

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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WHERE DO WE PREACH?

By Kenneth W. Massey

In view of the fact that some question has been raised in regards to whether preachers should preach in certain places, let us honestly appeal for the right answer to the Word of God.

Limited Commission

During the personal ministry of Christ the newly organized church went only to the Jewish nation with the gospel. Everything must have a beginning except God. He is from everlasting to everlasting. We are the creative effect of this First Cause, God eternal.

The Apostles and the Seventy were sent to preach to the Jews, and include John the Baptist with them. "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 10:5-7). Jesus warned them against preaching to any person except a Jew.

New Commission

As the life and personal ministry of Christ was coming to a close, He left a "new commission" to His Church. "And Jesus came and spake unto them saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matt. 28:18-20). Mark in his gospel puts it this way - "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk. 16:15). Please notice that Jesus did not say, Go ye into all the churches we fellowship and preach the gospel. He said

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LESSONS

FROM

GETHSEMANE

By Jerry A. Reynolds
Davisville, WV

The understanding of what Jesus taught is the nourishment of the soul. To understand the things that he did is to have great spiritual wisdom by which to live a Godly life. He is the pattern. Christianity is not just to know what words He said and the course of his outward actions, but to understand the words and deeds so as to be changed by their power into his likeness.

Perhaps there is no event in the life of our Saviour which teaches more by example than that agonizing evening in the garden of Gethsamane. As he approached it, he told his disciples, "my soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death." It was there that he came face to face with the reality of the greatest trial ever to confront a human soul. Knowledge of the future is a desirable knowledge, but to know it is often very burdensome. Shortly he must "become sin" for the human race in order to save their souls from everlasting death. He well knew that his Father was of "purer eyes than to behold evil, and could not look on iniquity." He must be "forsaken" of his Father and be "cut off out of the land of the living." He must go where no other could go and suffer what no other could suffer and he must do it alone. Not even his heavenly Father would comfort him in the final hour.

He had a cup to drink, a cup of unspeakable sorrow and bitterness. He loathed to drink it, but he knew he must. He had come to earth to drink it, and in

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REVIVAL

Lyons Missionary Baptist Church of Gagel Avenue, Louisville, Kentucky will begin revival services Sunday, November 8, 1981. Bro. D. C. Barton is pastor of the church, and Bro. Jerry A. Reynolds will serve as evangelist. Everyone in the Louisville area is invited to these services.

CHURCH ORGANIZATION

On Saturday, December 5th, beginning at 10:00 a.m., a Mt. Juliet Mission will be organized into an independent, local and visible missionary Baptist church. This mission has been in progress for the past seven months and under the ministerial direction of Elder Thomas Armstrong. God has blessed in saving at least four people.

All Baptist churches of like faith and order are invited, especially your ordained brethren.

The mission is located directly across from the old Mt. Juliet Post Office.

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." 2 Cor. 4:3

VOICE OF BAPTISTS

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P. O. Box 572

Huntingdon, Tenn. 38344

Kenneth W. Massey, Editor

STAFF WRITERS

James H. Smith, Nashville, Tenn.

W. T. Russell, Bowling Green, Ky.

F. W. Lambert, Westmoreland, Tenn.

Harold D. Carver, Buena Vista, Tenn.

Jerry A. Reynolds, Davisville, W. Va.

Stephen M. Skinner, Springfield, Mo.

Keith D. Frieze, Springfield, Mo.

CIRCULATION MANAGER

Rufus L. Chandler, Huntingdon, Tenn.

LETTERS

Dear Bro. Massey:

"I enjoy 'Voice of Baptists' very much. I want to tell the Staff Writers that I enjoy all of their writings."

Ollie Prince
Camden, Tenn.

"Thanks for sending 'Voice of Baptist' papers every month. We really enjoy reading the articles of each writer. Keep up the good work. We need such articles for teaching Baptist doctrine. May God bless each of you that have a part in publishing the paper."

Sadie M. Carter
Kokomo Missionary
Baptist Church

"I am the teacher of the Intermediate Sunday School Class at South Carthage Baptist Church. I enjoy the paper for myself, and sometimes I use articles which appear in the paper for helps in the classroom. God bless the efforts put forth on this paper."

Clifton Craighead
Brush Creek, Tenn.

"First, let me introduce myself. I teach the Young People's Sunday School Class at South Carthage Missionary Baptist Church. Bro. Bennie Maggart, our former pastor, has made available to our church copies of the 'Voice of Baptists' publication. We enjoy it very much and receive a blessing from numerous articles written by the staff. May God richly bless you in your labors for His Cause.

Charles H. Kemp
Carthage, Tenn.

WHERE DO WE PREACH?

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for us to preach to every creature. Why? Because there is power in the gospel. This "new commission" consumed or fulfilled the "limited commission."

"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (2 Cor. 4:5-7). There shall be no mistake about where the power lies. It fully rests in the power of God conjoined with His glorious word. Man could not provide his next breath. He is helpless without God. Need we exhaust ourselves sustaining the unchallenged fact that the gospel is greater than all of us combined. God forbid that any should ever feel too big to preach to the few or too holy to preach to the most wretched. It is a proven example that you may "put the boat through the water without getting water in the boat." "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Cor. 9:16). **WOE IS UNTO THE PREACHER WHO WILL REFUSE TO PREACH.**

Dear preachers, there will be somebody who will think you should not have preached most everywhere you preach. I was invited to preach for a black congregation in my earlier ministry. A deacon in the church I pastored didn't think I should go. I went by grace and do recall the presence and liberty of God as I tried to preach from the theme, "The Eyes of the Spirit."

While in conversation around the dinner table of a Christian brother, the question arose "how many times have you preached in one day?" Another minister was present, and he and I both replied. I answered by saying, five times. One Sunday, I had preached on a morning radio broadcast, then the church I served at eleven o'clock, later at the water's edge for a baptismal service, from the creek to the county jail to preach to one convicted of murder and finally back to the church for the evening service. The other preacher's wife spoke up and said, "I don't think they should have been forced to hear you at the jail. They were not given a choice." I informed her that I had been sent for by the family of the convicted man.

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LESSONS FROM GETHSAMANE

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Are we able, Christian brethren, to drink of his cup? With his first disciples we answer, "Yes, we are able," and so we are. Only because we have the life within us of Him who drank the bitter cup spoken of in Gethsamane and partaken of at Calvary are we able. We commemorate that awful pain and suffering, that sorrow and heartbreak, when we in remembrance of our Champion and Deliverer eat the Lord's Supper. That tasteless and bitter event stirs our minds, and the memory mingles together our tears of sadness for the spectacle with those of gladness for the remedy and we adore Jesus in that remembrance. The body and blood most holy are ours and we are sure it is true. We followed Him down by the way of the cross and as He "died unto sin once" for all of us, so each of us die to sin in becoming partakers of that benefit. We have tasted part of the bitterness with him in that death and afterward rejoiced in the power of his resurrection; but we are not now remembering his resurrection, and ours with him. We are remembering his suffering and death, and our hearts are broken. In our love for him we have desired to please him and to return a life of service to him, but alas, how feeble are our efforts! How little of that gift of love within breaks upon the surface! We are cowards. We fear to suffer, rather than desiring the "fellowship of his sufferings." The apostles feared also. They also fainted at the job of being Jesus' comrades. While he agonized in Gethsemane, they slept for sorrow. Alone and heartbroken, between prayers, Jesus found them "sleeping for sorrow," and inquired "could ye not watch with me one hour?" They could not! The flesh was too weak. Later, empowered with the greatness of the Holy Spirit, each of the apostles would prove, "we are able," as they drank of his cup, most of them sealing their testimonies with their own blood after his example. How much more would the holy ordinance mean to us if we knew the "loss of all things," moreover "bonds and imprisonment," and did "bear in our bodies the marks of the Lord Jesus" while ever facing the likely prospect of a martyr's death? Then would we the more remember and give thanks.

We fear and shy away because we are weak. Did only the great apostles fear? Did not the Saviour also? Does not the inspired text record of him, "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong

crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in THAT HE FEARED;" (Hebrews 5:7 - emphasis mine). He feared so great a trial and death to which he must submit. It was our first lesson that Jesus drank a bitter cup, that we also must share with him in part in order that we can remember, love, and appreciate him as Christians ought. Many have feared to do so. Here is a second lesson. Jesus feared, but he did not falter. "But," we say "I am not willing." It may shock some to realize it, but neither was Jesus. We need not hesitate for fear nor fail from unwillingness if we heed Jesus' example. He was determined to do the will of the Father, but he feared and he was unwilling. So he prayed earnestly, "if it be possible let this cup pass from me." That was his will. He added his righteous desire, "nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt," in his prayer to the Holy Father. On his face before God in agony he sweat "as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" and he "poured out his soul unto death" in submission to the Father. As he prayed he was strengthened from the powers of heaven by the appearance of an angel to strengthen him. Yet he prayed yet more earnestly until after the third time he returned to his sleeping disciples and told them to "sleep on" for the "hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." With calm steadfastness the strengthened, fearless, and willing Christ of God went to Calvary to bear our sins away.

We may summarize the following lessons for this great example.

1) Learn the principle of the cross: that suffering and death NOW brings peace and life **HEREAFTER**.

2) Face the inevitable before the fact, that you may be equipped for the trial.

3) Death is a bitter cup which must be tasted by all who would die unto sin as Jesus did.

4) Some of us may be required to shed our blood for the Lord's cause. If so, "we are able."

5) Do not allow natural fears and unwillingness to lessen the determination to suffer the will of the Father even unto death.

6) Determined faithfulness plus fear and unwillingness compels to prayer. Pray earnestly, pouring out the soul, until courage and willingness possess the mind and heart.

7) Be not stopped by the mere fact that all other mortals fail you. Their "spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak."

MANY THANKS

By Kenneth W. Massey

"...many thanksgivings unto God." 2 Cor. 9:12

Again we approach that day nationally designated as "Thanksgiving Day." It was a triumphant time indeed when the early settlers landed at Plymouth Rock in 1620 and soon organized a new colony in the new world. God had providentially guided them to this "land of the free and home of the brave." Patriotism resulted from deep conviction of the highest regard for the true and living God. Giving thanks to the Divine is a necessity for true worship. Will you join me as I remember a few of those grants from God that deserve our notice and response.

The Greatest Gift

"Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Rev. 1:5,6

My Saviour and yours is the Gift of all gifts. All spiritual blessings are communicated to the believer by the Holy Spirit because of the finished work of Christ in redemption. Today, He sits on the throne with God as our exalted High Priest. Jesus paid it all! The Just for the unjust! God for sinners! Oh, what a price has been paid. "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." 2 Cor. 9:15

The Sweet, Sweet Spirit

"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Gal. 4:6

Thank God for this Holy Spirit that reveals forgiveness of sins to the penitent, moves in the midst of the churches and convicts sinners through the gospel. His Spirit bears witness with our spirit. He guides us in paths of truth and righteousness. None shall trifle with His drawing and escape the damnation of hell.

The Spirit consoles the burden bearer, encourages God's ambassador, stands constantly as an ally to truth, fortifies those in despair, and discerns those deep things of God. Oh, what a Helper is this sweet Holy Spirit.

City of God

"A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." Matt. 5:14b

This glorious city set in the world but not of the world is the church of the living God. She belongs to God and will someday be presented to His Son for an everlasting wife. It is the pillar and ground of truth. A lighthouse to all in darkness, God's ordained voice! Though tossed on the rocks at times and even threatened by the pirates, the old Ship of Zion is sailing today with her banners unfurled and her Captain at the stern. Thank God for this home of the redeemed through time, and the promised glory awaiting her in eternity.

An Everlasting Gospel

"...having the everlasting gospel to preach" Rev. 14:6

Thanks be unto God for the unfailing gospel. A life-giving gospel! There is not another gospel. If any bring a gospel unto you than the gospel of Christ, let him be accursed. So said Paul to the Galatians.

What is gospel? The birth, life, death, burial and resurrection of God, the Son. A virgin born only begotten Son of God lived a sinless life, suffered a vicarious death, was buried as though defeated, but broke the bands of death and gloriously arose. He then ascended to heaven leaving a promise, "I will come again." God help us to ever take this sword and point the wandering ones to Jesus!

Heaven at Last

"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matthew 25:34

The greatest expectation of God's pilgrims and strangers in this land is the prospect of some day finally going home. My daddy would say as we returned home from a visit to relatives or friends, "There is no place like home, however so humble it may be." There's no way the redeemed can ever be fully satisfied until they arrive in heaven their home. I cannot spend a great deal of time describing it for I know so little about it. Paul said, "eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love him." When the sunset has set on our life, we shall go to our long home.

And we shall have new bodies likened unto the glorious body of the Son of God.

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord," Psalms 92:1.

WHERE DO WE PREACH?

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Several years ago, I allowed people taking God's justice into their hands to influence me against preaching in a certain place. God chastized me for refusing to exalt His Son as the Saviour of this world regardless of the place. I shall not refuse again.

Let me warn you against obeying the laws of men. Christ was criticized for eating in the home of a sinner, and He is our Pattern - the Dean of Preachers!

I do recall another incident in my life. A church had become divided at a certain place and the minority moved out and organized another church. This had been history for about fifteen years before I came to town. My first year in town both churches were having their revivals the same week, and both contacted me about helping in each one. Well, naturally I accepted the first to elect me. Would you believe that I have never been asked again to preach in the other church though I lived there for several years. Usually, as God opens one door for the preacher, men will shut another door to him. But just take it a day at a time and preach as you go and are given opportunity. To me, that's walking by faith and allowing it to work in your life.

Honest men and women will use gnats to justify limiting the preacher from being God's man anywhere and anytime he is afforded the occasion. Sometimes people want to possess a preacher. Preachers belong to God! They are called by God. No, I do not believe they should lord authority over God's heritage, the Church by Jesus Christ in local assembly, but neither do I believe the churches should quarantine the gospel for their own selfish, legalistic reasons.

Don't Go Backward

Should we go back to the "limited commission" or do we continue the "unlimited commission" to preach to every creature? Jesus is sending us to all people. A few feel that the gospel will again be under a "limited commission," and taken from the Gentiles back to the Jews in a period just prior to the Lord's return. The Jews are not excluded from the "unlimited commission" of today. There is no difference between the Jew and the Gentile now. The Lord is rich unto all that call upon him, for He is the same Lord over all. What more could the Jews receive? Nothing, unless it be unconditional salvation, and that would make God out a liar. So, we need not let our imagination run away with us.

It is evident that some are preaching grace but practicing law. Grace makes

everyone worthy of gospel address. "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Rom. 5:20). It is a gospel of grace (Acts 20:24).

Some of us in the ministry are afraid of persecution from a certain group because we want the security of belonging. But there is only one kind of real security in belonging - and that's belonging to God. May I ask this simple question, why do you preach? Notice Paul's reply in Galatians 6:12-14: "As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, (he is talking about the legalists) they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." If we pray only to be heard of men, we'll get our reward - the praise of men. If we preach for the praise of men, we'll get our reward - the praise of men.

Paul said, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14). Paul preached in synagogues, by the water's edge, on top of hills, in houses, before kings, in jailhouses and finally in Rome from his own hired house. I have never read of Paul refusing to preach Christ and Him crucified to anyone. Have you?

Peter hesitated before going to Caesarea to preach to Cornelius. I'm sure he thought his brethren might ostracize him, and they began to do just that before hearing Peter reason with them. Peter told them God had opened a door to the Gentiles (Acts 11:18). **THAT DOOR IS YET OPEN!** If not, who closed it?

Negativism Breeds Defeat

There are perils to be suffered by those who will hinder the furtherance of the gospel, but worse than all the gospel suffers, sinners are denied God's good news, and ultimately, glory for God is left wanting.

God positively told Moses and the Israelites to "go forward." Listen to God's command to Peter concerning his preaching to Cornelius, "Arise therefore, and get thee down (Peter was on the roof), and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent thee" (Acts 10:20).

Can you imagine how inviting it looks to the youngest preacher to go preach after hearing brethren criticize brethren for **PREACHING THE**

GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST in the wrong place???

Luke said, "a few things are most surely believed among us." All of my life the older preachers have emphasized that one of those things must surely be - **preach the preaching that God bids you.** Jonah said so! Jesus said so! Matthew, Mark, Peter, Paul all say so! May God supply us with sufficient voices to positively preach a positive gospel to every man, woman, boy or girl everywhere we have opportunity or invitation.

In the New Hampshire Confession of Faith, Article VI. OF THE FREENESS OF SALVATION, notice the first sentence - "We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel." Will anyone deprive a fellow creature from hearing the gospel? Do we not recognize the difference in salvation and church membership? Who will deny the sinner anywhere from hearing the gospel from your lips? Will **HARDSHELLISM** win out where you live? Even though they only believe a few are elected for heaven, I reckon they still believe in preaching to all, for they never know who the few are that will repent.

It is a denial of the faith once delivered unto the saints to handcuff the gospel. Paul said he was debtor to all men. Are we any less obligated?

Epilogue

Colossians 1:21-29:

"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight: If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and **which was preached to every creature which is under heaven:** whereof I Paul am made a minister; Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, **to fulfill the word of God;** Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory; Whom we preach, **warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.**