

**Today is February 04, 2024**

**Sovereign Grace**

**Missionary Baptist Church**

*"Where the Truths of God's Word Have Been Taught  
for Sixty-Two Years" Since October 21, 1961*

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**"Our Prayer List"**

*"Pray without ceasing." 1 Thess. 5:17*

Sister Zee Mink Fuller and Family, Her son's Bryan Armstrong and Hunter Hackie, Daughter Shannon, Johnnie Stephens, Alecia Stephens, and children, Frank & Sonya Trusty, Frank & Dawana Reigel, Diane & Smoke, Andrew Preston, Larry & Martha Mollette and Her Family Juanita her daughter, Lana Paul, Ted O'Bonion, Larry Mollette II & Family, Kerry Adcock, Kim Reich, Tyler Castle, Danny Mollette, Joshua Kidd, Ronnie and Sarah Henderson, Ricky Henderson and Family, James and Luann Reynolds, Timothy Fails, Jerry Hughes, Shirly King - Son David - and family, Little Cam Works, Sister Ann McSwain, Brother Justin Bookout and family, Little Weslynn McClelland, Adrienne Lavina, Pastor Nathan Hille and Sister Cassie and his family, Baby Titus Massey, Shane and Brook Sims, Ricky Bennett, Nick, Madison, and Baby Emory Patty, Bill Gossett, and Russell York.

**"Pray For Our Church Supported Mission Works"**

*"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8*

Missionary Dan and Sunny Sullivan in Thailand, Elder Raul and the Printing work Romania, and the Berea Baptist Banner Mantachie, Ms.

## **A Thief's Testimony**

By Curtis Pugh Former Missionary and now with the Lord.

The Lord Jesus was nailed to a tree between two guilty thieves. Matthew 27:44 says, "**The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth,**" referring to the mocking words of those who passed by. Both thieves mocked the Lord Jesus with the same words as the others. Their mocking included these words: "**He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God,**" (Matthew 27:42-43). Both were clearly unbelievers just as the other mockers were.

Luke records additional details giving us the testimony of the one thief: "**And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss,**" (Luke 23:39-41). While one thief continued mocking the Lord Jesus, something happened to the other one: something inward, something that changed his mind about himself, his sinfulness and about the Lord Jesus.

This thing that happened is called the new birth or the birth from above. Theologians call it regeneration. It is an instantaneous work of the Holy Spirit by which a sinner is changed inwardly. It results in spiritual sight or understanding causing the unbeliever to suddenly become a believer in the person and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. In speaking about this inward work the Lord Jesus likened the Holy Spirit to the wind. He said, "**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,**" (John 3:8). That old word "listeth" means pleases or chooses. The idea is that the Holy Spirit is neither controlled nor influenced by anyone or anything outside Himself. He does as He pleases!

There is no other way to explain what happened to the changed thief. He had once had a carnal mind. Romans 8:7 says: "**...the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.**" The impossibility of a sinner changing his mind is clearly stated here. But God can and does in an instant give elect sinners a change of mind, an understanding of spiritual things so that he believes savingly in Christ.

The believing thief turned to the Lord Jesus and said, "**Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom,**" (Luke 23:42). Have you experienced this new birth by which you were changed from an unbeliever into a believer in the Lord Christ Jesus? The Lord Jesus said, "**...Ye must be born again,**" (John 3:7).

## **"A Message from Pastor Johnson"**

*"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof..." 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5:2*

### ***God doesn't do anything by chance.***

*"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*

The writer to the Acts wrote these words, *"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."* Acts 15:18 What this tells us is that God is Omniscient or all-knowing and that everything God ordained or predestinated was completed before the foundation of the world. Most of confessed Christianity will not recognize God's Sovereignty, nor the ordained workings of God. In Ephesians 2:8 God said, *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:"* but God went on to say in verse 10 these words, *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."*

Therefore, we must recognize that our salvation was given to us because of God's grace, and it was not of our own works or doings, but by the working of God through Jesus Christ. Now, to make us understand the context here God put these words in the middle of these two verses, "Not of works..." verse 9. With all this being said, we can understand that we are saved by God's grace and power, through Jesus Christ, and not by anything we do, but it is a gift from God. Then God goes deeper and says that whatever we do in our Christian life is His ordained workings that He ordained before the world was ever created. Since God has explained this to us in detail, we must also recognize that God does not make mistakes nor does He do anything by chance, but by His Sovereign ordained will and power. Since *"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."* Then we must conclude that God will see all His ordained will thru its completion. As Christians and churches, we were put into the church and work because God created us for that work. God unlike man does nothing by chance, He does everything according to His ordained will, and God never fails. We see in Numbers 23:19 these words, *"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"* God is not like a man that He should not carry through His ordained will, nor that He should not see it through. God has a reason that He has elected people to do His will and ordained them to do His works, it is because God purposes everything and He ordained nothing by chance.

## **A Message from Pastor Johnson, Continued**

If you understand God and His Sovereignty then you must understand He never fails, and He knows every detail of everything because He ordained and predetermined everything before the foundation of the world. Let's look at the Tribulation Period, is there a chance it will not happen? Is there any chance that it will not happen exactly as God said it would? The answer is no because God said it would happen and how it would happen. This means that God not only ordained it to happen but also how it would happen. Every detail was predestinated and ordained by God before the world began. God leaves nothing to chance because He cannot fail. God ordained the death of His Son Jesus, but He went farther and ordained how He would be crucified and His reaction on the cross per Isaiah 53 and other places. Because if He had not then maybe they would not have crucified Him. How did God know the works we would do for Him, He ordained them. God left nothing to chance, nor does God depend on the believer, God carries through His ordained will.

## **Church Information and Happenings.**

Our church has moved the date of our Bible Confrence this year to September 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> for this year. We hope you will mark your calendars and join us.

### **John 3:1-6**

*"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."*