

Voice of Baptists

"The Voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Isaiah 40:3

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THERE WERE MANY LIGHTS IN THE UPPER CHAMBER

By Calvin Perrigo, Indianapolis, Ind.

And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."
Acts 20:7

Let us consider why the lights were on in this upstairs assembly hall and also note some of the benefits that were received by those that were present at that meeting. Nine of God's servants spent seven days together in Troas. After reading of the zeal and burden that Paul had for lost people and the church, I am persuaded that this time was spent in serving the Lord in some capacity or another. The introduction supplies quite a bit of information on the activities of these servants of God and the reaction of the congregation to this meeting. The meeting was in keeping with the pattern that was set by the disciples. The resurrected Christ met with his disciples one evening while they were gathered together; this first meeting with them after the resurrection was also on the first day of the week, (John 20:1, 19 and 26). The importance of meeting together on a regular schedule is stressed by the writer of the Hebrew Letter, (Hebrews 10:25). People that miss the meetings of the church today are subject to miss as much as Thomas missed that night he had something else to do, (John 20:24 and 25). Jesus has promised to be in the midst of an assembly that are gathered in his name, (Matthew 18:20). Thomas was caused to doubt the resurrection of the Lord for an entire week. Why? Because he missed one service! (John 20:26-29). Suppose Thomas had missed all the other appearances of the resurrected

(Continued on Page 4)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

By James H. Smith
Nashville, Tenn.



"I PRAY FOR THEM: I PRAY NOT FOR THE WORLD, BUT FOR THEM WHICH THOU HAST GIVEN ME." John 17:9.

In this 17th chapter of John there is a detailed account of a prayer that Jesus actually prayed. What is often referred to as the Lord's prayer, in Matthew 6:9-13, and Luke 11:1-4, is not a prayer that Jesus Himself prayed, but in those verses He was teaching the disciples how to pray, or giving them some basic principles for prayer. But here in John 17 Jesus Himself is praying to the Father, He is asking the father to do something. Please read all of John 17. Jesus prayed at other times, one time He prayed all night, Luke 6:15, but it is not recorded as to what He prayed for; but in our text the record is clear as for whom He prayed, He prayed for those that the Father had given Him; that is, His very own.

KEEP THEM

"Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom Thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are." John 17:11. Now, keep in mind that Jesus is praying to His Father to do something, and that something here is, "Keep through thine own name those that Thou hast given me." Can we believe that the Father answered that prayer? Will He keep those that He has given the Son? Will God keep His children? If we say, it is possible that He might let one of them go, then we must conclude that He didn't answer the prayer of His only begotten Son. Jesus said, in another place, "I knew that Thou hearest me always." John 11:42. If the Father always hears the Son, then He heard this prayer, "Keep

(Continued on next page)

ELDER ALFRED COOK DIES AT AGE 80

Elder Alfred Cook was born in Macon County, Tennessee, September 15, 1898, the son of James William and Martha Brooks Cook. Bro. Cook is survived by one brother, Jesse Cook of Nashville, Tennessee and one half-brother, Gib Cook also of Nashville.

Bro. Cook professed faith in Christ February 9, 1921 during a Methodist revival held in Edgely Schoolhouse near Scottsville, Kentucky. He united with the Methodist Church shortly after the meeting. However, after studying God's word, he was convinced that Jesus had established the Missionary Baptist Church during his personal ministry in this world. He then submitted himself for membership in New Bethel Missionary Baptist Church of Maynard, Kentucky. Bro. Cook was baptized by the authority of said church on August 20, 1922 at the hands of Elder L. O. Cliburn.

Later he united with Maysville Baptist Church, Allen Co., Ky. and was ordained to the gospel ministry by this same body January 5, 1924. At the time of his death he was a faithful member of Days Cross Roads Missionary Baptist Church near Lafayette.

Our brother labored vigorously doing mission and evangelistic work in Kentucky, Tennessee and Indiana for 58

(Continued on next page)

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ELDER COOK

(Continued from Page 1)

years. Most of his life was spent in Allen Co., Ky. and Macon Co., Tennessee.

He was well read in the scriptures and able to defend the Baptist faith.

Bro. Cook, though handicapped by a crippled body all his life, caused scores of people to turn to God and be saved. He was an inspiration to many while living on earth, but God called him home to enjoy the rewards laid up for him in that heavenly home. We will meet again one day.

(This obituary was written by Elder E. G. Williams, upon request of Bro. Cook, on April 10, 1978 while Bro. Williams and Bro. Cook were sitting under an oak tree in the Lafayette Courthouse yard.)

Funeral services for Bro. Cook were conducted in the chapel of Lafayette's Alexander Funeral Home, July 31, 1979 at 11 a.m. Elder E. G. Williams officiated with final interment in Haysville Cemetery. A host of friends and ministers attended the service showing ardent respect for a well-worn life spent in the Master's vineyard. I believe that Bro. Cook heard the following words as he departed this life July 30, 1979: "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of the Lord."

Matthew 25:23

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THE LORD'S PRAYER

(Continued from Page 1)

through Thine own name those that Thou hast given me." It should be a comforting thought to all children of God to know that our Saviour prayed for us, that we might be kept. It gives us that sense of security that relieves our mind and heart of those fears that are tormenting the world today.

Jesus said further: "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name: those that Thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled." John 17:12. The son of perdition refers to Judas Iscariot who betrayed Jesus, who never was saved; for Jesus said of Judas that he was a devil. (John 6:70) and of course devils are not saved. The other disciples He had kept, and none of them were lost; and this is true of all true disciples, none of them are lost and never will be.

**THAT THEY MAY BE ONE,
AS WE ARE**

Jesus and the Father are one, yet they are distinct persons, and this would include the third person, the Holy Spirit. They are three in a sense, but they are one in another sense. God is a Trinity, three in one, three persons, but one God-Head. They are one in nature, one in unity, and one in purpose. So Jesus prayed that His church might be one as they are. A local church is made up of several members, but that church can be one if all believe the same truth, the Word of God; and this was what Jesus was praying for. He was not praying for a oneness as the ecumenicalist are trying to promote, for they are saying by their attitude that you may believe and practice as you are and have been, but let us all cooperate and speak as one. Jesus never prayed for a thing like that, and He doesn't sanction such today. He prayed that the Father would sanctify them through the Truth, John 17:17. Sanctify means to set apart. The Truth sets us apart from error, it doesn't lead us to cooperate with such.

A oneness is so very important in a Baptist church, and I fully believe that this can only be maintained by faithful teaching. Pastors have a tremendous responsibility to teach his people what thus saith the Lord. One day we will have to answer to the Chief Shepherd, and if found faithful in feeding the flock, we shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away (1 Peter 5:2-4)

SANCTIFY THEM THROUGH TRUTH

I have already mentioned this part of the Saviour's prayer, above, but only

briefly. But I should like to stress this thought further, because it is so very important; for many people are confused about this Bible truth. Some are teaching that a person may be sanctified after he is saved by a second work of grace, and that through this second blessing one may become sinless and live above sin. I am sure that anybody who knows anything about the Bible should know that we, even though we have truly been born again, still have our carnal nature; and just as long as we live we have to battle with this sinful nature in order to serve God. A person who says he has no sin is badly deceived. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." 1 John 1:8. We have our contrary nature, and when we pray we are to ask for forgiveness, as Jesus taught in His model prayer, and mind you that He is teaching His disciples how to pray; and He said, among other things, "Forgive our sins" Luke 11:4. Jesus was not asking the Father to purify the flesh of the disciples but was asking that they be set apart by the Word of Truth. The Lord said further, "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they might also be sanctified through the Truth." John 17:19. Certainly Jesus wasn't purifying Himself, because He was already pure, for He knew no sin, (2 Corinthians 5:21) But He did set Himself apart for the work the Father sent Him to do, and for the sake of the disciples.

The Truth does set people apart when it is believed and applied to life. It tells us what we should do and what we should not do, and when we obey that Truth we become a peculiar people, and not all entangled with the sinful things of this world; and we won't be yoked together with unbelievers, and people of the world will be able to distinguish us from the world.

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REVIVAL

Longview Missionary Baptist Church of Gallatin, Tennessee will begin revival services Sunday evening, September 2, 1979. Pastor Johnny Carver extends a cordial welcome to all. Elder Kenneth Massey will serve as evangelist.

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TRUTH...TRUTH...TRUTH

By Frank Standley
Azusa, Calif.

DEFINITION

1. Truth - A State of Being True
2. Truth - Trustworthiness, Sincerely
3. Truth - Conformity with a Fact
4. Truth - An Established Fact
5. Truth - An Actual Existence

MOTIVE

1. Truth, Is Reliable and Certain.
2. Truth, Is Accurate and Correct.
3. Truth, Is Real and Genuine.
4. Truth, Is Right and Not False.
5. Truth, Is A Standard Rule.

WITNESS

1. Truth, Never Never Dies.
2. Truth, Seems To Sense Truth.
3. Truth, Vitality Is Imperishable.
4. Truth, Cannot Stand A Cover-Up.
5. Truth, Cannot Be Forgotten.

NOT EVIL

1. Truth Is Not Psychology.
2. Truth Maketh One, A Free Person.
3. Truth Is A Power In Leadership.
4. Truth Will Not, Bid Evil, God's Speed.
5. Truth Is Alight, And Not A Darkness.

CHRIST SAID, "I AM THE WAY,
THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE."

CLOCK OF TIME

By Juanita Gruel
Sheridan, Ind.

The clock of time is wound just once,
And no man has the power
To say just when the hands will stop,
The year, the day, the hour.
To lose one's wealth is bad enough,
To lose one's health is more,
To lose one's soul such tragedy
Which no man can restore.
So today alone you call your own
To do with as you will,
Don't count upon tomorrow, friend,
The time may then be still.

REACHING FORTH

By John A. Keen, Jr.
Brownsburg, Ind.



"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect; be thus minded:"

Philippians 3:13-15

These verses express an attitude adopted by the Apostle Paul which he encourages us to adopt. Note the phrase, "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before". These few words give us direction in our Christian lives. Paul, at the time these words were penned, had lived the greater part of his life. Most of his missionary work had been completed and the time of his departure was drawing near. Yet, he was not living in the past. Paul realized there was still work to be done and if this work were to be accomplished, it would have to be done by those who were reaching forth. The direction given to us by these verses is that of onward and upward.

Sometimes it appears as though we fail to face the problems of today preferring instead to dwell on yesterday. How often have we desparingly uttered or heard it said, "We don't have the power of God with us today like we did thirty years ago," How many times have we heard it asked, "Why don't we have revivals today like we did when I was growing up?" These questions are discouraged by the Word of God in Ecclesiastes 7:10, "Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this." Surely the key to understanding this verse lies in Paul's phrase, "forgetting those things which are behind." The Greek word translated "forgetting" means "no longer caring for". We surely can not erase from our memories those precious events, trials and blessings, which crossed our paths many years ago. Nor should we try to blot them out. Great strength can be derived from recalling life's experiences, good and bad. However, when this remembering becomes a desire to relive the past, then we become guilty of caring for those things which are behind.

A living example of this attitude is recorded in Joshua 1:1-2, "Now after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord it

BETHEL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION CONVENES SEPT. 14-16

Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Lantern Road, Fishers, Indiana will host the 1979 session of Bethel Baptist Association. Elder Calvin Perrigo served as moderator last year with Elder John A. Keen, Jr. serving as clerk and Elder Carlos Gammon serving as treasurer. Annual sermons will be delivered all three days with several subjects reported and discussed. Everyone is extended a warm welcome.



REACHING FORTH Continued

came to pass, that the Lord spoke unto Joshua...saying, Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them. "Moses was one of the great men in history. He remained faithful to God in leading the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage, thru the Red Sea, across the desert, and the bank of the Jordan River, but God had just told Joshua that Moses is dead; now you arise and take these people over this Jordan River. If Joshua and those Israelites had dwelt on the past they would have remained on the East bank of the Jordan wishing Moses was still alive to lead them; but instead they reached forward to those things that were before them. God had not been caught short-sighted but had prepared Joshua for this task and Joshua drew his strength from the promise of God in verse 5 of this chapter, "as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."

Today, we operate under no less a promise from God than Joshua. Jesus told His church after giving them the great commission in Matthew 28:20, "and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Neither is God without strength to provide for us all the means for overcoming today's problems. The work that God wants us to do does not lie in the past. It dwells in the present. Lord, give us strength to always be reaching forth.

MANY LIGHTS

(Continued from Page 1)

Christ, including the ascension? Many present day thinkers would expect Jesus to have made a special appearance for Thomas and that at the convenience of Thomas. What finally convinced Thomas? The blessing that Thomas received by his being at the right place at the right time changed Thomas from a doubter to a worshipper of the very person of Jesus Christ. If missing or making one service had this effect on Thomas; what could the results be today if we make or miss one hundred consecutive services? You will miss something when you fail to go! This service at Troas could have been an evening service, we know that it became an all night session. How is the trend today toward going out at night to meet with God's people? Meeting at night is not a modern day gimmick; these disciples came together on this day to break bread. We assume this was keeping the ordinance as it was delivered to them; "as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come," (1 CORINTHIANS 11:26). We should also keep the ordinances as our ancient brethren did and pass them on to the next generation.

Paul preached to those that gathered there in this upper chamber. Paul's plans to travel the next day did not interfere with his burden and responsibility to preach that night. It is not an uncommon occurrence in this age for people to neglect their callings or their assemblies in order to get ready for a planned trip. Much of our travel is planned for the first day of the week. When we consider the assembling with God's people has taken place on the first day of the week down through the ages we are caused to wonder if God has given approval for people to travel on the first day of the week, neglecting their church services.

Paul was speaking at midnight and had been preaching for a long time when Eutychus went to sleep. It is not uncommon for people to catch up on their sleep during a sermon, whether it be short or long. What is unique about Eutychus is, that his seat was in a third story window. When the crowds are so large that one must sit in a window it is best to stay awake.

Let us notice; a sermon was being delivered at midnight! The crowd seems to still be there; Eutychus couldn't or didn't get a more comfortable seat; neither did the leaving of people seem to wake him from his sleep. We conclude therefore, most of the crowd was still present at midnight. How many midnight sermons do we hear today? How

many would attempt to preach that late at night? UNHEARD OF! WE AGREE — Yet it is not unusual for Baptist people to engage in all-night or midnight singings and never get sleepy until Sunday School or service time on Sunday morning. Why would the sounds of modern music be received to the extent that five or six hour singings are well supported by our means and attendance while the preached word goes forth almost unheard? How many sleepers do we see in our special fund raising singings? How long since you were invited to a regular preaching service where a special offering was to be taken for some needy cause? When a large crowd is desired, there is of necessity, the advertised singing and too often only special groups with records to sell and reputations to build are expected to engage in these services. Have you purchased a tape of a sound gospel sermon lately? Have you even heard of one being promoted?

What is the New Testament pattern? At Troas there was so much enthusiasm shown, both from the preacher and the audience, that this preaching service continued past midnight, even till the break of day. The disturbance caused by Eutychus falling from the third floor window, his injury, Paul's examination of him did not close this service. Have you ever heard this statement? "The presence of so and so killed the service!" Excuses weak as this and others are not according to the New Testament pattern.

Paul once invited the Elders of the church at Ephesus to meet him at Miletus. They came, Paul reviewed his past work at Ephesus in their presence. This work consisted of teaching, both publicly and from house to house, this work was done both at night and day. The message was repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul was convinced that he had done his duty at Ephesus and commended them to God after exhorting them to feed the church at Ephesus. Their parting was a touching experience. Why? it was because of their love for him and that was due to his labors among them. He was to never pass that way again, therefore, they had no other reason to bid him good-bye in the fashion described in Acts 20:36-38. Do we really appreciate these past efforts today in like manner?

Paul and Barnabas attended a synagogue service on the sabbath at Antioch in Pisidia, (Acts 13:14 thru 44). In this service people were seated, the law and the prophets were read, then an invitation for exhortation was extended to Paul and Barnabas. Paul stood up and asked for an audience, then preached a very

inspiring message in this synagogue service. How well was it received? The gentiles at Antioch requested that the same words be preached to them on the next sabbath day. They never forgot this service either, they were so eager to hear the preached word that almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God. There is no record in the Bible of any special singing used to draw this large crowd. People really wanted to hear the word of God from these preachers. How does this pattern fit today? Have we altered it any at all? A Roman commander was so anxious to hear the word of God he sent men from Caesarea to Joppa to bring a stranger to preach to his friends and family. He was so thrilled when Peter arrived he fell before Peter and worshipped him. Peter preached, the people heard, it did not return void, (God has promised, it won't) but did the work in the heart of those people that were gathered there, (Acts, chapter 10).

The lights were on in the upper chamber because they were eager to meet together to hear the word of God. Why? "FOREVER, O LORD, THY WORD IS SETTLED IN HEAVEN" (Psalms 119:89). "HOW SWEET ARE THY WORDS UNTO MY TASTE! YEA, SWEETER THAN HONEY TO MY MOUTH." (Psalms 119:103). "THY WORD IS A LAMP UNTO MY FEET AND A LIGHT UNTO MY PATH." (Psalms 119:105). FAITH COMETH BY HEARING, AND HEARING BY THE WORD OF GOD, (Romans 10:17). The word of God is more important than bread or peanut butter! Are we standing on the edge of a famine? (Amos 8:11). Are our sounds indistinct? Do they fall on dull ears? Let us burn some midnight oil in preparation that many lights may still be seen in the upper chambers of our assembly halls. IT'S STILL NOT GOD'S WILL THAT ANY PERISH!

NO! YOU HEARD IT WRONG!

John the Baptist's message from the wilderness was not

"Smile! God loves you!"

Jeremiah was not put into a mirey pit for preaching,

"I'm OK: you're OK."

Noah's message from the steps of the ark was not,

"Something GOOD is going to happen to you!"

John's message was

"REPENT YE, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 3:2)