

# 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

VOL. 8

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## THE LIFE of BIDE RUSSELL

By Captain Buie Massey

The subject of this account was born at Red Boiling Springs, Tennessee, April 1, 1856, being the daughter of Thomas J. and Bernettie (Sutton) Russell. She was born in the midst of poverty, her father being a cripple. When she was three months old, she developed scrofula and the disease spread all over her little body until like Job, she was covered with sores from the crown of her head to the soles of her feet. Her eyesight failed at the tender age of six months and her life hung in the balance for two years and nobody thought that she could get well. Her name was Millie Elender, but solicitous friends and neighbors, during her illness, were constantly asking the question, "Does she still abide?" The result was that she received in this way the name by which thousands of persons know her. She became little Bide, later Bide and still later she became known as Aunt Bide.

She can see the slightest glimmer of light but she knows nothing of the beauties of the earth. She wore her hair cut very close to her head in her childhood and she still keeps it short; but in strict line with the Bible injunction, she keeps her head covered. At the age of eight years, Aunt Bide lost her mother, which was a dreadful loss to the blind child. During the two years of illness preceding her death, the dying mother often spoke about having to leave her blind child. Aunt Bide remembers faintly the death scene, her mother in the shadow of death laying her hand upon the little shorn head and no doubt asking God's blessing upon her almost helpless child. She can still remember the trembling hands laid upon her head nearly seventy years ago. The mother had often said, "I will leave my blind child in the hands of God,

who will care for her." About a year later the father broke up house-keeping and the motherless child stayed here and there with any family in which she could find anything she could do. She learned to wash, to knit, to spin, to card and to do nearly anything else that those who have sight can do. In those early days, she had a very hard time. Some of the people with whom she stayed were good to her, but others were not.

Her Christian experience will now be given as she tells it in her own words: "I was living at Eli Carver's the year when I was eleven. A revival was going on at old Timber Ridge Baptist Church, now Willette. It was a great meeting, one of the greatest ever held in that part of the country. People came from miles around, there was straw in the altar,

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## YOUTH DAY '86

Theme

### "How To Prevent Teen Suicide"

Sat., May 31st

10:30 A.M. (CDT)

NATCHEZ TRACE  
STATE PARK

Wildersville, TN

Guest Speaker

Bud Hulsey

Special Music

The Wilburn Family

## I AM THE PREACHER'S WIFE

By Diane Pellin

I am the woman who proudly sits in the shadows as her husband stands in the light.

I am the one who knows her husband is a gift from God, and so I give him back to my Lord through his full-time service. Often times, I am so lonely for him because I share him with others. But I am also pleased that he gives of himself so unselfishly.

I am the one who encourages the preacher when others sometimes fail to. I am the one who listens to his dreams for the church and helps him look into the future and see his dreams become a reality.

And when others wonder if he really cares, I am the one who sees him on his knees, shedding tears for the future of the Lord's Church.

I am the woman who saw this man give up a career of security with many material benefits. I am the one who watches as he steps out in faith to do fulltime service for his Lord. When things go wrong and he wonders if it is all worth it, I am the one who comforts him and assures him that the spiritual benefits far outweigh the material ones.

I am the woman who loves my child, like any other woman. But I sit and watch as my children are judged. Why is it that they are expected to be perfect in every way? World, please be kind to them, they are only children, like all others.

I am the woman who so often hears flattering phrases. At times I am treated with such loving kindness. The kindness you show me makes it all worthwhile. It keeps me going on when I feel like quitting. But I am also the woman who often hears unkind remarks. My heart can be broken, just as yours can. But I am the one who has learned to smile at the ugly things that are said. I have to pick up the broken pieces of my heart and forgive,

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## VOICE OF BAPTISTS

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**Bide Russell**

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people wept, mourned, prayed, shouted and sang. Nearly everybody was interested. Among the mourners was Addison Cartwright. On August 12, 1867, at ten o'clock in the morning, he was converted at his home. He was only a boy, but he came to me, got down on his knees and asked me if I would be lost if I were to die. I said, "I do not know." I studied for a moment, and like a thunderbolt from the sky, the realization came to me that I would be lost. I then said, "Yes." The new convert told me to pray and he also offered up for me a wonderful prayer.

"I prayed almost constantly but could find no relief. I was miserable everywhere I went, being blind both spiritually and physically. The gloom upon my soul was so deep that I could find no pleasure anywhere. I mourned and prayed a whole year, during which time I had gone to live in the home of Ike Grissom. All this family were sinners and could give me no help. In August, 1868, Brother Ira King was holding a meeting in the Cumberland Presbyterian church near Pleasant Shade. I was a mourner in that meeting. I had trusted in everything except the Lord. Brother King preached a wonderful sermon on August 12, 1868, and my conviction came on me with renewed power. I was calling on the name of the Lord with all my might. Brother Luther Smith was standing over me singing this song:

Oh sisters, are you ready  
To meet me in bright glory?  
There is a dying day a-coming,  
Oh, Lord, have mercy,  
There is a dying day a-coming,  
Make ready for to go.

I felt that I was sinking into an awful hell. I opened my hands which I had kept tightly closed somehow in the hope that I could thereby save myself. I said, Lord, if I am saved, it is mercy; if I am damned, it is just. Lord, I will risk it all with thee. Then and there I trusted Him and the burden was instantly removed and joy and peace and gladness filled my soul. I arose from my seat and I knew in my heart I would meet Brother Smith and my loved ones in heaven. I have always felt that my dear mother knew when her child was saved. I felt as David tells us in the fortieth Psalm, "He heard my cry and brought me up out of a horrible pit and put a new song in my mouth, even praises unto God. I loved everybody and I loved God and His cause. I shouted aloud for joy.

That night I went to the home of Uncle Jesse and Aunt Betsy Kemp, who were both sinners. I was still rejoicing and I went to their bed and bowed and prayed for them the best I could. It made Aunt Betsy very angry and she said she could stamp me. But thirty years after that night, the Lord saved that old woman who said afterward that it was the prayers of the little blind girl that brought conviction to her heart and had troubled her for thirty years. Six years before this time Uncle Jesse had been saved. Both united with a Baptist church and lived good lives.

My father said I was too small to join the church, but I was very anxious to become a member. I waited three months, trying to decide what to do. Finally I came to the conclusion to follow the Spirit of God instead of my father, even if he whipped me. On November 12, 1868, I offered myself for membership in Mt. Tabor Baptist Church, in Smith County, Tennessee, and was baptized on the following Sunday, November 16th by Brother Luther Smith. My father sent me word every day that I must not be baptized, but I felt that I must obey God rather than man. Later my dear father became sorry he had opposed my being baptized.

I have had many and grievous trials, but I have been happy ever since I was saved and joined the church. God has been so good to me all these years. My blindness has never kept me from enjoying life and I have tried to be as cheerful as I could. I am now in the shadows toward the end of the journey, but there is not a dread and I am sure that ere long I shall reach that land where there are no blind eyes and a loving Father will watch over us forever."

After the death of her mother and the breaking up of the home, Aunt Bide lived for nine years at various places. Then she and her father set up housekeeping again, the blind daughter keeping house for her father for two and half years. Her youngest brother also resided with them. She did the cooking, the washing and all the housework, although

blind. The family resided during this time near Defeated Creek church to which place she had moved her membership from Mt. Tabor. It might be added that during fourteen years of her residence in the Defeated Creek community, she missed only two preaching services. After the end of two and a half years, her father said: "Bide, it is too hard on you to do all the work of housekeeping. Select a woman you would like for a step-mother and I will marry again." She replied that Jane Carter would suit her. The father and his daughter's choice of a step-mother were married shortly afterward. She proved herself a worthy wife and was a mother to the blind daughter.

Aunt Bide was the first of her Father's children to be saved. She began praying for all the brothers and sister, the result being that all were soon saved except her brother, Buck Russell. He had no interest in religious matters and cursed his blind sister when she came to him about his soul. He swore to cut her throat if she ever came to see him again in her efforts to get him to become a Christian. She knew that the Bible had said the prayers of the righteous availeth much and that the Lord would withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly. She had heard the Scripture that told about how Paul prayed for his brethren and for fifteen years she continued to pray for him and went to him time after time in spite of all her brothers threats. One day not long before he was saved, she said, "Buck, you said you would go to hell before you went to the mourners' bench. You will just have to go." He immediately jumped up and ran to the anxious seat. The blind sister said, "Brother, you are mad at Tom Donoho (his brother-in-law) and the Lord won't save you till you forgive him." He went home that day under deep conviction, feeling that he could neither eat, drink nor sleep till he was saved. He kept repeating "Why can't I forgive? Why can't I trust the Lord?" In the midst of his questions, he was gloriously saved, got on his horse and went all over the neighborhood telling the people what the Lord had done for him. He went to church and met Tom Donoho. He ran to him, embracing him and told him that he had forgiven him. The next day his wife was saved, both joined the church and became useful members.

In 1901 her father passed away and Aunt Bide was left largely on her own resources. She had a horror of going to the county house. In the midst of her sorrows and uncertainty, she offered herself to the Lord to be used of Him in any way that pleased God if He would provide for her temporal needs. From that time she became a great worker in the vineyard of the Lord. Sometimes things became gloomy to her and she knew not how she would obtain a living, but the Lord always



provided for her. She is another example of David's statement: "I have never seen the righteous forsaken."

She has been called the old fuss-maker because she so often rejoices aloud in the church services. Hundreds and hundreds of times she has shouted aloud and rejoiced over the goodness of that God who has kept her through the dark, dreary years. The Lord has greatly blest her labors, hundreds of persons having been led to God through her prayers, her talking to sinners and her general activity in the churches. She is welcomed in any home to which she wants to go and nobody ever thinks of charging her a penny for keeping her. She has doubtless visited thousands of homes in the more than thirty years since she dedicated her life to her Maker. Although blind, she is cheerful, lively and is the best company. She knows nothing about grammar, but uses good language and is very able in prayer.

She says that God has been father, mother, brother, sister, Saviour and everything to her. She counts her pastors as among the best in all the whole world. She has moved her membership from one place to another as she has changed her place of residence. She has held membership with the following churches: Mt. Tabor, Defeated Creek, Old Union, Willette, Dixon's Creek, and at present she is a member of Fifth and State Street Church (Fairview Memorial) in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Her pastors have been the following ministers: Elders Luther Smith, E.B. Haynie, W.M. Kuykendall, T.A. Hudson, Wiseman Drury, W.J. Watson, G.W. Ramsey, T.W. Matthews, W.H. Smith, W.M.S. Wilkes, James Rich, Calvin Gregory, L.A. Stewart and the author, who is her present pastor. Some years ago when her immediate relatives went to Texas, Aunt Bide had to look for a home. The author took her into his home and she was like a member of his family. She spent much time with Elders L.A. Stewart, Calvin Gregory and J.E. McDonald. She goes from place to place to be in meetings and when the revival season is over, she may spend weeks with some minister and his family. She has more invitations to visit her friends than she can fill. She is a dear lover of children and has "spoiled" many a baby. Although blind, she can learn to find her way about a home within a short time, and then she makes herself as useful as she can and is not grouchy or fault-finding.

Aunt Bide is wonderfully blest with an abiding faith in God. In fact, she has more faith than any other person the writer ever knew. She is now 77 years of age. Only a few weeks ago Aunt Bide became dangerously ill and it seemed that she was anxious to go on to be with Lord, but she has now recovered and is able to go about again. She

resides at present in the home of her sister in Riddleton, Tennessee.

She says that she will soon be through with this dark old world and that when her journey is finished, she will have a home not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. She rejoices at the thought that loved ones are waiting for her in the better land and that she will be blest with eyes and a strong, healthy body in the resurrection.

If any who read this are unsaved, her desire is that you prepare to meet her in glory. Readers who are saved will find her in the sweet bye and bye when the great reunion takes place. Let us strive for the glory of God so long as we live in the world and then at last we may meet where no shadow falls, storm clouds never rise, congregations never break up and we shall be with God forevermore.

(This brief sketch of Aunt Bide's life was written in 1933. I express my appreciation to Bro. Massey's son, Johnnie J. Massey, for furnishing this information. Aunt Bide passed away about 1937 and is buried near Bro. Massey in the Dixon Springs Cemetery.)

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## Youth and Suicide

Suicide has been the leading cause of death among teenagers for the past ten years.

The suicide rate for people ages 15 to 24 has risen 300 percent in the past 20 years.

It is estimated that at least 7,000 teenagers kill themselves annually; as many as 400,000 attempt suicide.

One Chicago suicide "hotline" rings every 20 seconds.

More people kill themselves than kill others. This year some 28,000 Americans will take their own lives.

Sociologist Steven Stace of Pennsylvania State University sees a relationship between the rising suicide rate among youths and their lagging church attendance. In his view, religious beliefs support people through life's trials and lend meaning to suffering.

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## REVIVAL

Landmark Baptist Church of Memphis, TN will begin revival services June 15. All the members and pastor invite you to come and hear Bro. Brad Adams preach the gospel.



## Preacher's Wife

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even when forgiveness is not asked of me.

I am the woman who is sometimes expected to be perfect in every way. But I have to be patient as the world learns that I am a woman like any other. I too make mistakes and I try to learn from them. Oh, yes, Jesus died for me also - I am forgiven, as you are. Please be patient with me, as I too sometimes stumble. But I am growing, as you are also.

I am the woman who hears hundreds of suggestions for various programs, and I am expected to get the ball rolling on each one. Please be patient with me. My days, like yours, have only 24 hours in them. I, too, am a woman like any other woman, with a home and a family to care for.

Yes, world! I have my ups and downs, just as you do. And there are times when I, too, feel like quitting.

I need your tenderness and your encouragement to keep on keeping on. As I give my husband, my children, my home and myself to the Lord, I am the woman who is happy to sit back in the shadows.

"I am the preacher's wife."

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## C.V.S.G.M. Homecoming '86

The Cumberland Valley School of Gospel Music will be held on the campus of Cumberland University, Lebanon, Tn. The schools' theme this year is Homecoming '86. Registration for this year's two week school will be June 15th between 2 and 5 p.m. For more information contact President Key Dillard, Route 7, Rucker Lane, Box 492, Murfreesboro, TN 37130 or call 890-0286 or 865-8101.

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Give not from the top of your purse, but from the bottom of your heart.

No one ever became the man of the hour by watching the clock.

Worry pulls tomorrow's cloud over today's sunshine.

You are only poor when you want more than you have.

If you don't have the time to do the job right, where will you find the time to do it over?

Our children are our only earthly possessions we can take to heaven!

## WHICH BAPTIST?

By Kenneth W. Massey

During my ministry I have been asked a few questions far more than all others combined. Of these, here are a couple, "will I know my loved ones in heaven?" and "what's the difference between your kind of Baptist and such and such Baptist?"

I wish to present a series of editorials over the next few months which will identify the various groups of Baptists with some of their variations.

There are present today Freewill Baptists, General Baptists, Primitive Baptists and Missionary Baptists. There may be others but their numbers are so small I will pass over them for now. Within the Missionary group are Baptist Missionary Association, American Baptist Association, Fundamental Baptist, Southern Baptist Convention (largest group) and Direct Missions Baptists (also called Faith Missions Baptists).

The first three groups of Baptists aforementioned are so rapidly vanishing from the scene that I have no intention of spending much time with them.

Free Baptists originated in England and have been referred to in times past as General Baptists, Particular Baptists and Arminian Baptists. They held to the beliefs of free grace for all men, possibility of apostasy so as to be finally lost in hell and salvation by works, in part, if not wholly. They were very loose on church organization and discipline. My great grandfather, Elder Booker, preached for the Freewills in West Tennessee.

The General Baptists actually originated in England in 1608 with a man named John Smyth, who baptized himself. A new group of General Baptists began in Liberty, Indiana in the year 1823 with a man named Benoni Stinson as leader. These people advocate apostasy and view baptism as a requirement whether or not church membership commitment follows. That is, they will baptize you and allow you to decide whether you wish church membership or not.

The Primitive Baptists evolved after the formation of the Triennial Convention in 1814. A missions society was formed that same year, and it took about a year for it to effect a division. Spencer says, "previous to 1816, there was not an Anti-mission Baptist in Kentucky." Elder S. Trott was instrumental in bringing about a separation of the Baptist brethren in Virginia. When the American Revolution brought an end to the persecution of that day toward Baptists, they burst upon the scene of opportunity and began building schools and launching greater mission efforts than ever. It was the idea of some good brethren that an educated ministry together with

concerted mission zeal would make them into the same ecclesiastical tyrant as their persecutors. The woes of procrastination have dealt tremendous blows to the Baptist Cause, and I fear continues to do so today.

These Primitive Baptists have been known by other names such as, "Old School Baptists," "Black Rock Baptists" (from the name of the place at which they held their seceding convention), and "Hardshells." Dr. John Watson, who was on what they called the "Primitive" or "Old Baptist" side of the question, in his Old Baptist Test, spoke of the split as "our painful separation from the Missionaries." If the Primitives withdrew from the Missionaries, then the Missionaries were the real primitive or oldest Baptists. (Early Tenn. Baptists, O.W. Taylor).

J.H. Grime said, "it would be well to state that this division was not caused by any doctrinal difference. They were one in doctrine. Since the division Two-seedism and fatalism have been advocated by some in the ranks of the Hardshell brethren. May God speed the day when all out Baptist Zion shall be united."

(History of Middle Tenn. Baptists, J.H. Grime)

Two-seedism was introduced by Daniel Parker. Simply stated, Two-seedism was the belief that God had one seed, the Devil another, and every person possessed in his soul one or the other. If your soul contained God's seed, at death you would go to heaven. And, if it contained the Devil's, then to hell you must go. The fatalism part came with the seeds business as denial of a resurrection for the body. Parker did not stay in Tennessee very long before going to Illinois.

Before closing this general overview of Baptists, let's examine briefly the original cause of separation. Two extremes grew out of the Reformation period as pertaining to the true church. These were either Calvinistic or Arminian teachings. Most Baptists, if not all, have at one time or another leaned toward the points of Calvinism or Arminianism. Regular Baptists were hyper-calvinistic, the Separates were calvinistic and the United Baptists were a blend. The General Baptists advanced the Arminian theory. Hyper-calvinism embraces the teaching that all are elected for either heaven or hell, and there is nothing to effect any change in this order. Calvinism holds that some were elected personally to receive the merits of the Redeemer's shed blood so that Christ should not die in vain. The Arminian position held that some act or work was required by man in addition to his repentance and faith, in order to be saved. I heard a man announce the following in a service, "I had to play the piano before God would save me." That's not true! The Bible says, "Repent ye, and believe the gospel." Nothing more and nothing less. The proper balance between Cal-

vinism and Arminianism brings us back to the indestructible truth of God's Word and the first Baptists to occupy His House. Jesus Christ paid the price for salvation. The Holy Spirit accompanied word urges and invites the convicted ones. God, the Father, saves sinners who heed the terms of the gospel. Thank God for His preservation of the children through their perseverance in faith.

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## HOW MOTHER'S DAY BEGAN

Anna M. Jarvis (1864-1948) first suggested the national observance of an annual day honoring all mothers, because she loved her own mother so dearly. At a memorial service for her mother on May 10, 1908, Miss Jarvis gave a carnation (her mother's favorite flower) to each person who attended. Within the next few years, the idea of a day to honor mothers gained popularity, and Mother's Day was observed in a number of large cities in the United States.

On May 9th, 1914, by an act of Congress, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day. He established the day as a time for "public expression of our love and reverence for the mothers of our country." By then, it had become customary to wear white carnations to honor departed mothers and red to honor the living, a custom that continues to this day.

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If you've given up trying to open something, tell a four-year-old not to touch it.

When you ask someone if they can keep a secret, you are asking them to do something you cannot do yourself.

A task without a vision is drudgery; a vision without a task is a dream; a task with a vision is a victory.

Mothers write on the hearts of their children what the world's rough hand cannot erase.

Spring is God thinking in gold, laughing in blue, and speaking in green.

*The Immanuel Informer*

Some families can trace their ancestry back 300 years, but cannot tell you where their children were last night.