is telling me (not because love is so nauseating) that we are sick. Sometimes we get sick because some food is just too rich.

When I think about the kingdom that has been given us; when I think about the history of the Primitive Baptists for the past 200 or 300 years, I think we may have become sick of love. It is possible for us to become sick of love when we fall into a rut, and neglect the warning of God, that we teach the whole counsel of God. When we begin to think about the good things; when we begin to ponder, and meditate on the doctrine of salvation by grace, which we love so much; when we spend so much time dealing with this and neglect the other points of doctrine, then we become sick of love. We become anemic, because our diet is imbalanced.

When I first saw this several years ago, I thought I may have made a mistake of going too far the other way. Then one day I heard Brother Danny Parker at Mount Vernon mention that some said we were preaching too much grace and not enough duty. Brother Parker said he believed it was impossible to preach too much grace, because this work of grace, which Jesus wrought for us, is the motivating force which moves our lives, the very cornerstone of the building. Who could question what he said? So, I revised my thoughts a little.

It is possible for us to be sick of love. That is the reason the writer says stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples. I understand that those flagons are food similar to a raisin cake, a food that is good for you. Most of us remember the old adage, "an apple a day keeps the doctor away." I could not tell you all the benefits we get from the apple.

The thought under consideration here is, stay me with flagons and comfort me with apples. This banner of Love that you are flying over me is wonderful, but I need the flagons and apples, something tangible that I can get hold of. That is, indeed, what makes this kingdom of God, what it is. Christ is our example.

When we begin to study the life of Christ; what he did in His life here on earth; what He accomplished for us, we cannot even name the ways He did things for us. In life we have the expression, "How do I love thee? Let me count the ways." When you look at the life of Christ, you begin to count the ways He loved you. His banner is love over you.

In that life where the law is drawn out in living characters, we see these tangible things; we see the flagons and apples, the foods we can eat, the things we can do, the service we can render in His name. We can then be true disciples of Christ. When Jesus told his disciples He was the bread of life, they did not understand. Many of his followers turned away. They said he was speaking hard words. Our faith is intangible, but putting that faith to work uses tangible things. **Elder Dan Hopper (Rocky Mount 3/1/87)**

Of Men and Angels

Do You believe in angels? Do You really?

Have you ever seen an angel? Have you ever been "touched" by an Angel? Have you ever been an angel; or perhaps, do you think you will ever be one? -- -- Or have you ever been used to do the work of an angel?

Angels played an important role in biblical history, as well as our lives today. That's evident throughout the Bible. Some of the Bible's greatest events and miracles have involved God's use of His angels.

I believe his angels still work in our lives today -- and every day. We may not always see his work -- or pay attention to it; but angels have their impact on someone nearly every day.

While angels are one of God's primary tools to serve as messengers and deliverers of the Lord's decrees, their actions may be miracles to us. But they are often disguised and we should be careful not to miss them. Are we ourselves capable of being the tool of angels?

From the outset we can establish that while angels are God's messengers, they did not rise above the authority of Jesus. Certain pagan doctrines attach special significance to angels. Some believe that Jesus was an angel by virtue of the miracles he performed. Jesus was and is superior to any angels, by the authority and inheritance of the Lord. In fact, all angels of God are to worship Jesus. Hebrews 1:4-14. Chapters 2 and 3 further establish Jesus' superiority.

The Bible has plenty of references to the Lord's angels. Most often, we associate angels with the Bible's greatest events.

The early references of angels include such events as the "angel of the Lord", which appeared to Hagar -- Abraham's wife, Sarah's maiden; Genesis 16:7, 21:17. The angel of the Lord, which appeared to Moses in the burning bush, Exodus 3:2.

The most-often referenced passage is the angel that announced the birth of Christ: "*I bring you good tidings of great joy... for unto you is born this day... a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.*" Luke 2:10-14. But angels also appeared to Joseph regarding his marriage to Mary (Matt.1:20-24).

Satan tried tempting Jesus, quoting the ability of Jesus to use angels to bear him; Matthew 4:1-6. Jesus was not tempted, even though he knew he could summon "twelve legions of angels" to save himself from suffering on the cross, but chose not to, so that the Scripture might be fulfilled and each of us might inherit eternal life. Matthew 26:53. An angel appeared to Jesus in Gethsemane to strengthen Him before His arrest, trial and crucifixion; Luke 22:43.

We know that an angel rolled back the rock over the tomb of Jesus, and sat on the rock to address those witnesses looking for Jesus' grave; Matthew 28:2-7.

Perhaps the greatest acts of angels will come at the end of the world, when Jesus will send out his angels to sever the wicked from among the just; Matthew 13:41-43, 49-50. And we know that upon our rise from the dead, we will be "*as angels, which are in heaven.*" Mark 12:25.

Angels were active in the days of the apostles. Paul states he was treated as an angel of God; Galatians 4:14. An angel appeared to Philip, Acts 8: 26, and Peter talked of the sighting of an angel, Acts 11-13, and an angel directing him, Acts 12: 7-8. The apostle Paul stated he served the angel of God, Acts 27:23.

The 34th Psalm tells us that angels are still with us today, camping around those that fear the Lord and a well-known hymnal prays to "Bear me up Angels."

Have you helped the poor or afflicted or a stranger in need? Have you given assistance to another, or chosen to serve a neighbor so that the Lord might be glorified? If so, you may have entertained angels and not known it, Hebrews 13:2.

My father shared from the pulpit many times the story of him being stranded on a deserted rural highway one night in a terrible storm when his vehicle failed. A rough-looking individual in worn clothes driving a well-worn pickup stopped and came to his rescue, carrying him into the nearest town, and delivering him back to his vehicle. There was no doubt ever in his mind he had met face-to-face with an angel of God.

You can do the work of an angel, or assist angels' work by serving another in need. The Lord moves mysteriously, and His directions to angels can be disguised as merely "good luck" or coincidence.

You may be the tool the Lord Jesus uses to do the work of an angel. When you seize the opportunity to help another in need, no matter how small or trivial your help may seem, it is the work of an angel to the recipient. I've been so fortunate to be on the receiving end of the work of the Lord's angels. They come in the form of pastors and friends past midnight in hospital rooms and many others, whom the receiver may recognize as an angel without the giver realizing the power of the act.

When it comes to the Lord's angels at work, sometimes "We may not behold them, Our Vision is Dim". Whether we recognize Angels in others -- or in ourselves, we need them to "bear us up."

The Lord may use you to carry out part of the work of His angels. You may not realize your contribution to one in need as angel work. But when your act is delivered with the power of the Holy Spirit, the Lord can move mountains in the eyes of the receiver.

We still have Angels. We still need them. When you see an angel at work, do not forget to thank the Lord and thank the angel. **Don R. Richards, The Banner of Love, July, 2001**

Don't Forget to Pray

In the songbook "The Good Old Songs," there is a song titled "I Am A Great Complainer." I've never sang it, but when I see it I'm reminded of myself. I spend a great deal of time complaining. But, I have found that when I spend less time complaining and more time praying, I have a lot less to complain about.

I confess with shame, that sometimes I forget to pray and I remember the song "Oh what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear. All because we do not carry, everything to God in prayer."

"Men ought always to pray and faint not," Luke 18:1. We should always remember to pray to God and thank Him for our blessings, praise Him for His goodness, pray for others and ask Him for the things we stand in need of. And, in time of trouble, rather than prayer being the last thing we do, it should be the first thing we do.

The scripture tells us to "pray without ceasing," 1Thess.5:17. I know we should always have a prayerful heart and look to Christ continually. But, we also need to pause and with full attention give ourselves to prayer. "Pray without ceasing" means to not quit praying; pray every day several times no matter what. Even as Daniel who "kneeled upon his knees three times a day and prayed," Daniel 6:10.

Elder Steve Stathelson