

consideration of God's purpose that Adam transgressed, nor was he moved to the act by the spirit of the Lord, but the fact of man's falling from his first state being left to his will should prove an everlasting blast to that doctrine of free will which is so popular in the world, for if Adam's free will led him and his posterity into the difficulty, it is not likely that free will will now lead us out. No, we may as well rely upon the devil as upon the will of sinners, who will to do satan's lusts. But, as we said above, sin cannot stand in the way of God's purpose, for, although sin is almost as old as time, yet we find that God's purpose and grace is older, and in this case the elder shall not serve the younger, as Arminians suppose. That covenant or promise made to Abraham (Gen. 17:8) was a transcript of a covenant which was confirmed before of God in Christ (see Gal. 3:17,) and if the law which was four hundred and thirty years after could not disannul God's promise to Abraham, then how can the law and sin which dates only from Adam make null God's promise and grace, which dates from eternity. Truly here is strong consolation for the tempted and tried saints of God, who see another law in their members warring against the law of their mind, and bringing them in captivity to the law of sin, which is in their members. (Romans 7:23.) Oh reader, do you feel that you have been a sinner all your life long, and that you have not been worthy of the least of all God's mercies! Have you fellowship for David when he says "mine iniquities are gone over mine head as an heavy burden; they are too heavy for me, I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly, I go mourning all the day long, for my loins are filled with a loathsome disease, and there is no soundness in my flesh, I am feeble and sore broken, I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart." (Psalm 38:4-8.) O, David, if such is your state where is your hope? In thee O Lord do I hope, thou wilt hear O Lord my God. (Verse 15.) What, David, shall the Lord hear from you? will you speak of your good works? nay I will declare mine iniquity; and will you also rejoice in your iniquity? nay I will be sorry for my sin. (Verse 18.) Hence we perceive that David's hope was in the Lord, that is, in his purpose and grace, according to which he and all saints are saved and called, and in pursuance of

which Christ was delivered, crucified, and arose from the dead, by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all (Heb. 10:10,) and by the one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. (Verse 14.) Now I ask did God's absolute counsel or purpose that his people should be saved, preclude the need of the offering of Christ, by which they are redeemed from all iniquity? or should we not rather conclude with the Scriptures that the offering of Christ was the means that the Father hath devised for the accomplishment of his purpose? That there are other subordinate means of salvation we do not question or doubt; for instance, the Spirit's calling and work, with all that results therefrom, the repentance, faith and holy character of the saints. Without these none could be saved, and predestinarians are as well aware of this as others. But these, with every other necessary thing, must be derived from the atonement of Christ, and originally from God's purpose, according to which the saints are both saved and called, as expressed in our text. Now, reader, will you behold the orderly walk of the saints. Oh, we may with great admiration witness the obedience of the Lord's people, and exhort them to press forward, but we should rejoice more that they have been called to such obedience. Here I will stand and rejoice with you for a while, in view of the fact that the saints are as effectually called by the Spirit as the worlds were framed by the word of God. But now let us take a step back to the cross, upon which Christ expired under the weight of our sins. Here again we will stand and wonder, gaze and admire, that so glorious a personage should die for such filthy worms as we are. Could such an event result from a consideration that we were, or of ourselves would be holy? No, verily our holiness, if we had had any, would have superceded the need of any such a thing. Then, reader, as you look at Christ as expiring upon the cross, remember it was not because we were, but it was that we should be holy, for by that sacrifice our sins were put away, and if so, then it is not true that our sins remain, to be put away by some sacrifice of our own. But now for a little while let our minds pass from the cross and go back to eternity, and there we behold God's eternal

purpose and his sovereign and unchanging love for its basis, and from these have resulted the death of Christ, and the consequent exemption of his people from the penalty of the law; yea, from God's unchanging love and purpose have resulted the call of his people, their repentance, faith, and every other good thing that we have beheld in this world. Hence in the light of God's revealed word, with the teaching of his Spirit, we may perceive a harmonious train of events, all resulting from God's purpose, and all tending to the salvation and final glorification of his chosen. And now, christian reader, keep your mind steadily upon these things, and no man shall spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit; after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. I design soon to bring this communication to a close. I would like to treat briefly upon the evidences of an holy calling, as I know it is a point of great concernment with each individual saint, whether they have been called of the Lord. Reader, have you any special concern about this matter? if so, it is the Lord that has called you to that concern. Do you hunger and thirst after righteousness? if so, this is an evidence that the Lord has called you from death unto life, for the dead neither hunger nor thirst. Ah, you say, I do greatly desire to be free from sin; nothing would afford me so much pleasure as to live the life of an obedient christian, but alas! I am so prone to evil that if my action is restrained, my mind is often light, foolish and vain, so that I greatly fear I am not one of the called of the Lord. Here let me remind you that satan perverts everything that he is permitted to handle; I know that he would persuade you that your feeling sense of your own unworthiness, your dark and dreary seasons of gloom and depression are evidences that you have not been called, but in fact it is highly necessary that you should have such a view of your own sinful state, and nothing but the light of God's spirit could give you such a view of your unworthiness. Hence if such is your experience, you have been called out of darkness into his marvellous light. When our sins are set in array before us, and we are left for a while to wrestle in our own Arminian strength, we soon see that our sins are enemies too strong for us, and if this was not

so we should neither flee to Christ nor be prepared to honor him for our deliverance. Then weep on, saint, when the Lord sees it is best for you to weep he can comfort you at his pleasure, and will, for so he hath promised. If you are in trouble and anguish of soul, you should remember that heaven is not here, but in the world we shall have tribulation, which is but a consequence of our sins, from which, together with its consequences, we shall at last be saved, if indeed we have called upon the name of the Lord. Then to be saved—what is it? Here we have sin, in heaven we shall have none; here we often have pain and sorrowful hearts, in heaven we shall have neither pain nor grief; our earthly substance is liable to forfeiture and confiscation, but our treasure in heaven neither moth nor rust can corrupt, neither can thieves break through nor steal; here we are bereaved of parents, and children, and dear companions, but there is no bereavement in heaven; in this world many of the saints are poor and hard pressed, oh, who but her can realize the widow's sighs, when with heartrending pity she looks upon her orphan children, which in many instances have no visible means of support! For the comfort of such I would say to them, your heavenly Father knows of your grief, and his ears are open to your cries, heaven and earth is his, and the poor and needy are subjects of his compassion, moreover he hath declared that no good thing will be withheld from them that walk uprightly. To be saved, then, is to be taken out of this sin-disordered world, and taken to heaven, where sighing cannot enter, where the weary will be at rest, and where the wicked will cease from troubling. Then if we hope for such salvation, let us adore God's own purpose and grace, according to which we are both saved and called, and which was given us in Christ (not in Adam) before the world began.

JOHN ROWE.

Elder Bodenhamer:—Will you please inform me if there is any Primitive Baptist Church in Johnson county, North Carolina, by the name of Salem, and if so, who is the Pastor, and what is his address?

J. B. MATTHEWS for  
S. W. SMITH.

If any person can give the above information it will be thankfully received.—Ed.