

# The Good News

Newsletter - October 2014

A Publication of University Baptist Church, Hattiesburg, MS

The purpose of University Baptist Church is, through guidance of the Holy Spirit, to assemble and worship God, to love and encourage one another, to proclaim the gospel of Christ, to minister to all people, and to live in peace.

In a world where difficult issues remain, University Baptist Church continues its commitment to be a church where “there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male or female, for (we) are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3:28)

## Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones

1. Ye watchers and ye ho - ly ones, bright ae - rapha, che - ru - bim, and  
 2. O high - er than the che - ru - bim, more glo - rious than the ae - ra -  
 3. Re - spond, ye souls in end - less rest, ye pa - tri - archs and pro - phets  
 4. O friends, in glad - ness let us sing, su - per - nal an - them a - cho -

throns, raise the glad strain, Al - le - lu - ia! Cry out, do - mi - nious,  
 pham, lead their peal - ses, Al - le - lu - ia! Thou bea - rer of th'e -  
 blest, Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Ye ho - ly twelve, ye  
 ing, Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! To God the Fa - ther,

*Refrain (Harmony)*

peace - dom, possera, vir - tues, ar - chan - gels, an - gels' choir:  
 ter - ral Wood, most gra - cious, mag - ni - fy the Lord Al - le - lu - ia!  
 mar - tyrs strong, all saints tri - um - phant, raise the song:  
 God the Son, and God the Spi - rit, Three in One:

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

Text: John Athelstan Laurie Riley, 1906  
 Tune: Geistliche Kirchen Gesänge, 1623;  
 harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906



SS 44 88 Refrain  
 LASST UNS ERFREUEN  
<http://www.hymnary.org/hymn/UMH/90>

### *All Hallows Eve*

I was raised in a typical Mississippi Baptist church and the notion of All-Hallow's Eve wasn't even discussed in my childhood memory. Halloween was a super fun holiday, but the idea that it connected somehow to true Christian faith seemed an odd notion. Then again, I hardly even knew any Catholics and if the Methodist down the road were more enlightened, they didn't bother to share it with me! So, when my current church (University Baptist) began to expand its identification with the larger church family and its liturgical traditions, I was in for some new thinking (always a good thing). Just look up the definition was a step in the right direction and it was here that I learned that this ancient celebration honored the church's past saints (believers) who had passed from this world to the next. It is a celebration of unity and remembrance as well as promise that speaks to the core of our faith.

I have always found that for a celebration of religious significance to impact me on a sincere level it is essential that I consider it on a very personal level. When we speak of *the Church*—the body of Christ in this world—as an active, spiritual reality, I have to personify it the only way I know how. With people. I think of names. I think of friends and family that I love and this includes those that are beyond my reach. This vision for me personally can include people who may not be dead but I am unable to contact though they have played very important parts in my life's spiritual journey. As a believer, this is an interesting comparison. For what is death to us but a physical separation? How is an old friend who has shared communion and trials but has traveled beyond my reach different than a friend who has died? Of Course I might happily discover the missing friend again in this life, but beyond that, my Christian brother or sister is a part of my eternity. Also, this thinking about this celebration makes me think of the famed saints of former times who understood that there would be others who would join their family in part because of the witness in times of trial or hardship. My gratitude for them is also joyful for I know they are beyond the pains they suffered and live in the light I struggle to follow. It is also an assurance that ultimately we shall all see the age when good has overcome all evil at last and light has swallowed up the darkness. And that is a thought most appreciated in the evening.

-David Walker , University Baptist Church



## *Ten Days*

T... Ten Days

R... Restricted and shunned wholly of my families love

I... In divine tongues my lips spill forth flavor from above

B... Beheld in my vessel be more loved by Jesus than can fathom and explain

U... Ultimately by way of sore snares and slack of this life I'll go home and be freed of shame, despair, loneliness, pain

L... Lacerations within my heart lavished deep thereupon proving the challenge to stay sane

A... Anchored deep below the surface of God's word, water continually fuels my lamp

T... Thou hast beckoned my wretched clay by name, though a number be my stamp—178476

I... Indigent and alone I dwell save one with me

O... Omitted by society, caged in the embrace of bars I for now am deemed to be.

N... Not a few pierced against me; I praise God I'm binded in Thee!

David Cox  
Parchman DR

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## *A Chain Reaction*

A mouse was living on a farm and one day he saw the farmer and his wife come back from a shopping trip. He watched as they started to unload their packages because he wanted to see what he would be feasting on. But the first things they pulled out were mouse traps! The mouse was very disturbed about that. He went out to the barn and the first animal he saw was a chicken. He told the chicken, "They're putting mouse traps in the house." The chicken said that was too bad, but it wasn't her problem. So he moved on and when he saw a pig he told him, "They're putting mouse traps in the house." The pig said the same thing, that it was too bad but it wasn't his problem. The mouse told the same story to the cow and got the same answer.

That night the mouse went back to his cubby hole. And then he heard one of the traps snap. So did the farmer's wife and she went into the kitchen to see what had been caught. But before she turned on the light, the poisonous snake that had been caught by the tail bit her. She got sick. So they killed the chicken to make chicken soup for her. People came to visit her, so they killed the pig to feed them. The wife eventually died and they killed the cow to feed the people who came to her funeral!

The point of this is that we never know what might come up that will affect our lives.

Sherwood B. and friend Albert

## *The Love Chapter*

Text: 1 Corinthians 13:3

For the purpose of this devotion we focus on verse 3. However, it is suggested that the entire chapter be read as a background passage. The focus of this chapter in the Apostle Paul's discourse to the church is both the superiority and the preeminence of charity as the defining quality of Christianity. Now don't get that wrong: there is more to charity than just being generous, as our text clearly points out.

"Charity" is used in the King James Version to translate the Greek word *agape*. This same word is translated as *love* in numerous other places, most notably in John 3:16: For God so loved (agape) the world... Agape then is best described as a God-type of love; it is a self-sacrificing love. The Bible tells us that because God so loved us, we ought also to love (agape) one another (1 John 4:11). The love of God is expressed in its sacrificial giving of oneself.

We should be mindful that God is not a creature like we, carried about by external influences and internal urgings. God is immutable, which means that He is unchanging (Mal 3:6; Heb 13:8) and so He is not given to flights of emotional fancies. Rather than interpreting God's attributes according to our human example we have to understand them according to His unchanging nature. If all things work together according to God's purpose (Rom 8:28), then God has a purpose for all things. His love then is a love of purpose.

We are better able to understand the love chapter when we know that charity is a love of purpose. It is active in the giving of oneself for the purpose of meeting the need of another. So often we fix an emotional attachment on something and say that we love it. The contradiction in this is seen when our emotions change and we find that we no longer love the thing or person we once did. Our love was not a love of purpose; it was not a God type love.

I like to use the relationship between a mother wolf and her pup as an illustration of natural love. A mother wolf will kill in order to defend her pups. She will also kill her pups in order to preserve her own life. She does not love them. The purpose of protecting her pups is outweighed by the purpose of preserving herself. She is not able to sacrifice her own need in order to meet the needs of her offspring. She does not have a God type love.

In the ultimate expression of God's love, Christ lay down his life for us and commands that we do the same for one another. There is no emotional predicate to this action: we were unlovable when he loved us and so we are to love the unlovable. Our purpose should be that we will show the love of God to others because we have experienced the same. As Christians we are called to be witnesses of God's grace. We do this by our love toward others (John 13:35).

In 1 Corinthians 13, the Apostle Paul tells us that none of our outer garments of religions mean anything at all if they do not proceed from a heart of love. The very core of the Christian faith has to be the experience and expression of the love of God. James expresses this thought well when he calls us to action with "pure religion" (James 1:27). When we strip ourselves of the outer garments, Paul tells us, we are left with the fundamentals of faith, hope and charity—"but the greatest of these is charity" (agape; love) 1 Cor. 13:13.

Christopher Lee

*I Keep Digging!*  
(Read Deuteronomy 28:1-14)

Here I stand with a shovel in my hand and the people around me are wondering why I'm digging such a deep, wide hole.

Here I stand with a shovel in my hand and I'm wondering why the people around me aren't doing any digging of their own.

Here I stand with a shovel in my hand and then someone finally asks me why I'm digging such a deep, wide hole?

My answer to that question is: So that I can fill up the hole with all the blessings that I need from God.

*I Keep Digging!*

Poverty stands guard around every corner  
awaiting to rob me,  
Bitterness has punched me in the eye hoping  
that I can't see--I KEEP DIGGING!

Carelessness has blind-folded me and left me  
tied up to a bed,  
Sickness has befallen me and has left  
me for dead--I KEEP DIGGING!

Difficulty kicked me in the head and has  
left me comatose,  
Weakness drugged my drinking water and  
now I feel overdosed--I KEEP DIGGING!

Resentment itches my tepid soul in places that  
I can't even scratch,  
Foolishness hangs over my head trying to wear  
me like a hat--I KEEP DIGGING!

Through all the wretched vices and even more  
that are clinging,  
I hold steady, I hold strong, and with my shovel  
I KEEP DIGGING!

- Justin Underwood, Parchman, MS

## *Dealing with Death*

The heavy, humid air of the pre-dawn hour is stirred as the tent flap is drawn back and the runner from Flight Operations moves among the cots to reach through the mosquito netting to shake the shoulder of a sleeping G.I. Moans, grumbles and an occasional smoker's cough greet this rude interruption of dreams about home, the land of round eyes and big PX. A home that is in stark contrast to the endless jungle-covered hills in the central highlands of South Vietnam in 1966.

You arise and begin suiting up for a day of flying as a door gunner aboard a CH47 Chinook Helicopter of the 1st Cav. Division (AIRMABLE). Before the day is over, it's possible you will have flown on several different aircraft with different pilots, crew chiefs, and flight engineers. The chief mission of these aircraft is moving men and equipment for artillery and infantry operations by the division throughout the country and around the base camp at a KHE, home of the CAV, as it's called.

There is a possibility that the law of averages will catch up with the man in the cot 4 feet away and he, along with the rest of the crew, will either be shot down or die in a crash caused by mechanical problems or inclement weather. For this reason, flight day is strictly volunteer in the army.

Forming close friendships can lead to severe emotional distress at times when your focus must be on your duties. It can lead to doubts about continuation of your own flight status. Why put your feelings out where they can be hurt so easily? Experience will lead a wise individual to avoid close personal ties in such a risky endeavor.

Flash forward to the present. Darkness has fallen. A sense of anticipation, mixed with dread, permeates the atmosphere of the maximum security unit of Mississippi State Penitentiary. Which of the two feelings dominates your thoughts depends upon whether you wear the red suit of a condemned person or blue suit of a corrections officer.

Someone is scheduled to die shortly. This will not be a death by accident or chance, unless you call losing the lottery of who gets the death sentence and who doesn't, even for crimes identical in nature, "chance". The death tonight will be one planned out in detail, with minute to minute protocols for each step. In fact, it would be a miracle or accident if death did not take place.

If a fellow death row prisoner is to die, I am saddened, just as I am saddened by any unnecessary death from any cause. I wish it would not happen. But the same rules apply to me now as they did in 1966 in a place over 9,000 miles away. Don't get too close. Don't let them hurt you by taking someone with whom you have more than a casual relationship. They are trying hard enough to kill me. I'll not let them do it slowly a piece at a time, by being overly affected each time they kill someone in the name of the law.

No, they'll not get me that way! They'll never see the tear in the corner of these eyes. This ole boy has been through this sort of thing before. He made it out with most of his sanity, if not humanity, intact!

-Richard Jordan

## A Response to "Dealing with Death"

First, let me be perfectly clear. My response to Richard Jordan's "Dealing with Death' is not in any way intended as an attack on a man whom I love and whom I greatly respect. We correspond with each other regularly. His essay is well written and honest. And by the way, although this particular article is not funny, Richard has a great sense of humor and I love getting letters from him.

So I just want to gently offer an alternative to the theme of "Dealing with Death". First, it's important that I acknowledge two things: (1) I have never been in combat, and in fact I have never been in the military. (2) I have never been on Death Row except as a visitor. I cannot begin to know what that is like, although I have a number of friends who are my brothers in Christ who do live there.

Here is an option for your consideration as writers and readers of "Good News". In essence, the same arguments for avoiding close friendships in the military or on Death Row could be made for avoiding close relationships of any kind, although in all fairness to Richard, he made it clear in a letter I received from him today that he was talking about very specific circumstances and was not arguing against close relationships in general. But life is so uncertain for all of us. I have lost close kin folks and close friends who died in wars. I have lost close relatives in recent years. Even at prayer vigils here in Hattiesburg at Sacred Heart Church when executions were scheduled at Parchman for men I did not even know, I was teary eyed. And even though thus far none of my close friends on Death Row have been executed and I earnestly pray that they never will be, I know without a doubt that I would weep--and I really mean weep copiously--if one of them should be executed. I even come close to tears just thinking about that possibility. But not for a moment would I want to decide that it's just too dangerous to love people up close, as uncertain as life is in this world.

I remember a few years ago when I received a call that my twin sister and my brother-in-law had been killed in a car wreck. I cried until I couldn't cry anymore, but not once did I wish that I had not loved them so much. After all, Betty and I used to remind each other that we started out as "womb mates".

So Richard, my brother in the Lord, I just want you to know that I love you, and if you should go to be with the Lord before I do, I'd cry for you too. And I'd never regret that we became good friends. And if I die before you do, which I fully expect, it's OK if you should want to cry too!

-Dick Allison  
UBC

# GOSPEL GAMES

Find the 24 words below that are hidden in the puzzle. There are 17 hidden letters in the 24 hidden words you have to find. These 17 letters all have a line under them and will help you figure out the secret word that goes with the hidden Phrase, which will also uncover the fun facts and theme of this months Gospel Games. Good Luck!.

## “HIDDEN WORDS”

FAITH FAVOR UNDER JUSTIFIED CHRISTIAN GIFT CHRIST ABIDING POWER RELATIONSHIP RECIEVED PEACE GROWING ACCEPTANCE SALVATION LOVE COMFORT MERCY GUIDANCE PROVISION ENCOURAGEMENT HOPE EQUIP PROMISE

## “BIBLE VERSES/CLUES”

John 1:14-16, Acts 4:33, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Galatians 1:6, Hebrews 4:16

## “HIDDEN PHRASE”

\_\_ \_ A \_ E \_ I \_ \_ U \_ \_ E \_ I \_ E \_ \_ A \_ O \_ \_ \_ O \_ \_ O \_

## “Fun Facts”

\_\_\_\_\_ (secret word goes here) in the Old Testament is the translation of the Hebrew noun 'chen' and the verb 'chanon'. In the New Testament its the Greek 'charis' and is used approximately 150 times. The history of the Greek word had a long history in the secular Greek before the New Testament. When the Old Testament was translated into Greek, 'charis' or \_\_\_\_\_ was used to translate the Hebrew 'chen' and so it came to be associated with an objective relation of underserved favor given by God to man and forms the background of the Christian meaning of \_\_\_\_\_ in the New Testament. The best way to avoid being led astray by Satan is to grow in the \_\_\_\_\_ and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The purpose of Gospel Games is to not just inspire you, but to challenge you to pick up your Bible more. Inspiration is great to get us started but its habit that will keep us going. I encourage you to pick up your Bible everyday and spend time with the Lord, it's the only way.

Romans 10:17

With Love In Christ,  
Devin B.  
AKA: Kingdom Kid

*Crumbs of Glory*

The feet of Jesus rest upon me. That is the home I seek and the rest I desire.  
Any reward, even heaven's crown, I bequeath to others.  
Oh, to be home!  
Where the eyes see new and the heart is refreshed. Lord, take your ease on your throne.  
I shall lay at your feet. To be a footstool for my Lord,  
That will be my prize.  
Under Your feet, Lord, I shall praise, sing and worship in Your temple.  
My ease will be to have the dust of my Lord's feet upon my back.  
Rewards I give away, crowns I pass to others;  
My prize is Jesus. And to be under His feet in my glory.  
No banquet seat for me; The feast I pass to others, more deserving.  
My prize, my crown, my joy are the crumbs that fall from the table  
To rest at Jesus' feet.  
It is the Master I seek. O Lord of my life,  
Let me be your footstool for all to see; Then I shall be glad and sing.  
I love you Lord, and the crumbs are enough for me.

-David Cox  
Parchman, MS

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*The Angles in Heaven are Rejoicing*

Likewise, I say to you, that there is joy in the presence of the angles of God over one sinner who repents. Luke 15:10

We as believers know this to be true, that the angles in heaven do rejoice when a sinner or a lost person finds Christ, because we were the same way ourselves. So if the angels in heaven rejoice when a sinner repents we as believers should rejoice as well when we help others to repent and accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. We also know that the devil and his demons rejoice when they cause someone to be separated from Jesus Christ our Lord and it hurts Jesus and the angels that are in Heaven and it should hurt each and every believer as well.

We as believers need to tell each and every person that we meet that the angles in Heaven will rejoice if they return to Christ Jesus. There are a lot of lost souls out there in this world today so we as believers need to be letting the angles rejoice as we help the lost souls to repentance. We also let the angles that are in Heaven rejoice when we forgive one another for when they do something to us or the people that we love. We also need to tell the devil and his demons that we are not going to let them rejoice over our brothers and sisters failures, but the angles that are in heaven rejoice over their repentance.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.  
Brother-in-Christ,  
Stephen P.

## *Love, Life and Laughter*

\*Read Psalm 16, 126:2-3, Matthew 5:43-48, James 4:10

My mother writes me faithfully every week and she always keeps me informed about the welfare of the family and about whatever events are going on. I'd be lying if I said that it doesn't make me sad but I do handle it gracefully. I start to reminisce about all the family gatherings and cookouts that I was privy to when I was younger I've never really appreciated the value of that quality time together until I was in prison. I've never taken the time to sit down and understand the valuable lessons that my elders were trying to teach me about love, life, and laughter. I acknowledged them to a certain extent. There's a lot of love and wisdom that come from the ones we adore as well as strangers. I wish that I could turn back the hands of time and really enjoy and truly appreciate those precious time.

I remember when I got my first real job working at a grocery store, my Grandfather and Great Aunt Nook came into that store to shop on a Sunday after church. They were so proud to see me learning some responsibility and getting an edge in life from work experience. I can remember how happy they were when I reached into my pockets and paid for their groceries. It was only about \$23.00 but that appreciation that resonated on their faces was priceless. I still get teary eyed about it to this day.

Most of the people that I've always been very close to have passed away and gone without me ever being able to tell them how much I appreciated them and their love. My father passed away a few weeks before I went to trial and received a death sentence. I never had the opportunity to say I was sorry for being mad at him. Well, I did have the opportunity but I foolishly just squandered it away. He attempted to make amends with me a few times but I wanted to see him grovel. I was really pissed at him because he left me at my grandfather's house in Clinton and went back to Miami without me. I didn't hear from him for nearly 3 years—not until I was charged with capital murder. That had been the first time I'd seen him since he left me. Much of my life when he left was spent sulking instead of really enjoying life and appreciating family and friends who were there for me. I did become close with my grandfather but not as close as I should have been with him and others.

The moral of this story is to forgive and forget about the petty stuff that we sulk about every day. We should tell about and show our family, friends, neighbors, every day community members and others the unconditional love of our Almighty God. Don't waste that time because life is too short and too precious so treasure every moment. Let go and let God. I send this message to everyone in the world and wholeheartedly to all my brothers and sisters behind these prison walls. There's too much hatred, too many killings and too much strife going on. WE all have to learn to get along before we can ever move on to something bigger and better in life. May peace always be with you. God Bless you!

Love with all your heart and happiness will embrace you  
Live life to the fullest and let God forever guide you  
Let laughter bring you sunshine and clear skies of heavenly blue.

-Justin Underwood  
Parchman, MS

The Apostle Paul was always exhorting those he ministered to that they would cultivate a rich, healthy, and productive Christian witness. By that is meant that the life we live in the flesh should be a testimony to the Life of Christ in us (Gal. 2:20). This life must be nourished and tended to so that we will grow in the Grace and experiential knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 3:18). and for this, Paul gives his famous instruction in our text.

I have often heard someone quote this verse of scripture with a tone of smugness in their voice, as though to say they have mastered the imperative: "Study to show thyself approved...". They say it as though they have so studied and are now able to show themselves approved. But they omit the part about being approved "unto God". And so their self-approved boasting proceeds from the desire to be approved by men. The focus of this message isn't necessarily about growth so much as it is about the study that lends itself to our growth. That is, the ability to rightly divide the Truth. With churches springing up on every street corner, and so many movements characterized as non-denominational, inter denominational, or trans-denominational; it is important that the Truth be proclaimed. For that, the man of God must study to show he is approved by God to speak Truth (2Tim. 3:16-17). Let's look at just one example of the failure to rightly divide the Word of Truth. Have you ever heard a preacher, teacher, or author use a verse of Scripture, usually from one of the Old Testaments prophets, in order to some current event or prophetic scenario? Quite often it is one of the minor prophets that is being quoted and explained in the backdrop of 21st century events. For instance, certain verses in the writing of the prophets have been credited with predicting automobiles (Nah. 2:4), airplanes (Isa. 31:5), the tragic events of 9/11, and many other things so that when you get to the Book of Revelation, we are conditioned to expect attack helicopters (Rev.9:7-10)! The prophetic Scriptures are commonly misapplied to a modern Jewish nation and a rebuilt temple. When passages are pressed like this to fit every new theory, the approach to the Biblical text itself becomes superficial. The context of the Scriptures and the related verses are largely ignored as the isolated passages are dogmatically asserted to find their fulfillment in our time.

What was written to have a relevance to the original readers becomes divorced from its audience and subjected to every fanciful interpretation. Basic rules of interpretation help us to rightly divide the Word of Truth. When we hear a preacher make reference to the temple in Ezekiel 40-48, the basic rules of interpretation are largely ignored. Most teach the temple referred to by Ezekiel is yet to be built, holding its fulfillment to be either during a final seven-year tribulation period or in a so called Millennial Reign. This holding uses theory to interpret the Word rather than using the Word to formulate the doctrine. Looking at the temple Ezekiel describes, we can see that it requires priests to follow the laws, rituals, and sacrificial rites of the old covenant (40:38-39; 42:13-14; 43:18,25,27;44:17-19). They would be allowed to marry but could only marry a widow if she were the widow of another priest (44:22,25). Only those who were circumcised in heart and flesh would be able to enter the sanctuary of this rebuilt temple (v.9), and animal sacrifices would be a regular occurrence in worship.

Now, what if Ezekiel is simply utilizing the language of the old covenant to figuratively describe a future Temple in terms his original audience could appreciate? What if we were alive at the time and had witnessed the desolation of Solomon's temple, and heard this message? Wouldn't it fill us with hope that we would pass along to our children? Wouldn't we rejoice in the expectancy that God would restore pure worship among His People, but one not bound by old covenant regulations that clearly point us to Christ? And then what would it be like if we're alive at the time of the temples rebuilding (Ezra), less than a hundred years after Ezekiel's prophecy? Imagine how we would view that newly rebuilt temple in the context of the hopelessness we felt not long before. Understanding the colorful and poetic way that prophets often expressed things, would we look for every minute's detail to be fulfilled? Would we see the fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy, or would we deny that the new temple had any thing at all to do with it? Now flash forward to our present day. Do we really need any further fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy when our Lord Jesus Christ has

declared "The hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father" (Jn 4:21)? Don't we boldly profess to be the new temple of God (Eph.2:19-21)? Why then do we think we have need for a physical temple?

It is obvious we tend to overlook the historicity of the Bible. When we study to show ourselves approved unto God we take into consideration God's relevance in the lives of His People. Think about the implication of the miracles and imperial decrees in Israel's favor recorded in Ezra and Nehemiah. Many nations were in awe of the Israelites because God's hand was strong upon them. When we divorce prophetic writings from the events being experienced at the time of their writing, we tend to interpret the prophets in ways we shouldn't. A fuller knowledge of the historical fulfillment of Scripture should make us more cautious in making interpretations of future fulfillments regarding prophetic writings.

In closing, let me state a few basic principles that should be used as guidelines when rightly dividing the prophetic writings:

- 1) Try not to read the prophetic writings more literally than the Hebrews did; the literature of the people is poetic and symbolic.
- 2) Note the context of the verses, or chapters; including the writers and their reasons for writing.
- 3) Don't be so quick to jump to the end of the world when you read the prophetic writings; consider the historicity of the people.
- 4) Don't be so quick to apply things to our time or situations; the Bible is relevant and applicable to us, but much is qualified by the contextual setting.
- 5) Appreciate the prophets' task of relating visions through visual language; Ezekiel saw the Glory of God. Try describing the indescribable!

Whatever your study habits may be, it is important that you enter therein prayerfully and soberly. It's easy together sidetracked with fanciful interpretations of obscure verses of Scripture. It takes the Spirit of Truth to guide us into all Truth (Jn. 16:13). Ask God to bless your study so that you will "show thyself approved unto God."

-Christopher Lee, Leakesville

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### Some suggested topics for the Newsletter

Thank you for the continued letters, thoughts, and poems you send in to us each month. We want to know more about who you all are. Story seems to be one of the best ways to get to know who someone really is and so we encourage you all to look at some of these suggested topics to see if any inspiration comes as we seek community with one another. Please know that these are not to restrict your writing; you are certainly welcome to choose to write on another topic or in another form. They are simply some ideas as all writers need somewhere to start. Thank you for your continued contributions to this piece and happy writing!

- Choose a story or a character from the Bible and tell us how it speaks to your life or how you connect to it.
- Make up a short story
- Tell us about a character you've read in a book or watched in a movie that inspires you and why.
- Tell us your favorite song. What is it about this song that draws you to it?
- Write a song or send in a piece of original artwork.