



# THE BANNER HERALD

## JANUARY 2024

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# THE BANNER-HERALD

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*All contributions above the subscription price are now tax deductible.*





# Divine Guidance

*Studies in the Scriptures*

By:  
A.W. Pink - 1934  
(1886 - 1952)

*\*From Chapel Library*

## DIVINE GUIDANCE

It is well for those who are sensible of their own weakness and fallibility, and of the difficulties with which they are surrounded in life, that the Lord has promised to guide His people with His eye, and to cause them to hear a word behind them, saying, “This is the way, walk ye in it,” when they are in danger of turning aside either to the right hand or to the left. For this purpose He has given us the written Word to be a lamp to our feet and encouraged us to pray for the teaching of His Holy Spirit, that we may rightly understand and apply it. It is, however, too often seen, that many widely deviate from the path of duty, and commit gross and perplexing mistakes, while they profess a sincere desire to know the will of God, and think they have His warrant and authority. This must certainly be owing to misapplication of the rule by which they judge, since the rule itself is infallible, and the promise sure. The Scriptures cannot deceive us if rightly understood, but they may, if perverted, prove the occasion of confirming us in a mistake. The Holy Spirit cannot mislead those who are under His influence, but we may suppose that we are so, when we are not. It may not be unseasonable to offer a few thoughts upon a subject of great importance to the peace of our minds, and to the honour of our holy profession.

Many have been deceived as to what they ought to do, or in forming a judgment beforehand of events in which they are nearly (closely) concerned, by expecting direction in ways which the Lord has not warranted. I shall mention some of the principal of these, for it is not easy to enumerate them all. Some persons, when two or more things have been in view, and they could not immediately determine which to prefer, have committed their case to the Lord by prayer, and have proceeded to cast lots—taking it for granted, that after such a solemn appeal, the turning up of the lot might be safely rested in as an answer from God.

It is true, the Scripture, and indeed, right reason assures us, that the Lord disposes the lot, and there are several cases recorded in the Old Testament in



which lots were used by divine appointment. But I think neither these, nor the choosing Matthias by lot to the apostleship, are proper precedents for our conduct. In the division of the land of Canaan, in the affair of Achan, and in the nomination of Saul to the kingdom, recourse was had to lots by God's express command.

The instance of Matthias likewise was singular, such as can never happen again, namely, the choice of an apostle, who would not have been on a par with the rest, who were chosen immediately by the Lord, unless He had been pleased to interpose in some extraordinary way, and all these were before the canon of Scripture was completed, and before the full descent and communication of the Holy Spirit, who was promised to dwell with the church to the end of time. Under the New Testament dispensation, we are invited to come boldly to the throne of grace, to make our request known to the Lord, and to cast our cares upon Him, but we have neither precept or promise respecting the use of lots, and to have recourse to them without His appointment, seems to be tempting Him rather than honouring Him, and to savour more of presumption than dependence. The effects likewise of this expedient have often been unhappy and hurtful. A sufficient proof how little it is to be trusted to as a guide of our conduct.

Others, when in doubt, have opened the Bible at a venture, and expected to find something to direct them in the first verse they should cast their eye upon. It is no small discredit to their practice, that the heathens who knew not the Bible, used some of their favourite books in the same way, and grounded their persuasions of what they ought to do, or what should befall them, according to the passage they happened to open upon. Among the Romans, the writings of Virgil were frequently consulted upon these occasions, which gave rise to the well-known expression of the *Sortes Virgilinae*. And indeed Virgil is as well adapted to satisfy inquiries in this way, as the Bible itself, for if people will be governed by the occurrence of a single text of Scripture, without regarding the context, or duly comparing it with the general tenor of the Word of God, and with their own circumstances, they may commit the greatest extravagancies, expect the greatest

impossibilities, and contradict the plainest dictates of common sense, while they think they have the Word of God on their side. Can the opening upon 2 Samuel 7:3, when Nathan said unto David, “Do all that is in thine heart; for the LORD is with thee,” be sufficient to determine the lawfulness or expediency of actions? Or can a glance of the eye upon our Lord’s words to the woman of Canaan, “Be it unto thee even as thou wilt” (Mat 15:28), amount to a proof, that the present earnest desire of the mind (whatever it may be) shall be surely accomplished? Yet it is certain that matters, big with important consequences, have been engaged in, and the most sanguine expectations formed, upon no better warrant than dipping (as it is called) upon a text of Scripture.

A sudden strong impression of a text, that seems to have some resemblance to the concern upon the mind, has been accepted by many as an infallible token that they were right, and that things would go just as they would have them. Or on the other hand, if the passage bore a threatening aspect, it has filled them with fears and disquietudes, which they have afterwards found were groundless and unnecessary. These impressions, being more out of their power than their former method, have been generally regarded and trusted to, but have frequently proved no less delusive. It is allowed that such impressions of a precept or a promise, as humble, animate, may comfort the soul by giving it a lively sense of the truth contained in the words, and are both profitable and pleasant, and many of the Lord’s people have been instructed and supported (especially in a time of trouble) by some seasonable word of grace applied and sealed by His Spirit with power to their hearts. But if impressions or impulses are received as a voice from heaven, directing to such particular actions as could not be proved to be duties without them, a person may be inwardly misled into great evils, and gross delusions, and many have been so. There is no doubt but the enemy of our souls, if permitted, can furnish us with Scriptures in abundance in this way, and for these purposes.

Some persons judge of the nature and event of their designs by the freedom which they find in prayer. They say they commit their ways to God, seek His direction, and are favoured with much enlargement of spirit, and therefore they

cannot doubt but what they have in view is acceptable in the Lord's sight. I would not absolutely reject every plea of this kind, yet without other corroborating evidence I could not admit it in proof of what it is brought for. It is not always easy to determine when we have spiritual freedom in prayer. Self is deceitful and when our hearts are much fixed and bent upon a thing, this may put words and earnestness into our mouths. Too often we first secretly determine for ourselves, and then come to ask counsel of God. In such a disposition, we are ready to catch at everything that may seem to favour our darling scheme, and the Lord, for the detecting and chastisement of our hypocrisy (for hypocrisy it is, though perhaps hardly perceptible to ourselves), may answer us according to our idols, see Ezekiel 14:3-4. Besides, the grace of prayer may be in exercise when the subject-matter of the prayer may be founded upon a mistake, from the intervention of circumstances which we are unacquainted with. Thus, I may have a friend in a distant country. I hope he is alive, I pray for him, and it is my duty to do so. The Lord, by His Spirit, assists His people in what is their present duty. If I am enabled to pray with much liberty for my distant friend, it may be a proof that the Spirit of the Lord is pleased to assist my infirmities, but it is no proof that my friend is certainly alive at the time I am praying for him. And if the next time I pray for him I should find my spirit straitened, I am not to conclude that my friend is dead, and therefore the Lord will not assist me in praying for him any longer.

Once more, a remarkable dream has sometimes been thought as decisive as any of the foregoing methods of knowing the will of God. That many wholesome and seasonable admonitions have been received in dreams, I willingly allow, but though they may be occasionally noticed, to pay a great attention to dreams, especially to be guided by them, to form our sentiments, conduct our expectations upon them, is superstitious and dangerous. The promises are not made to those who dream, but to those who watch.

Upon the whole, though the Lord may give to some persons, upon some occasions, a hint or encouragement out of the common way, yet expressly to look

for and seek His direction in such things as I have mentioned is unscriptural and ensnaring. I could fill many sheets with a detail of the inconveniences and evils which have followed such a dependence, within the courts of my own observation. I have seen some presuming they were doing God's service while acting in contradiction to His express commands. I have known others infatuated to believe a lie, declaring themselves assured beyond the shadow of a doubt, of things which, after all, never came to pass, and when at length disappointed, Satan has improved the occasion to make them doubt of the plainest and most important truths, and to account their whole former experience a delusion. By these things weak believers have been stumbled, cavils and offences against the Gospel multiplied, and the way of truth evil spoken of.

But how, then, may the Lord's guidance be expected? After what has been premised negatively, the question may be answered in a few words. In general, He guides and directs His people by affording them, in answer to prayer, the light of His Holy Spirit, which enables them to understand and to live the Scriptures. The Word of God is not to be used as a lottery, nor is it designed to instruct us by shreds and scraps, which, detached from their proper places, have no determined import, but it is to furnish us with just principles, right apprehensions, to regulate our judgments and affections, and thereby to influence and regulate our conduct. They who study the Scriptures in an humble dependence upon divine teaching, are convinced of their own weakness, are taught to make a true estimate of everything around them, are gradually formed into a spirit of submission to the will of God, discover the nature and duties of their several situations and relations in life, and the snares and temptations to which they are exposed. The Word of God dwelling richly in them is a preservative from error, a light to their feet, and a spring of strength and consolation. By treasuring up the doctrines, precepts, promises, examples, and exhortations of Scripture in their minds, and daily comparing them with the rule by which they walk, they grow into an habitual frame of spiritual wisdom, and acquire a gracious taste, which enables them to judge of right and wrong with a degree of readiness and certainty, as a musical ear judges of sounds, and they are seldom mistaken, because they are influenced by



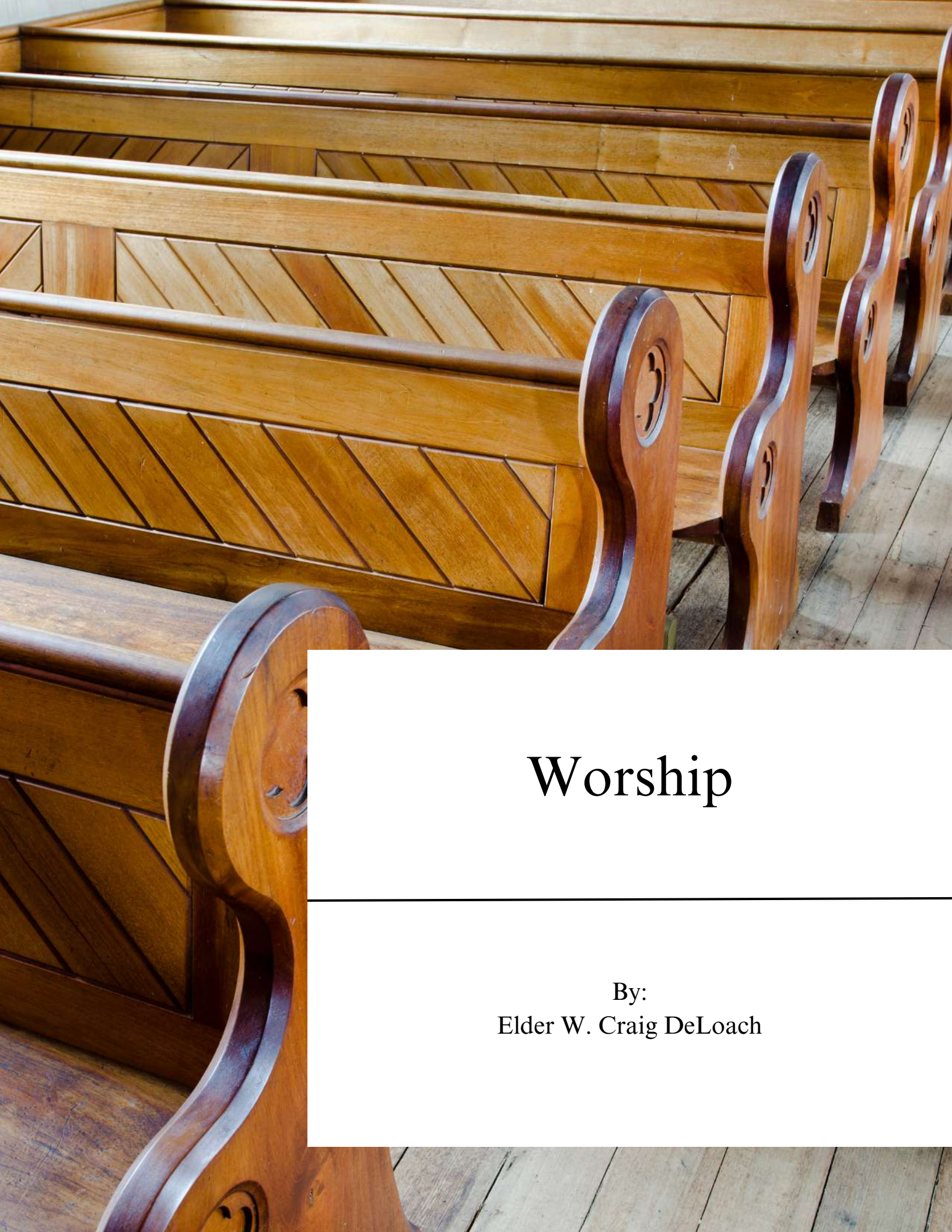
the love of Christ which rules in their hearts, and a regard to the glory of God, which are the great objects they have in view.

In particular cases the Lord opens and shuts for them, breaks down walls of difficulty which obstruct their path, or hedges up their way with thorns, when they are in danger of going wrong, by the dispensations of His providence. They know that their concerns are in His hands. They are willing to follow whither and when He leads, but are afraid of going before Him. Therefore they are not impatient. Because they believe, they will not make haste, but wait daily upon Him in prayer, especially when they find their hearts most engaged in any purpose or pursuit, they are most jealous of being deceived by appearances, and dare not move farther or faster than they can perceive His light shining upon their paths. I express at least their desire, if not their attainment. Thus they would be. And though there are seasons when faith languishes, and self too much prevails, this is their general disposition, and the Lord, whom they serve, does not disappoint their expectations: He leads them by a right way, preserves them from a thousand snares, and satisfies them that He is and will be their Guide even unto death.—  
John Newton (1770).

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**The following comments are from the editors of The Chapel Library, who printed the above article in their publication.**

*“We heartily commend the above article to the careful attention of those who are exercised about the matter of divine guidance. Its exposure of the foolish, fanatical, and superstitious devices employed by not a few today, when they are undecided as to their line of duty, is timely. The positive side of the subject is capable of and probably needs some amplification, and we hope to write an article thereon for the next issue. The general rule or principle may be stated thus, if we are daily concerned in seeking to please God in all the details, great and small, of our lives, He will not leave us in ignorance of His will concerning us. But if we are accustomed to gratify self and only turn unto God for help in times of difficulty and emergency, then we must not be surprised if He mocks us, and allows us to reap the fruits of our own folly. Our business is to walk in obedient subjection to Christ, and His sure promise is, “He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness” (Joh 8:12). Make sure you are sincerely endeavoring to “follow” the “example” Christ has left us, and He will not leave you in ignorance or uncertainty as to which step you should take when you come to the parting of the ways.”*



# Worship

By:  
Elder W. Craig DeLoach

## INTRODUCTION

The thoughts presented in this article are not original with me. They are excerpted from an excellent study on the subject of worship by Alfred P. Gibbs in his book *Worship: The Christian's Highest Occupation*. Quotations will be cited by the word “*Worship*” followed by the page number. Gibbs delves into the subject of worship in a way that strikes at the very heart of our coming before God appropriately to give Him that which He rightly deserves from us.

### EFFORTS TO DEFIN WRSHIP

Gibbs makes the interesting point in his book that “‘Worship,’ like many other great words, such as ‘grace’ and ‘love,’ defies adequate definition” (*Worship 15*). He asserts that it is more easily experienced than described. To make this point clear, he directs the reader to several efforts to define worship.

The first definition describes worship as “The overflow of a grateful heart, under a sense of divine favor.” Gibbs notes that this author is emphasizing that worship “is a spontaneous thing. It is not something that has to be laboriously pumped up, but that which springs up, and overflows from a heart that is filled with a sense of the greatness and goodness of God” (*Worship 15*). David makes a statement in Psalm 45:1 that supports and, thus, confirms this definition. In this psalm, the man known as the sweet psalmist of Israel said, “My heart is inditing a good matter.” The word “inditing” carries the sense of “gushing,” “boiling,” “stirring.” Gibbs states that Psalm 45:1 might be translated “My heart boileth, or bubbleth up” (*Worship 15*). Gibbs then adds the following:

As he meditated on the glory and majesty of God, as revealed, both in creation and His word, his heart began to warm within him, until it boiled over, and there ascended to God the fragrance of his worship (*Worship 15-16*).



David speaks of this experience again in Psalm 23:5 where he writes: “Thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over.” When I hear this psalm, I affectionately recall a friend of mine many years back that utilized this verse constantly. When you would ask him how he was doing, he always remarked that “I’m drinking from my saucer because my cup is overflowing.” That certainly supports the point that worship does not have to be pumped up. It is a natural response to the recognition of the greatness and goodness of God in the life of the believer.

The second definition offered by Gibbs is given by an unnamed author who states that worship is “The outpouring of a soul at rest in the presence of God” (*Worship 16*). None are at rest in the presence of God who are not aware of their deliverance from sin. The individual who has been chosen, regenerated and has exercised faith in Jesus is aware that he has been delivered from the wrath of God (See Romans 1:18). Gibbs emphasizes the fact that the believer is fully aware that “he hath made us accepted in the beloved” (Ephesians 1:6) and then goes on to say:

He has been brought to realize that, in Christ, he is seen by God as sanctified, redeemed, regenerated, justified, and blessed with all the spiritual blessings in the heavenlies. As he thus basks in the sunshine of Divine favor, his heart goes out in adoration to the One who made it all so blessedly and gloriously actual in his experience (*Worship 16*).

When we come to understand that God has saved us through the redeeming work of Jesus Christ, we understand and rest in the knowledge there is nothing we can do to add to or take away from the marvelous work of Jesus in our behalf. Paul said it best in Romans 4:16 when he wrote: “Therefore, it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; . . .” The apostle had previously stated in chapter 4 the following: “Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted

for righteousness” (Romans 4:4-5). Then again in Ephesians 2, Paul continues with his theme regarding the place of works in salvation when he states, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9, emphasis added). How sweet to know that we who have come to embrace Christ as our Savior through the faith given to us by God our heavenly Father can rest in His glorious grace. Truly our worship will be exemplified by the outpouring of our soul at rest in the presence of God.

Gibbs quotes a third example given by another unidentified writer who defines worship as “the occupation of the heart, not with its needs, or even with its blessings, but with God Himself” (Worship 16). There is here in this definition a subtle distinction being made between prayer, praise, and worship. Gibbs refers to the narrative in 2 Samuel 7:18-22. About that he states:

David knew what this meant, for we are told that when Nathan was commissioned by the Lord to tell him that the throne of his kingdom should be established for ever, David’s heart was so full that he went in and sat before the Lord. As he did so he was soon lost in wonder and praise, and exclaimed: ‘Wherefore Thou art great, O Lord God, for there is none like Thee, neither is there any God beside Thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears’ (*Worship 16*).

As we spend time in the Word of God, we come to realize that we have an eternal home, an inheritance, a dwelling place, that is promised to us by our Lord Jesus Christ. The promise is succinctly set forth in John 14 where our Savior says:

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also (John 14:1-3).

Just as David was promised his kingdom would be established for ever, we should also recognize that our eternal destiny is established for ever. Because of that, our worship should never be based on what we need, nor our blessings, but on God Himself.

Gibbs offers one further definition. He quotes it as follows: “Worship is the upspring of a heart that has known the Father as a Giver, the Son as Savior, and the Holy Spirit as the indwelling Guest.” Truly, it is only one that is born again and has come to know Christ that “can spiritually and intelligently worship the Father and the Son, through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit” (*Worship 17*).

Scripture is very clear on this point. First Corinthians 2:14-15 states: “the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” Therefore, it is only those who have experienced the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit Who leads us into all truth (See John 16:13) that are enabled to intelligently worship the Father and the Son.

## **WORTHSHIP**

It has often been said that worship could just as well be pronounced “worthship,” and there is good reason for this ascription. The book of Revelation gives an excellent example. In Revelation 4, we read “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive honor and glory and power, for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created” (Revelation 4:11). Gibbs continues this thought as follows:

In chapter five, the numberless hosts, who surround the Lamb, join in a glorious chorus and sing: “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!” It will be seen in these two instances that not a single petition occurs. It is worship in its purest form, for it is the ascription of worth to One who alone is worthy, or in other words, worthship (*Worship 18*).



## THE LAW OF FIRST MENTION

The Law of First Mention is one of the major interpretive principles of biblical hermeneutics. A. P. Gibbs offers an excellent definition: “This rule affirms that the first mention of a word, or doctrine, in the Bible, determines its meaning throughout the whole range of the Scriptures” (Worship 18). The first mention of the word “worship” is found in Genesis 22:5 where we read, “And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.” Consequently, Genesis 22 reveals several principles that are applied to the subject of worship. These principles are set forth in order by A. P. Gibbs under the subject of the law of first mention.

The first thing we learn is that worship is based on a revelation from God. In Genesis 22:2, God speaks to Abraham saying, “Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.” Abraham did not think this up himself. His response was to a Divine revelation. Gibbs notes that “For one to act without Divine authority is presumption in the worst degree” (Worship 19). He then continues:

The worship of the Lord, as also the work of the Lord, must be guided by the word of the Lord. The believer’s authority in worship is not the traditions of men, however hoary with antiquity, nor the subtle reasonings of human wisdom, however plausible; but the clear revelation of God’s word (*Worship 19*).

The second principle is that worship is conditioned by faith in, and obedience to that Divine revelation. In Genesis 22:3, we notice that Abraham did not hesitate to obey the commandment of God. Verse 3 states that “Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place which God had told him.” To this, Gibbs adds, “In other

words, Abraham did something in response to God's word. Thus, prompt, unquestioning obedience to the known will of God, as revealed in His word, is essential to true worship" (*Worship 19*).

The third principle is that worship involves a costly presentation to God. In Genesis 22:2, we read where God commanded Abraham to "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." With Abraham, it meant the offering of Isaac. Abraham had waited twenty-five years for the child of promise to be born to him and Sarah, and now, God is commanding Abraham to take this beloved child and offer him for a burnt offering. Gibbs states, "Worship is not a cheap thing, to be offered thoughtlessly or carelessly, with no sense of the self-sacrifice involved" (*Worship 20*). David sums it up in 2 Samuel 24:24 when he states, "Neither will I offer burnt sacrifices unto the Lord my God of that which dost cost me nothing."

The fourth principle is that worship necessitates a deliberate separation unto God. This is found in Genesis 22:5 where Abraham told the two young men "Abide ye here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder and worship." Gibbs points out that the two young men represent "things which would combine to hinder the believer from entering by 'the new and living way' into the holiest, to pour out his heart in adoring worship" (*Worship 21*). If we are to worship appropriately, we should command any and all distractions to "Abide ye here while I go yonder and worship!"

The fifth principle is that worship glorifies God. Genesis 22:16-18 reveals God's delight in and appreciation of Abraham's obedience:

By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed

shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice.”

David was brought to realize this truth as God said to him, “Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me, and to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God” (Psalm 50:23). Gibbs makes the following outstanding statement: “Worship gives to God the place of absolute pre-eminence and thus glorifies Him, to the exclusion of all others . . .” (*Worship* 23).

The sixth principle is that worship results in blessing to the worshipper. Once again, this is revealed in Genesis 22:16-18,

[B]ecause thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice.

God provided a ram for the burnt offering in the place of Isaac. Abraham must have ascended the mountain with a sad and troubled heart, but when he descended the mountain, his heart must have been singing the praises of God, because he had received his beloved son Isaac to life again. The promises of God to Abraham were immense, and as Abraham and his son returned to his two servants after worshipping the LORD his God, Abraham was blessed beyond his wildest dreams.

## CONCLUSION

How often do we hear that we worship the Father in spirit and in truth, because “the Father seeketh such to worship him” (See John 4:23). The only way we can do that is to assimilate each of the points made by A. P. Gibbs in his introduction to worship. If we are to worship our Lord and God appropriately,



our worship should be a spontaneous thing “inditing a good matter.” It should not have to be ginned up. Further, our worship should be generated by a sense of rest in the presence of God. This rest is the consequence of knowing that God has done everything for us. Our position with Him is ultimately secure. We can never lose our salvation (See Romans 8:38-39). Lastly, we have become aware that worship does not involve our needs nor our praise, but true worship is the occupation of our heart with God Himself.

The principles presented in Genesis 22 should be a sure guide to approaching God in worship, especially as we follow the law of first mention. Our worship should be initiated by Divine revelation; our worship will be motivated by obedience to and faith in that Divine revelation; our worship will be a costly presentation to God; our worship necessitates a deliberate separation unto God; our worship glorifies God; and our worship results in a blessing to us.

As we follow these unique teachings, we are enabled to worship God in the way He desires.



# NEWS FROM THE DENOMINATION

The background of the image shows the interior of a church. The walls are made of light-colored horizontal wooden planks. There are several tall, narrow, arched windows with white frames. The floor is made of dark wooden planks. In the foreground, there are dark wooden pews. A white, rounded rectangular box is overlaid in the center of the image, containing text.

# **Ministers' School**

**January 15-17, 2024**

**Macedonia Church**

**Ider, Alabama**

**Theme: *“Studies from the Scriptures”***



**Progressive Primitive Baptist Foundation**  
**2024 Annual Meeting**  
**Goshen Primitive Baptist Church**  
**Hartsburg, MO**  
**April 24 - 25, 2024**

Greetings to our Brothers and Sisters in Christ. Good news from your Primitive Baptist Foundation!

Our next Annual Meeting is being planned for Wednesday and Thursday, April 24 and 25, at Goshen Primitive Baptist Church, Hartsburg, MO. **PUT THIS ON YOUR CALENDAR, N-O-W!** We are delighted to be invited to the 'Show Me' state for our first Foundation Annual Meeting in the Midwest. Goshen has invited us for three years. We had to cancel in 2022 due to the COVID pandemic. The 2023 meeting was relocated to central Georgia where most of our churches are located in an effort to regain some of the lost momentum after three cancelled meetings. And it was indeed a very successful meeting. Best attendance in recent years. Special thanks to Metter Primitive Baptist Church for the outstanding job they did in hosting the meeting.

We are very thankful for Goshen's patience and enthusiasm while working with us on meeting arrangements. We look forward to a great meeting! Please pray for Goshen Church and our Foundation Officers/Directors as we prepare for this special event. We will share updates as we move toward the meeting time.

See you in Missouri in April 2024!

In Christian Service,  
Primitive Baptist Foundation Executive Committee  
Elwyn Deal, President

## Praying For Pastors & Churches

For many years we have been seeing a decline in the number of pastors and churches. It seems every so many years we become burdened about it and emphasize the need to pray. I believe there is a deep-seated problem that is causing the declines we are facing. This article isn't to present my opinions as to why we are seeing such decline over the years. I simply want to let you see how rapidly the decline is occurring.

In 2001, an article was published in the Banner Herald. If I remember correctly, it was compiled by Elder Craig Campbell. I want to give you a comparison of his report and the recent tally I have made from our 2024 Church Directory. I am only going to give you the totals.

In 2001, there were 113 Churches. In 2023, there are 79 Churches (69 full time, 52 have a pastor). In 22 years, we have lost 34 churches. In 2001, there were 127 pastors. In 2023, we have 81 pastors (46 serving churches full-time, 15 are retired or available for supply, 10 are not available for supply). This means that in the same 22 years we have a loss of 46 pastors. Currently, there are only 3 licentiates.

This says to me that there is a serious problem. Let's pray for our condition and consider what might be causing this loss in churches and pastors. I want your feedback, and I will make a report in next month's Banner Herald.

**Please send your thoughts to:**

Elder Pat McCoy

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or

email at: [pm4dmi@outlook.com](mailto:pm4dmi@outlook.com).



# **OBITUARIES**

**ANDERSON, Mary Elizabeth –**  
February 14, 1944 to December 2, 2023.  
Brooklet Primitive Baptist Church, Brooklet, Georgia.  
(Wife of Elder Lavone Anderson)

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

In accord with the historical position of the Primitive Baptists, the editors of the Banner Herald subscribe to the scriptural principles stated in the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith. The following is an abbreviated statement upon that confession.

- We Believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, inspired and inerrant, and the only rule of faith and practice.
- We Believe in the only true and living God. That there are three persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that these three agree in one, are coequal, coeternal, and coexistent.
- We Believe in the total depravity of the entire human family; that is, sin pollutes man's faculties - his heart, mind, and will - and he is unable to recover himself from his lost and ruined estate.
- We Believe in particular, eternal, and unconditional election, the effectual calling of the elect, and the final perseverance of the saints.
- We Believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, the only Savior and Redeemer, and that Salvation is by His grace alone.
- We Believe that believer's Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the ordinances of the church of Jesus Christ. We Believe the only baptism taught and recognized in the Bible is immersion. We Believe the Lord's Supper is a memorial of our Lord's death and should be regularly observed in the church. We Believe that the washing of the saint's feet is an example of humility and service to be observed by the church.
- We Believe that no minister has the right to administer the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper but such as are called by God and come under the imposition of hands by a presbytery.
- We Believe in the resurrection of the just and the unjust; that the just shall be raised, changed, and fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Son of God, to dwell in heaven forever, soul and body reunited; and, that the unjust shall be raised, soul, and body reunited, and consigned to punishment in hell forever.