

Miscellaneous Religious Writings of A. C. Machiavello

Introduction

My dear father-in-law, Brother A. C. Machiavello, was a great man in the truest sense of the word. He served his Lord well and went to be at home with Him February 23, 1997. He was a god-fearing man. He was a sober-minded man. He was a Spirit-filled man. He was an excellent deacon, who truly held "the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience." He was a courageous and able defender of the faith. He was very bold in his defense of the truth. He had earned this boldness by his consistent walk with God. He exemplified what Paul said about good deacons when he said in 1 Timothy 3:13, "For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is Christ Jesus."

Brother Tony was a very good student of the word of God. He had a good theological library. He studied the Bible all throughout his Christian walk. When he worked in a jewelry store in downtown Memphis, TN, he would often go on his lunch hour to the municipal library and spend his time studying religious works. He was active in drawing up the articles of faith in both Raleigh and Grace Chapel Primitive Baptist churches. After his retirement as a jeweler and watchmaker, he spent hours and hours in deep Bible study. This study manifested itself in many excellent and spiritual exhortations that he made to the church from time to time. Another fruit of his studies was displayed in his writings. He enjoyed putting some of his thoughts in print. He had a special desire to leave some of his writings for the benefit of his children and grandchildren. He wanted them to know where he stood. He strongly believed that the Primitive Baptists had a precious heritage, and that this spiritual legacy should be preserved. He did the best he could to maintain it while he lived. What was said of David in Acts 13:36 can be well said of Brother Tony: "For David, **after he had served his own generation** by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption..." Truly, A. C. Machiavello served his own generation by the will of God. However, his influence still lives on and will as long as there are those who remain on this earth who knew him and worshipped God with him. He will also live on at least among his family and close friends in some of his writings. What was said of righteous Abel can also be said of Brother Tony that "he being dead yet speaketh."

The Plan

What I propose to do is to include the actual writings of my dear father-in-law, and make a few explanatory comments when necessary. To avoid confusion I will insert the editorial comments using the same font in which this is being written, which is called **Times New Roman**. When I am using the actual writings of Brother Tony I will use the font I am now writing in which is called **Bookman Old Style**.

(Zack Meaders Guess-Grace Chapel at Memphis- November, 1997)

Davis Huckabee's Letter

One of the first men the Primitive Baptists made contact with in the Philippines was Ronald Jacutin. He had previously been supported by some Missionary Baptists. When Jacutin came to a knowledge of the truth of immediate, Holy Spirit regeneration, one of the Missionary Baptist preachers, Davis Huckabee, wrote him trying to convince him that the gospel was used as a means of regeneration. Brother Tony had access to a copy of that letter. One of the Scriptures that Mr. Huckabee used was 1 Cor. 4:15. Brother Tony studied that Scripture out and gave me the following letter with the result of his studies. I had done extensive study on this verse several years prior to this incident. In fact, I had even written a pamphlet on it which was titled *Begotten By the Gospel: What Does This Mean?* I was amazed at the insight that Brother Tony displayed as he, with independent study, reached some of the same conclusions I had reached. Notice his references to some of the books he consulted. He mentioned *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, by Joseph Henry Thayer and the *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry. One reason why Brother Tony was bold in his defense of the gospel was because he was not satisfied to receive it second hand. He did what the Bereans did two thousand years ago when they "they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

Some Thoughts On Mr. Huckabee's Letter To Brother Jacutin in the Philippines

The charge made by Mr. Huckabee was that 1 Cor. 4:15 (For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.), and 1 Peter 1:23 (Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.) plainly taught that the new birth or regeneration was brought about by the ministry of the word.

After reading the letter, that night I became concerned about my short comings in the Word; my added concern was the effects the letter would have on the brethren in the Philippines.

I have since studied the question and submit the following:

The word, "begotten." in 1 Cor. 4:15, has a double meaning (Thayer's Greek/English Lexicon.)

(A) Natural Birth

(B) To bring one over to one's persuasion by preaching.

1 Peter 1:23

The word born is in the KJV; however, in the original (Berry's Interlinear) it reads beget.

Beget, according to Thayer's, in this instance means "To thoroughly change the mind of someone through preaching."

In view of the following scriptures, it is evident to me that those who have been reached by the Spirit of God beforehand are the ones who will respond to the preached word. The word will not infuse life but will manifest same.

John 1:12,13

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

John 3:8

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

A. C. Machiavello

Writings on Sanctification

One time while Brother Tony was visiting kin folk in another state, he attended services in a PB church there. The minister that Sunday morning made some remarks which were very critical of the doctrines of **sanctification** and **perseverance**. He did not actually refer to these doctrines by name, but he made a statement somewhat as the following: "Brethren, do you know that there are some young preachers that are preaching a dangerous doctrine? They are preaching that if you are a child of God, you are going to manifest that in your life. They are teaching that all of those who are born again are going to bring forth some fruit and evidence of the new birth in their lives. That is not sound doctrine!"

When Brother Tony heard that, he later told me that it made his blood boil! He knew that it was this man, not the young preachers, who was preaching false and destructive doctrine. While he remained at the house of his kin, he immediately began to do some research into the scriptures and came up with the following writing. It was wonderful to see that he could not just sit there and be unmoved when false doctrine was being advocated. This reminds one of the apostle Paul at Athens whose "spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry."

Is There Not a Difference?

Is there a behavioral difference between a child of God and those of the world? Is it possible to rub shoulders with a group of people for years and not be able to distinguish an individual who is born of the Spirit of God? For instance, should there not be a contrast in the conduct of a person who has had a powerful work done in his soul by the Holy Spirit? Should there not also be a difference in his walk and a responsive effect in his life? Should we not expect a difference from someone who has been irresistibly drawn by God's grace?

It is true a child of God can lose his footing, fall flat on his face and even backslide for a time, but, in the sum total, would there not be a difference in his journey here below?

The following scriptures come to mind:

1 John 4:4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

1 John 2:4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

Matthew 12:35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

Philippians 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

The above verse refers to a continual work of grace in a child of God that transforms a sinner into a God-loving Christ-follower.

Romans 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Rom. 8:1, 5, 9, 14. Eph. 2:10. Titus 2:14.

The life of an elect will be a reflection of the work of grace, to the praise and glory of God.

Psalms 37:23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. Job 17:9. John 10:27

Heb. 12:6-11. Hebrews 12:14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness[sanctification], without which no man shall see the Lord.

Ezekiel 36:26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my spirit within you, and

cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

It seems to me that the grace of God is relevant for eternal salvation and also relevant for a child of God's pilgrimage here on earth. For instance, the Scripture states "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world..." So, if someone does backslide, I am not going to judge and say they are going to hell, but it doesn't appear that it is the norm for the child God to backslide permanently. For instance, the Bible says that "by their fruits ye shall know them."

I know that a child of God can fall flat on his face, but it seems to me that the grace of God ought to make a difference in the long run in one that is born of the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:3, "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart."

Surely God's chosen, adopted, quickened, redeemed, justified, sanctified, and reconciled family will to some degree...

"LET THEIR LIGHT SO SHINE!"

A. C. Machiavello

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Another Writing on Sanctification

After Brother Tony had had time to do more study on this subject he put his more complete thoughts into a pamphlet which he entitled *Sanctification of the Saints*. Notice here his use of his library. He shows evidence of familiarity with various historic Baptist confessions of faith. He mentions the *History of the Church of God* by C.B. and Sylvester Hassell. He refers to *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* by W.E. Vine and to the *Editorial Writings* of C.H. Cayce. He has done research in the *Body of Divinity* by John Gill, in the multi-volume *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, and in *Matthew Henry's Commentary*. Brother Tony knew wherof he spoke!

**Sanctification of the Saints:
A Brief View of
Sanctification**

Sainthood

Introduction

Oh, what joy and exultation! It should humble us to the dust, that any be singled out beyond eons of time to be called and separated to serve as cup-bearers to our Lord, sanctified to a service of holiness. What a unique opportunity for lowly mortals, born earthlings, formed of clay, to serve the risen Saviour, the One that is "fairer than ten thousand" whose Name is "Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

Most Articles of Faith of the Primitive Baptists include the word sanctification. Sanctification is one of the doctrines of grace that Primitive Baptists at large recognize. It appears, however, rather obscure among our people and less talked about than other doctrines of grace. We know, for instance, that it means "to be set apart to holiness and to be made clean." This grace originates not by the will of man, but by the will of God.

But how does this all fit in with the child of God? To begin with, before an individual is born of the Spirit, he finds himself with a singular nature. That one nature is the nature of the flesh. It is the carnal nature, simply the nature of man. When such a person is touched by the Spirit of God and is born of the Spirit of God, then he finds himself with a dual nature: the Spirit of God and the nature of man. The child of God has to continually strive to keep his carnal nature under control. This is a lifetime struggle.

The spiritual nature with which one has been endowed by God is the nature that is now under consideration. This spiritual nature is sanctified by God, and is a consequence of regeneration. There are thirty-seven verses in the New Testament that mention sanctification. The following are quotations from various sources concerning this spiritual nature.

"Although the remaining corruption for a time may much prevail, yet through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ the regenerate part doth overcome." (Hassell's Church History)

"Saint-hood or Sanctification is not an attainment, it is the state into which God in grace calls sinful men and in which they begin their course as Christians." (Vine's N.T. Bible Dictionary)

Jude 1:1- "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called..." In this text we find that Jude, the inspired writer,

was addressing his short letter to "them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called..." It was the work of God the Father to sanctify them. To sanctify means "make free from sin; to cleanse from moral corruption and pollution; to purify; to make sacred or holy; to set apart to a holy or religious use, etc." It was the work of the Father to set them apart to a holy or religious use. The Father had chosen them, and set them apart to salvation, or to be saved. Sanctification is

'...the act or process of God's grace by which the affections of men are purified, or alienated from sin and the world, and exalted from sin and the world, and exalted to a supreme love to God.' etc.- Webster. It was the act or process of God's grace by which they were sanctified. God did that work by His grace. The Father had chosen them to salvation, and set them apart to that end; and by His own act in giving them the divine life. He had planted in their hearts a love for Him. Thus they had been sanctified, set apart, exalted to that high state or condition, in which they were brought to hate sin and to love God and holiness. (Cayce Editorials, page 259, Vol. 5)

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, *that we should be holy and without blame before him in love..." (In the original it reads, * "for us to be." Greek-English, Berry's Interlinear). (Ephesians 1:4)

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10)

"Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." (Matthew 7:17)

The saints are called in the present life to be conformed to Christ by the work of the Spirit, and are, indeed, 'predestined by God to be conformed to the image of His Son.' On this foundation of grace and divine calling, Christians are exhorted to an active life of Christ-like conduct. Nonetheless, in every aspect of their ethical holiness or newfound righteousness Christians are to recognize that not they themselves, certainly not their own work or their own will, but God working in them is the SOURCE of their holiness or righteousness. (International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Volume 4, page 323 Under Sanctification)

"Much of sanctification lies in the conformity of our wills to the will of God."

It is to be seen in religious exercise and in acts of devotion to God, and in the exercise of grace in them; as in an affectionate attendance on the ministry of the word, and administration of ordinances; and in fervent prayer, which is the breath of a sanctified soul towards God. (Gills' Body of Divinity, Sanctification)

HOLINESS IS RENDERED SANCTIFICATION

HAGIASMOS, translated 'holiness' in the A. V. of Rom. 6:19, 22; 1 Thess. 4:7; 1 Tim. 2:13; He. 12:14, is always rendered "sanctification" in the R. V. It signifies (a) separation to God, 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:2. (b) the resultant state, the conduct befitting those so separated, 1 Thess. 4:3,4,7, and the four other places mentioned above. Sanctification is thus the state predetermined by God for believers, into which by grace He calls them, and in which they begin their Christian course and so pursue it. Hence, they are called "saints" (hagioi). (Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words)

Sanctification is usually spoken in scripture as the work of the Holy Spirit, yet here it is ascribed to God the Father, because the Spirit works it as the Spirit of the Father and the Son. Note, All who are effectually called are sanctified, made partakers of a divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4); for without holiness no man shall see the Lord, Heb. 12: 14. Observe, Our sanctification is not our own work. If any are sanctified, they are so by God the Father, not excluding Son or Spirit, for they are one, one God. Our corruption and pollution are of ourselves; but our sanctification and renovation are of God and His grace; and therefore if we perish in our iniquity we must bear the blame, but if we be sanctified and glorified all the honour and glory must be ascribed to God, and to him alone. (Matthew Henry, page 1108)

It is evident from the Scriptures that God's people shall endure and continue throughout their lives in the state which the Scriptures term sanctification. No, God's people will not live a sinless life. Yes, we are prone to sin, some in greater degree than others, but we may bear in mind, "that He that is in you is greater than he that is in the world." (1 John 4:4)

"Pray without ceasing."

"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

"Quench not the Spirit."

"Despise not prophesyings."

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

"Abstain from all appearance of evil."

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

"Brethren, pray for us."

(1 Thess. 5:17-25)

A. C. Machiavello

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

This was written at the close of services one morning after Brother Jimmy Barber preached ably on God's creation. This was excellent for college age people as well as for others. I asked Tony to record his thoughts after meditating on this.

-Patty Machiavello

"Twinkle, twinkle, little star.
How I wonder what you are.
Up above the world so high.
Like a diamond in the sky."

As we grow older, and, peradventure, the Spirit and love of God is infused into us, we are able to say with the Psalmist, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." This is telling us the awesomeness of God's Sovereignty.

We read about God's Sovereignty in many places in the Bible, such as: Abraham, who had a vision one day which revealed to him that his posterity would find themselves four hundred years in the future in bondage to an alien nation, and his seed would serve that nation some four hundred years. Consider Rahab, the harlot; the spies that went to Jericho to spy out the country did not choose to dwell with that woman at random, but God was directing it all. Eventually, we find Christ's genealogy through Rahab. The genealogy mentioned in the first chapter of Matthew is as follows: there are fourteen generations from Abraham to David, fourteen generations from David to the captivity, and fourteen generations to Christ. Fourteen generations figure approximately four hundred years.

We can see God's sovereignty in orderliness. Yes, He did not fling the stars in any haphazard manner, but put them in exact orbits.

"What is man that thou are mindful of him?" Well, He made man after His own image; He formed man from the ground dust (dirt) and when God breathed into man the breath of life, man's body became a "hi-tech" marvel of engineering.

All of nature cries out and testifies of God's existence and creation. The ocean waves, the wind, the clap of thunder unitedly testify- "In the beginning God..." -Genesis 1:1.

Examine the small blade of green grass, how small and simple. What makes it unique is that it cannot be duplicated completely; it has God-given life.

What about a tall, majestic tree? Oh, I like the way Joyce Kilmer expressed it:

"A tree whose hungry mouth is pressed against the
earth's sweet flowing breast.
A tree that looks at God all day and lifts her
leafy arms to pray."

Yes, we see God's Sovereignty in events, in nature, providence, direction, and salvation of man. Let us call upon the LORD, for He is worthy to be praised!

A. Machiavello

The Church

Brother Tony dearly loved God's church. He had much reason to do so. He was born and reared a Roman Catholic. He was very devout. His sisters have said that he was the most devoted of the three children to their ancestral religion. He was faithful to attend the various services of the Catholic church. He was about eleven years old when his mother died. He earned some money and spent almost every penny he made to buy candles to help his mother get out of purgatory.

When he joined the Army Air Force, he attended some Protestant worship services and found them interesting and somewhat enjoyable. This was the first time that he was made aware that the Bible was divided into Old and New Testaments. After he got out of the military, he decided to find a Protestant church. He found, to his surprise, that there were many Protestant denominations. He attended many and found the Presbyterian more to his liking than any of the others. He eventually joined the Presbyterians, but really desired baptism. He approached the pastor and told him of this desire. The pastor said that if he wanted to be "dunked" there would be no harm in it, but that is was

unnecessary since he had been sprinkled as a babe. Tony was embarrassed and said nothing further about it.

When he met his future wife and my dear mother-in-law, Sister Patty Lee Davis, he was introduced to the Primitive Baptists. The first church meeting he attended was an associational meeting held with Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church, west of Paris, Arkansas. He was immediately favorably impressed with the friendliness and hospitality of the people, but thought the worship was too emotional.

He eventually came to Memphis, Tennessee to work. Patty came to Memphis to be near to him. One time they attended a Presbyterian church which had just gotten a new pastor. The particular time they attended, this pastor was influencing them to throw out the doctrines of election and predestination. This disturbed Brother Tony, who believed that if a doctrine had once been true, it would always be true. He could not understand a church making fundamental doctrinal changes.

Tony and Patty began attending Morris Memorial Primitive Baptist Church in Memphis. Patty had been wanting to join a Primitive Baptist Church for some time, and was about to do so on one occasion when Tony held her back, thinking that she was making a mistake. She told him that she was so burdened that she either had to join or never go back. When he saw how much it meant to her, he quit hindering her. The night she joined, he went into the handshake out of regard for her, and felt a strong witness of the Spirit as he did so.

He began an intense study of God's word. He literally studied day and night. Every day on his lunch hour he either got together with deacon S. W. Dearing or went to the public library and went to the religious section and got busy studying. Several nights a week he went to the home of Morris Memorial's pastor, Elder E. C. Holder. God revealed the truth of Sovereign Grace to Brother Tony and he became a Primitive Baptist. He did not join because his wife did; he joined because he was convinced that the truth was preached among those people.

He dearly loved God's truth, and the pillar and ground of that truth, which is the New Testament church. His knowledge of the truth was not second hand-he had gained it at great price, and it was precious to him. He loved the Bible and church history. He believed the historic Baptist claim that those people had had an existence back to the days of Christ and the apostles. He did not believe that Baptists were Protestants. The name "Protestant" was given to those, like John Calvin and Martin Luther, who had once been in the Roman Catholic Church. They did not intend to leave the Catholic church, they were against some of the flagrant abuses and corruptions that were there, and they "protested" against these abuses and tried to "reform" Roman Catholicism. Instead, they were excommunicated and began their own churches. Calvin is the father of the Reformed churches. Luther is the father of the Lutheran churches. In many cases, some of these churches of the Reformation spawned churches of their own, For example, the Anglican Church came out of the Catholic Church, and the Methodist Church came out of the Anglican Church. As far as the Baptists were concerned, they had never been in the church of Rome. They had existed since the time of Christ and the apostles, and were

often obscure and persecuted. They were called by many names, such as Albigenses, Waldensees, and Ana Baptists. **They were not Protestants** because they had never been Roman Catholic. They regarded the churches of the Reformation as "daughters of Rome," and churches such as the Methodists as "grand daughters of Rome."

Brother Tony strongly believed that only authentic Baptist churches had the proper authority to baptize, administer communion, and to ordain ministers. He was not intolerant nor bigoted. He simply believed this to be the truth. He had many friends in other Christian denominations, and believed that they were true Christians, but he did not believe they were in God's true church. He believed that they were Christians who were in error. He was convicted of this, and was willing to lovingly but firmly stand by his convictions. On one occasion he made a notable stand based on these convictions. We had several times allowed in our pulpit a man who was from a Sovereign Grace church in another state. This man was an able preacher. Word came to us that he had made a public statement that the Primitive Baptists were wrong in their belief on the doctrine of the church. I called our men together and told them of the situation. I asked for their advice as to whether we should continue to allow this brother in our pulpit. As I went around the circle of men they began to express the opinion that even though this man was wrong on this point, they thought it would be okay to continue to allow him in our pulpit. When it came time for Brother Tony to speak, he was kind but very bold and firm. He said, "I am totally opposed to this. We do not believe that this brother has been baptized nor ordained by the proper authority. We claim that we are one of God's true churches. If we continue to recognize him officially, we are eventually going to lose our identity, and in the meantime, we are sending uncertain signals to our young people." Most of the men saw the wisdom in what he was saying, and were impressed with the spirit and fervency with which he spoke. As a consequence, we quit inviting the Sovereign Grace brother into our pulpit. I believe that was a safe and correct decision.

Matthew 16:18

"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The word Peter (Petros in Greek) means a stone small enough that it can be moved or thrown. The word rock (petra) means a huge rock or mountain (Christ). I see in Matthew 16:18 that Jesus Christ is revealing to Peter that Christ is the **founder** and **foundation** of the church. This institution is not man's institution, but God's institution. Jesus makes a distinction between man and Himself. Peter, compared to a stone, is typical of mankind, who is weak, frail, given to vacillation, and tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. (Ephesians 4:14)

A. "And upon this rock..."- Jesus Christ is to be recognized as the founder, charter member, and architect of His church, as well as the cornerstone of this God-ordained institution.

B. "I will"-Can any hinder His will? " And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of

heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Daniel 4:35)

C. "Build my church"- I do not view this as a chronological factor in early church history. What I do see, however, is something more far-reaching and breath-taking. I view the Holy Spirit in a continuing work of calling individuals to bear the truth and of adding to the church. (Acts 2:47) I see the Comforter in the role of embolding, uniting, edifying, strengthening, and building God's people in their most holy faith. (Jude, verse 20) "As lively stones built up a spiritual house..." (1 Peter 2:5)

D. "And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."--Should we believe this? Are we to understand that the church that Jesus Christ established during His ministry would continue to exist throughout the centuries? The answer is an unequivocal YES, in the same manner that we believe Genesis 1:1 through faith. (Hebrews 11:3) This guarantee is as binding as the one God made to Noah that that the world would never be destroyed by water again.

Today in a city or in an out-of-the-way place, should we find an assembly of saints (church) singing praises to God, preaching doctrines of grace, upholding Bible principles and practices that were passed on by the church from one generation to the next and thus perpetuated, partaking of ordinances which were established at the time Jesus walked along the dusty roads of Galilee, we can be certain that it is the church in Matthew 16:18.

CHURCH IN HISTORY

A Brief View

SHE HAS EXISTED THROUGH TIME

HAS SUFFERED PERSECUTION

HAS EXPERIENCED HARASSMENT

HER LITERATURE DESTROYED

HER MINISTERS SLAIN

BUT TODAY

SHE IS ALIVE AND WELL!

**"MY DOVE, MY UNDEFILED IS BUT ONE"
(Song of Solomon)**

This is the title page of the pamphlet that Brother Tony wrote on this subject. The text of the pamphlet follows.

MORNING OF THE CHURCH

In viewing the early history of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, we are made to realize that at best we see through a glass darkly...(1 Corinthians 13:11). Why is this so? For one thing, the onslaught of persecutions and burning of books and libraries destroyed early church history. Then too, much recorded history was written by their enemies.

The early church at Rome was becoming the center of Christianity. In the second and third centuries, it began to slip away from the Apostles' teaching and practices. Much of what crept into the church was worldliness, vanity, pre-eminence, power, and money. Corruption soon began to take its toll.

Christian congregations from early times spread throughout the Roman Empire. They became known under different names in various places at different times in history, and often various groups existed at the same time.

By the third century, ceremonies were added to the church "by Bishops to please the multitudes." (Hassell's Church History). This turning away from Apostolic purity became obvious to those of God's people who desired to keep the church scriptural and sound.

These Christian congregations had basic beliefs in common. They were opposed to a church/state status; they believed in separation from the state. "My Kingdom is not of this world..." (John 18:36), and they based their creed and practices on the scriptures only.

TRAITS OF THE EARLY CHURCH

The early church was made up of a specific assembly. NOT just ANY assembly with various ideas and practices. But, rather, each assembly consisted of born again, Bible-believing people that acknowledged Jesus Christ as the SON OF GOD, who shed HIS blood for the remission of sins for HIS people.

The early church had a willingness to conform to Apostolic authority. The church was not a self-appointed assembly nor a self-willed

assembly but conformed in every way in the matter of calling deacons and ministers. They also believed in proper, scriptural baptism by duly ordained ministers.

MARKS OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH

1. Acceptance of individuals into the church who display a work of grace.
2. Candidates believed and acknowledged Jesus Christ to be the Son of God who died on the cross for the remission of the sins of His people.
3. Submission to baptism by immersion by duly ordained ministers.
4. An assembly that displays love for each other and interest in one another's welfare.
5. Acceptance of the Scriptures as the inerrant Word of God from Genesis to Revelation as a GUIDE and RULE in all things. (66 Books)
6. Observance of the two ordinances- Baptism and Communion.
7. An assembly dedicated to perpetuating Scriptural faith and practice.
8. Acknowledging that there is a church of the Lord Jesus Christ here on earth.
9. Maintenance of Scriptural discipline.
10. Support of the ministry.
11. An assembly that prayed individually and collectively.
12. They believed in spreading the gospel where and however they could.

The word "Church" is mentioned 115 times in the New Testament. (1 Timothy 3:15-The church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth). Matthew 16:18- Upon this rock I will build* my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

*(establish, encourage, edify).

STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL

There is a long list of Christians that existed throughout Europe in the early centuries of history.

The early Christian assemblies (churches) can and should be viewed as upholding Biblical standards in the midst of corruption and tarnished truth. It is proper to recognize them as Bible congregations.

Christianity, under the Roman Church, became a legally established institution by Constantine, the great emperor of Rome, about 325 A.D. The Roman Church became well funded and was given extensive authority; it became an extension of the government. However, many independent Christian assemblies were worshipping and in existence before the establishment of the Roman Church of 325 A.D.

Some examples of independent Christian assemblies follow:

Novatians-250 A.D. in Rome
Donatists-311 A.D. in Africa
Tertullians-202 A.D. -Carthage, Africa
Montanists-171 A.D.-Pepuza, Africa

These and other assemblies are found in history before the Roman State Church. They did not descend from the Roman State Church nor were they Protestants.

These independent Scriptural congregations prove that there have always been witnesses contending for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Christianity was extensively persecuted, libraries and books put to flames and Christians put to death by the multitudes.

LONDON 15TH CENTURY

Standing Up For Christian Conviction

There have been Christians throughout history who have been willing to lay their lives on the line for what they truly believed to be right. Their beliefs superseded PREFERENCE (choice) to a level of CONVICTION (firmly persuaded to a belief).

Such were the early Christians who suffered death as MARTYRS. We think of those that went to the arenas to be devoured by lions, and the hunted Christians in pages of history such as the Waldenses who suffered persecution. There were those that were imprisoned by the National Church of England, such as John Bunyan, 1628-1688. (Incidentally, Bunyan read Foxe's Book of Martyrs, among other books, while in prison.)

Yes, many Christians throughout history have stood up for their convictions. Not all, however, because there is a difference between PREFERENCE and CONVICTION.

This is the story of just such a man with conviction:

He was Sir John Oldcastle, otherwise known as Lord Cobham. Sir John was a man of great birth and in favor with the King of England. He had everything to live for as far as this world's comforts.

Lord Cobham came under the influence of the gospel by Christians known as the Lollards in London. He eventually became the champion for the cause of the Lollards.

"The Lollards opposed worldliness, schism, foreign dominion of the Church. They objected to the use of crosses, incense, pilgrimages, image worship." (Collier's Encyclopedia). "They insisted that the Bible was the only law in the Church; it was to be translated, read and preached to all." (Foxe's Book of Martyrs)

Lord Cobham became a leader for these people in London. He soon came under the frown of the established religious institution of London. After much persuasion to the King of England by the established church, he was finally brought to trial in December, 1417. Sir John had every opportunity to recant; every possible argument was offered to him to withdraw his affiliation from the Lollards and to espouse the religious establishment in the land.

The reason that Lord Cobham refused the tempting offer was that this was not a PREFERENCE but a CONVICTION with him!

In December, 1417, he was judged guilty and the sentence was carried out in 1418. "It was adjudged that he should be taken as a traitor, carried to the tower and from thence drawn through London unto the new gallows in St. Giles and there to be burned hanging by his waist." (Foxe's Book of Martyrs)

CONCLUSION

In the last days, we too will have to face PREFERENCE or CONVICTION in our lives and worship service as we endeavor to abide by the Word of God!

USHERING IN THE N.T.CANON

In the first three centuries, the Christian churches were at a distinct disadvantage as far as having access to the Scriptures as a whole. There

existed an uneven knowledge (correlation) of all the twenty-seven books that made up the New Testament.

The books of the New Testament were not intact; they were not compiled together, which resulted in a lack of knowledge.

For instance, the brethren in Asia (Turkey), which included churches in provinces of Cappadocia and Galatia, along with the city churches of Ephesus, Antioch, Colosse and Laodicea, would naturally be acquainted with the epistles that were written to them by Paul and Peter. However, they would not be familiar with the epistles written to the brethren in Rome. Neither would they be acquainted with the letters written to distant Macedonia (Greece), such as Corinthians, Thessalonians, and Philippians.

Another church, in an out-of-the way place (four hundred miles east of Jerusalem), in the city of Babylon, fifty miles south of the present day Baghdad in Assyria (Iraq), would certainly not have access to the epistles sent to Rome, Greece, or Asia.

Therefore, we can imagine the confusion as to how many books made up the New Testament, and which ones to accept or reject. The churches were acquainted mainly with the epistles that were written to their region.

However, God at last raised up a scholar by the name of Athanasius from the intellectual center of Alexandria, Egypt. With the assistance of others, he compiled the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, which compilation was completed in 367 A.D. It was immediately accepted throughout the Christian world. It was, then and now, the Canon, GENUINE AND INSPIRED, the inerrant WORD OF GOD!

In addition, copies of the original manuscripts were once again diligently compared and translated in 1611, in the authorized King James Version.

The Old Testament (thirty-nine books) was originally written in Hebrew; the New Testament (twenty-seven books) in Greek. Jerome, a Roman Catholic scholar, was commissioned by Pope Damasus in 380 A.D. to translate the entire Bible into Latin, the Vulgate version.

GETTING THE BIBLE IN THE VERNACULAR

It was indeed a dark period for Christianity for about fifteen centuries. The reading of the Bible was prohibited; possession of it was not sanctioned by the ecclesiastical and political authorities. The problem of the times was compounded by the fact that the Bible was copied in the

Latin, the learned language of the scholars and priesthood. The average person did not begin to know enough to read Latin.

In England, John Wycliffe finally broke the barrier with Nicholas Hereford by translating the Bible into the vernacular (native tongue). This occurred in 1380; it was tedious work, considering that this was all done by hand.

The printing press came into being in the fifteenth century which certainly had a definite impact on Bible circulation.

William Tyndale came along later and translated the New Testament from the Greek manuscripts, and with the aid of the printing press, brought the Bible in the vernacular to England. The year was 1525.

The reception of the Bible kept printers busy printing, and bishops busy burning them throughout Europe.

KING JAMES AUTHORIZED VERSION OF THE BIBLE

This version was sponsored by King James I of England. Fifty-four scholars and theologians were commissioned for this great work. These dedicated men were divided into six companies, of which two met at Westminster, two at Oxford, and two at Cambridge.

It took six years to accomplish this task, and finally it was completed in the year of 1611 A.D.

LOOKING BACK TO OUR KINDRED

"In the northeast of Spain, in the foothills of the Pyrenees Mountains, which separate Spain from France, in the province of Catalonia, were people who originated the Waldenses. There were thousands and tens of thousands of them by the fifth century." (G.H. Orchard)

We read that it was the Apostle Paul's intention (60 A.D.) to make a trip to Rome (Romans 15:24-28), and from there continue west to Spain. Going west from Rome by ship (a good 550 miles) would have put him in the province of Catalonia, Spain. Now whether or not this took place in a matter of conjecture. It can, however, be assumed that if Paul never made it because of his subsequent imprisonment in Rome, that some close disciple of his might have later made the journey into Spain. Luke was with him, and Timothy along with Mark, were encouraged to visit him during his imprisonment in Rome.

Persons holding sentiments in accordance with the true Waldenses were numerous throughout that region in Spain. Much later, in the twelfth

century, they became known by that name after an outstanding leader in Lyons, France, Peter Waldo.

These people, the Waldenses, appear to have been predestinarians and practiced baptism by immersion. They were Bible-believing Christians of the Apostolic order. There is no doubt that they, along with the Welsh Baptists, go back to the period of the apostles.

OUR BRETHREN - THE WELSH BAPTISTS

Paul, in the last letter that he wrote from Rome before his execution by Nero (beheaded about 66 A.D.), mentions a married couple, Pudens and Claudia. Pudens was one of the seventy disciples, according to tradition (Gill on Luke 10:1). Claudia was born in Wales, and she and her husband visited Rome. She came under the influence of Paul's ministry while he was confined there under house arrest. (2 Timothy 4:21)

It is believed that these two were instrumental in bringing the Gospel back to Wales. There were some elders from Rome that later came to Wales to assist in spreading the Gospel throughout that region.

In the year 180 A.D., the King of Wales, "Lucius," became the first king in the world to embrace Christianity and was baptized.

It is my belief that our people's roots go far into history by way of the Welsh Baptists and the Waldenses.

By the year 1500, Anabaptists were numerous throughout England and Europe.

Matthew Poole's Commentary says this concerning the church:

"The Church will exist throughout all generations."

Matthew Henry's Commentary:

"Christ will ever have a church to praise Him."

John Gill's Commentary states:

"The Church will abide forever."

FROM COLONIAL DAYS

The first Baptist Association in America (Philadelphia Association) was founded in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1707. It originated with churches made up of members from Wales.

In September, 1742, it adopted its Confession of Faith, which is in substance the same as the ancient Baptists of Poland, Bohemia, the early English and Welsh Baptists, and the Mennonites of Holland.

This Confession of the Philadelphia is a copy of the London Confession of Faith of 1689.

(Incidentally, the Articles of Faith of the Philadelphia Association were printed by Benjamin Franklin for wide distribution.)

Many associations can trace their roots to the Philadelphia Association, which was the first in America.

A few are as follows: **Charleston**, organized in 1751 on the basis of the London Confession of Faith; **Kehukee**, organized 1765, which also adopted the 1689 Confession (Hassell's Church History, page 525). Their Articles of Faith were considered as the standard of orthodoxy among Baptists. (Minutes of the Philadelphia Association by Gillette).

OUR DAY

In September, 1900, the Northern Primitive Baptists met in Indiana (Patoka Association) in Oakland City. With a representation from over one hundred churches, they voted to recommend and endorse the London Confession of Faith of 1689.

Approximately two months later in November, 1900, the Southern brethren met at Fulton, Kentucky, and they, too, endorsed and recommended the London Confession with the addition of some footnotes.

This convention was attended by 51 ministers representing 335 churches aggregating 14,500 members with direct correspondence with over 100,000 Primitive Baptists. (Refer to Editorial Writings from the Primitive Baptist, vol.3, pages 319-322 & vol. 6, page 534)

It was stated at this convention in Article 8-"The London Confession of Faith has served one of the most needful services among our people of any document of faith since the days of the Apostles, and has stood unquestioned as an expression of the Primitive Baptist interpretation of the Bible from then until now."

The above shows the doctrinal beliefs and sentiments of the forefathers of yesteryear and declares where they stood.

**"REMOVE NOT THE ANCIENT LANDMARK
WHICH THY FATHERS HAVE SET."**

CONCLUSION

"Dear God,

Is there a true church of God here on earth?"

This was the heartfelt question put to God in prayer by a seventeen-year-old girl who was just out of high school and living in a large city far away from home.

This, too, is the heartfelt question of all sincere searchers of truth. Is there a place of worship that is most compatible to the New Testament? Are its footprints found in the pages of time?

Let's just share some of the evidences that we have on hand.

Quoting Jesus Christ:

" God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."
- John 4:24-

"And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom ..." (church) see Gill.
- Luke 22:29,30-

Notice what Jesus Christ says again about this matter. I quote part of another statement for emphasis.

"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
- Matthew 16:18 -

Listen to one of his apostles, saying, " the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. (1Timothy 3:15)

" And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."
-Acts 2:47-

Solomon, a man endued with great wisdom, describes the church in a romantic way:

"He brought me to the banqueting house..." Notice not a but the banqueting house.
-Song of Solomon 2:4-

Listen to the sentiments of David of old and see what he has to say:

"Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King." (Psalm 48:2)

May God direct all seekers "To the house of my master's brethren." (Genesis 24:27)

It is my judgment that the church of the Lord Jesus Christ is to be found among the people known as Primitive Baptists.

I believe that it is the same as the one described in 1 Timothy 3:15-

May we always recognize her for what she is. "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth."

"Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls..." (Jeremiah 6:16)

A. C. Machiavello