



# THE BEACON BEAM

February 2015

## *Growing in Grace and Knowledge*

### Why Preach the Word?

By John MacArthur

**F**or many reasons, faithful and full proclamation of the Word is the only right way to preach.

**First** of all, such preaching lets God speak rather than man, because it declares God's own Word. And it is an incredibly thrilling privilege to give voice to God!

**Second**, preaching the Word is the only right way to preach because it brings the preacher into direct contact with the mind of the Holy Spirit, the author of Scripture. It is for that reason that the preacher of the Word finds the process of study and discovery to be even more rewarding than the preaching that results from it, gratifying as that can be.

It is tragic and puzzling that so many preachers who recognize Scripture to be God's own Word spend more time investigating and interacting with the limited and imperfect minds of other men than delving into the infinite and holy mind of God. Part of the reason, of course, is that many hearers do not really want to delve into the depths of God's righteousness and truth, because it exposes their own shallowness and sin. In his second letter to Timothy, Paul warned his son in the faith about the danger of those who hold "to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power" (2 Tim. 3:5). Later in that same epistle he would warn again that "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; . . . and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths" (2 Tim. 4:3-4; cf. Acts 20:29-30).

**Third**, preaching the Word is the only right way to preach because it forces the preacher to proclaim all of God's revelation, including those truths that even many believers find hard to learn or accept.

**Fourth**, preaching the Word is the only right way to preach because it promotes biblical literacy in a congregation, not only through what is learned from the sermon itself but also through the increased desire to study Scripture more carefully and consistently on their own. The faithful pastor, and all other faithful believers, love to learn God's Word because they love the God of the Word.

**Fifth**, preaching the Word is the only right way to preach because it carries ultimate authority. It is the complete and perfect self-revelation of God Himself and of His divine will for mankind, which He has created in His own image.

**Sixth**, preaching the Word is the only right way to preach because only that kind of preaching can transform both the preacher and the congregation.

**Seventh**, the final and most compelling reason that preaching the Word is the only right way to preach is simply that it is His own Word, and only His own Word, that the Lord calls and commissions His preachers to proclaim.

John MacArthur/Pastor-Teacher  
*Grace to You*

*"The faithful pastor, and all other faithful believers, love to learn God's Word because they love the God of the Word."*

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#### Schedule of Services:

**Sunday**  
Morning Worship....9:30 AM  
Sunday School.....11:10 AM  
Evening Worship.....6:00 PM

**Wednesday**  
Prayer Meeting.....7:00 PM  
IMPACT Clubs.....7:00 PM  
Teen Ministry.....7:00 PM

# Beacon Highlights for February

## Special Events for February

01	ESL	14	Teen Homeplace Ministry
02	Tri-State Particular Baptist Fellowship	15	New Deacon Installation Members Meeting
03	Coffee n' Courage (p.m. only)		ESL
04	Annual Business Meeting	17	Coffee n' Courage (a.m. only)
08	Lord's Table	18	IMPACT Clubs
	ESL	19	Silver Saints
	Senior & Junior High YAC	22	ESL
10	Coffee n' Courage	24	Coffee n' Courage
	Elders/Deacons Meeting	25	IMPACT Clubs
11	Teen/Parent Focus	26	Men Sharpening Men
	IMPACT Clubs		

*Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.*

*1 Corinthians 13:4-5*



*You are invited to join us for our  
**Spring Bible Conference***

*Sunday, April 26 through Wednesday, April 29*

*With Pastor Mark Webb from Olive Branch, Mississippi*

## February Member Birthdays

02	Jessica Yelverton
03	Joanna Isley Kitty Shaw
04	Mae Counts Hazel Garcia
06	Rob Conrad
07	Wendy Lynch
17	Blanche Carden
19	Arlene Wright
21	Tommy Blanchard
22	Amanda Abernathy
24	Larry Byrd
26	Greg Mullis Larry Norris

*Happy Birthday*

**Sympathy ~ We express our heartfelt sympathy to the family of:**

Alma Flanigan	Taylor Koonce	Jean Pruitt	Mr. Woodcock
Sylvia Harris	Craig (Dobby) May	Harold Rudd	Doris Wright

## The Beacon Broadcast

### Monday thru Friday

WITA 1490 AM (Knoxville, TN)	9:30 a.m.
WKBA 1550 AM (Roanoke, VA)	10:00 a.m.
WKPA 1390 AM (Lynchburg, VA)	10:00 a.m.
WBAG 1150 AM (Burlington, NC)	12:15 p.m.
WTRU 830 AM (Winston-Salem, NC)	2:00 p.m.

### Sunday

WPCM 920 AM (Burlington, NC)	9:00 a.m.
WCRU 960 AM (Charlotte, NC)	9:30 a.m.
WBAG 1150 AM (Burlington, NC)	10:30 a.m.
WTRU 830 AM (Winston-Salem, NC)	10:30 a.m.
WDRU 1030 AM (Raleigh, NC)	10:30 a.m.
WSML 1200 AM (Graham, NC)	8:30 p.m.
WLES 560 AM (Richmond, VA)	10:30 a.m.
KUTR 820 AM (Salt Lake City, UT)	11:00 a.m.
Harbour Light of the Windwards	9:30 p.m.
1400 AM/94.5 FM (Caribbean)	

## February Missionary Birthdays

06	Isaiah Slawson*
08	Gabriel Bixby*
15	Cheri Racke*
19	Bill Standridge
20	Miriam Bixby*
21	Caroline Vaughn*

\*Children of Missionaries

## Beacon Pastors

Gregory N. Barkman	<i>Senior Pastor</i>
Michael R. Karns	<i>Minister of Christian Education</i>
Robert F. La Tour	<i>Minister of Families</i>
Gerald J. Counts	<i>Minister of Visitation</i>
Gregory L. Phillips	<i>Minister of Music</i>

# Doctrinal History (Part Seven)

Greg Barkman

**I**n the last article, I traced the final events which culminated in my understanding and embracing the Doctrines of Grace, also known as the five points of Calvinism. I was finally convinced that this is indeed what Scripture teaches, even though it took several years of wrestling to reach this point in my life. However, it would still be some time before I was comfortable with the term “Calvinism,” and willing to be known as a Calvinist. My background had strongly conditioned me against Calvinistic theology, and even though I had come to embrace these doctrines, I was not yet ready to embrace the label. I would prefer to be known as a “Biblicist,” and avoid a label which had been odious to me most of my life.

This is why I became a “Closet Calvinist” for several years. Labels, I reasoned, are man-made, and there is no reason to use a label which many find offensive. I soon found out that there were many other pastors like myself, secretly embracing the Doctrines of Grace, but carefully avoiding a label which could cause some to reject them. I found it strange that there were people who didn’t seem to mind what I preached, as long as I didn’t use the Calvinist label, but such is the case. This is probably a testimony to the theological shallowness of many Christians. They are quicker to challenge a label than doctrinal teaching. I observed that over time, pastors who are closet Calvinists end up with theologically mixed congregations, a condition which never seems to resolve itself. Those who are theologically alert, will be drawn to the sound doctrine coming from the pulpit, and will rejoice in the Calvinist teaching they hear. Those who are theologically dense, will fail to understand what they hear, and continue happily in their Armini-

an beliefs without discomfort. Both positions can remain side by side in the same congregation for years, unaware of the existence of the other, until a crisis develops to reveal a divided congregation. It is not a healthy situation, but it is more common than you may realize. Before I became a Calvinist, I thought there

*“Both positions can remain side by side in the same congregation for years, unaware of the existence of the other, until a crisis develops to reveal a divided congregation.”*

were very few Calvinist pastors in our area. After I became a Calvinist, I found there were quite a few, but most of them were closet Calvinists, who were willing to be known only to other Calvinists. This was my own situation for several years. At first, it may have been wise. After all, how God honoring is it to charge in like a bull in a china shop with unpopular doctrine, and split churches wide open? But after a while, I fear that this becomes more cowardly than wise. At some point, the doctrine being taught needs to be pressed home, and people challenged to take a stand for what they believe. A double minded man, the Scripture assures us, is unstable in all his ways.

Still, all of this requires a period of growth and development. I

well remember the first person I told that I had become a Calvinist. The year was 1979, and I had invited an itinerant evangelist to hold a Bible Conference at our church. When my doctrinal position changed, I knew I would need help to bring our church to a new doctrinal understanding. The men we employed for special meetings in the past were not Calvinists, at least not conspicuously so, and we needed a different caliber conference speaker. But where to find one? I really didn’t know, as I had met very few “real live Calvinists” at this point in my life. However, someone gave me a cassette tape of a preacher who lived in Virginia at that time, and although he made no direct references to Calvinism in the sermon I heard, I recognized immediately that he and I held the same theology, and even though we had never met, I invited him to come to Beacon for a meeting. The day arrived, and our speaker checked into the Ramada Inn. I went over to meet him on Saturday night before the conference began on Sunday. We exchanged some small talk to get acquainted, and something I said caused him to realize that I was not a typical independent Baptist preacher. “Truth be known,” he said softly, “I’m about a four point Calvinist.” I paused for a few seconds, then slowly replied, “Well, truth be known, I’ve become a five point Calvinist.” That’s the first time I let anyone know that the dreaded “C” word now belonged to me. He looked a bit surprised, then said, “Actually, I’m a five point Calvinist myself, but I was hesitant to say so without knowing where you stood.” We had a great conference, our people couldn’t get enough of his solid, expository preaching, and thus began a fruitful relationship that lasted many years until his health precluded continued travel. I’ve lost

*(Continued on page 7)*

# Ten Commandments of Parenting

Lance Quinn

One of the most common questions I get from Christian parents is about parenting. They want specific and practical advice for rearing their children in the very best way. Couples usually understand their general parental responsibility, but will often speak of the need for help in specifically framing their biblical commitments to optimally shepherd and train their children.

Whether you are considering your parental responsibilities with a new child, or even reaffirming these biblical principles with your older children (It's never too late!), or even as grandparents toward your grandchildren, the following "ten commandments" from God's Word are sure to benefit you, your family, and your church.

## 1. Pursue Righteousness in Your Marriage

Husbands, you need to show your children how a husband loves his wife, even as Christ loved the church (Ephesians 5:25). Do they see you giving yourself up for her? Are they observing how you tenderly and patiently lead her, teach her, and protect her? Your example in the treatment of your wife will teach volumes about Christ's love for His beloved bride, the church.

Wives, to your children you need to model biblical submission as you subject yourself to your husband in everything (Ephesians 5:24). Do your children see how you work out your submission to Christ in respectful submission to your husband? Your marriage is a living, breathing example of the church's willing submission to her Head, the Lord Jesus Christ.

## 2. Confess Your Sins to One Another

You need to confess, when appropri-

ate, your sins to your family (Proverbs 28:13), and seek their forgiveness when necessary (Matthew 6:14-15; Colossians 3:13). As you are quick to confess, you are demonstrating true humility and an ultimate desire to be pleasing to God in all your ways (2 Corinthians 5:9).

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## 3. Pursue Sexual Purity

Be very careful to protect your home from the sexual immorality of the world we live in. That means you need to abstain from sexual immorality yourself (1 Thessalonians 4:3-8), and otherwise promote sexual purity in your home (Proverbs 5-7). The pursuit of sexual purity should govern your entertainment choices, season your speech, and guide you when you're in public or private, especially when you think no one else is looking or listening. Your own sexual purity will protect you and your children from the heartbreak known well among a depraved generation (Proverbs 5:7-14).

## 4. Manage Your Resources Wisely

Take great pains to manage the Lord's money and resources with which you are entrusted, and do so with the utmost integrity (1 Timothy 6:5-10). Continually think of ways to be a better steward of all your time, talent, and treasure (Proverbs 31:10-31), always looking to God for His provision for

all your basic life needs (Matthew 6:31-34; 1 Timothy 5:8).

## 5. Evangelize Your Children and Others

Because of your great love for your children, endeavor to be a consistent witness to them of your own faith, as well as speaking often to them about the nature of their relationship to the Lord. Live in such a way around your kids that you are fulfilling the spirit of Paul's command to Timothy: "Do the work of an evangelist" (2 Timothy 4:5). In addition, as you have opportunity, proclaim the gospel to others with whom you come in contact, thus hopefully instilling in your children the same desire to share this eternal message (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

## 6. Teach Your Children the Word of God

Regularly teach your children God's Word, both by your life (desiring to be models of Christ-likeness to them; 1 John 2:6) and by your proactive and consistent commitment to family worship. Especially as fathers (as well as single mothers too), you have the responsibility to impart the truth of Scripture to your children for their great good (Deuteronomy 6:4-9).

## 7. Discipline Your Children

When your children need correction (which, when they are young, may seem to be "ever and always"), discipline them with what the Bible calls the "rod of reproof." Those parents who truly love their children will desire to do this in a caring, consistent, yet firm manner, attempting to avoid harshness and anger. Scripture says that when you do so, children will cease their foolishness and become wise (Proverbs 13:24; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14).

*(Continued on page 5)*

# Ten Commandments of Parenting

Lance Quinn

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## 8. Watch Your Words Carefully

Words are very powerful tools for good or evil! They can either build up or tear down. Speak to your spouse, your children, and others with godly wisdom so that you may edify and encourage (Proverbs 4:24; 6:12; 10:32; 19:1). Your children are watching you intently, and what you say (including *how* you say it), will have deep and lasting effects on them. Train your children not to speak unrighteously (Ephesians 4:29-31).

## 9. Show Your Children Your Own Love for God and Man

Love your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 22:37-40). The greatest gift you can give your kids is to show them your all-consuming love for Jesus Christ! What

should flow from this passion is also your love for your neighbors, which certainly includes your immediate family. Extending beyond this circle of influence is your desire to live a pure and undefiled spiritual life, which is demonstrated by visiting orphans and widows in their distress, and keeping yourself unstained by the world (James 1:27). Pray that your example of love will have great impact on your children.

## 10. Ask God for Grace and Strength in Your Child-Rearing

The Bible commands you to rear your children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). Thus, child-rearing is not an option. Thus, the remaining question should be: *How well are you doing as a parent?* To whatever degree you perceive you are succeeding or failing in the task, and

regardless of what will be the initial outcome and ultimate destiny of your children, ask God for much grace and strength to be a parent who glorifies Him.

If you'll follow these "ten commandments" of parenting, the Lord will sanctify you and bless you. Furthermore, your life and doctrine can be useful to the Holy Spirit in demonstrating the saving power of the gospel to your children. The rest we must leave in the hands of a sovereign God. May God continually remind all of us of our solemn parental task to leave a legacy of godly faithfulness to the succeeding generations.

Lance Quinn  
Grace to You



*Men must understand that when they sin, they have not rebelled against some minor deity or the superintendent of some small province, but against the great King above all gods, the Lord of heaven and earth, the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords! They must see every sin as a declaration of war against the very One who created the universe with a word and governs the same freely and effortlessly. He commanded the stars to set their watch in the midnight sky, and they took their place. He gave word to the planets to find their orbits, and they followed His degree. He ordered the valleys to be cast down and the mountains to be lifted up, and they obeyed in fear. He drew a line in the sand and told the brave sea to come no further, and it bowed in reverence. Yet in spite of the unaltered obedience of creation's greatest powers, man continues to lift his puny fist in the face of God. He is as pathetic as a mite beating its head against a world of granite, and as self-destructive as a man on life support who seeks to rip the power cord from the wall. As preachers of the gospel, we must make much of the sovereignty of God and thus prove to men that their sin is an atrocious crime that reveals the insanity and self-destructive nature of the fallen heart. However, if we refuse to make known the fullness of God and speak these hard truths to our hearers, then we do them a great injustice and condemn them to a life of ignorance and idolatry. The Scriptures tell us that God revealed Himself to Israel so that they might fear Him. In turn, we must preach the full counsel of God's revelation concerning Him so that all nations might fear and be saved. To the degree that they know Him, they will comprehend something of the heinous nature of their sinning and possibly seek a remedy for it in the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

—Paul Washer

**B**y this time of the year our winter world is nearly monochromatic, many shades of one color, and the color is brown. Look out most any window and everything visible at eye level is grayish brown. There is, still, a bit of grass in a weak, wintry green and the boxwoods and hollies are green, but even they look stressed by the cold, the tips of the last of summer's growth having turned light brown. If you want to see green, you can look straight up to the tops of the tall pine trees. They are thriving in this seasonably cold weather. And in our yard another spot of green can be seen. On the far side of the driveway there is, sprouting as if July, the remnants of our wax myrtle trees.

Twenty-some years ago I brought home 11 wax myrtles, small enough to fit in the back of my station wagon. I'd seen these trees looking lovely, trimmed and beautiful, growing along the walkways at Duke Hospital and I was pleased to find they were readily available and very affordable. The ones I brought home that day didn't look anything like the admirable specimens I'd admired but we planted them with high hopes that time and nature would do what we couldn't. They grew quickly, before long were dense enough to start providing a bit of shade in that very sunny spot, had a reasonably good shape, and we loved the spicy aroma on warm days. But not many growing seasons passed before their true nature began to emerge. They were immensely difficult to trim correctly and the best and strongest limbs branched out in strange and unattractive angles over the driveway, too low for trucks to pass under them. Limbs broke easily under the weight of the smallest amount of ice or snow and the small leaves that could have made great mulch fell sparingly. But these were not the worst of their traits. With-

in a short time of their planting they began to sprout shoots around the base of the trunk...all eleven of them! This new growth was easily broken off but out of each break came multiple shoots and it wasn't long before there were

*"How many of the good things in your life might be the shoots sprouting from those roots from the life of a godly friend or family member?"*

hundreds to be trimmed weekly. Within five years of their planting, it was a situation out of control. I often wondered, on hot August afternoons as I dealt with that unsightly growth, just what it was I had admired as I walked along that sidewalk at Duke!

By the summer of 2013 only seven of the original eleven remained and they were not a pretty sight. The other four had been lost to ice storms, and I was ready to lose the ones that remained. But I've learned by regrettable experience not to chop things down too quickly so we left them for the summer. They were not on our radar during fall, and we stayed snug inside the house during the winter and didn't think about them.

March 11, 2014: We woke to the sound of silence...utter silence. And darkness—complete darkness. No heat pump cycling on and off, no ceiling fan, no light from the digital clock, no security light outside. Only the occasional slow crack of tree limbs and the whooshing sound of branches falling to the ground. The view in the weak light of 5 AM was of piles of tree branches standing well above our heads and surrounding the property. And out at the driveway one lone wax

myrtle remained standing. The decision had been made for us and by the end of the week, those trees were part of a gigantic woodpile and now they are keeping us warm as we burn the logs in our fireplace most nights.

After the trees were cut down the seven stumps remained so we applied the right stuff in the right way to kill them and considered wax myrtles a closed subject. But we were wrong! The stumps are dead but the roots growing out of the stumps are very much alive and sprouting like gang-busters out there along the driveway. Those long roots that snake along the ground, just high enough to catch the blade of the lawnmower are covered with bright green, unafraid-of-the-cold new growth.

We all know the lesson of the root. The most effective way to deal with sinful actions in our lives is to identify the root sin, often a root that is responsible for multiple sinful patterns. But have you ever thought about the positive aspect of roots? Have you considered the importance of righteous roots? Think about the ways in which others planted righteousness in your life...teaching you by word and especially by example, truth about God and his ways, about how to live a good and godly life. Think of the impact someone has made on you by praying for you diligently and loving you and dealing patiently with you in spite of immaturity and willful wrongdoing. How many of the good things in your life might be the shoots sprouting from those roots from the life of a godly friend or family member?

And what of those who follow us? What have we planted in their lives that will show up, maybe not right away, but years from now? What a blessing should they see fruits in their lives that spring from who and what we are now! Our lives today are not an end in themselves but will live on in others, for good or ill.

# Doctrinal History (Part Seven)

Greg Barkman

*(Continued from page 3)*

track of how many conferences he held at Beacon, but we had him every year for about ten years, and he helped us grow into an understanding of and appreciation for the Doctrines of Grace.

My second declaration was made to my wife, Marti. I had been reluctant to tell her what had happened to me, knowing she came from the same background as mine, and not knowing how she would accept having a Calvinist for a husband. Finally, I could keep silent no longer. I needed to explain to her why I was making certain changes in my ministry. "Honey," I said one day, "I need to let you know that I have become a Calvinist." I had no idea what to expect next. Would she burst into tears? Would she retreat in anger? Her response took me by surprise. "Oh," she said, "so that's what it is. I knew something had happened, but I had no idea what. I'm not sure I fully understand what Calvinism is, but whatever it is, it has to be good. I've noticed the changes in your life and ministry, and I am so thankful for them. I see a maturing and a more serious approach to God and the Scriptures which are wonderful. I'm looking forward to learning more about Calvinism." That was it. No objections. No immediate demand for more details. A simple statement of encouragement and support, and a quiet desire to be taught and grow with the passing of time. Could a pastor ask for a more godly response from the partner God gave him? I have been blessed repeatedly over the years by my lovely wife, but that moment launched our relationship to a whole new level.

It would still be several years before I was willing to explain publicly and specifically my new theology. I needed to grow further in my own

understanding, and I needed to lay a good foundation for the church if I hoped to develop the congregation without major problems. However, I began to incorporate Calvinistic truth into my sermons without using Calvinistic terminology, and I made subtle changes in my ministry. One of

*"This episode forced people to think about what the Bible actually teaches compared to what tradition assumes it teaches."*

the most dramatic changes came in 1982, the day I stopped giving altar calls. Those of you who have a Baptist background similar to mine, have grown up experiencing altar calls, or public "invitations" as they are usually called, at the close of nearly every sermon. This practice often becomes a fundamental of the faith in many churches. Failure to give an altar call is equated with liberalism. Churches that give altar calls are Bible-believing and evangelistic. Churches that don't are liberal, and more concerned about not offending people than winning souls to Christ, or so it is thought. Strange that a practice found nowhere in the Bible could be used as a standard of Biblical fidelity, but such is the strength of religious traditions. Too many Christians are unable to discern between what Scripture teaches and what traditions teach. It is often next to impossible

to get Christians to examine this question from the Bible.

I brought a series of messages from the Sermon on the Mount, preaching systematically through Matthew chapters five, six, and seven over a number of months. I was still giving the traditional altar call, but with an uneasy conscience. In the early years, I gave altar calls with great enthusiasm. It was a rare Sunday when nobody walked the aisle, and most Sundays there were many who responded to my "invitation." However, as I became troubled by the gap between the large number of professions, and the apparent small number of conversions, I began to realize that altar calls were part of the problem. It was difficult to get people to distinguish between responding to an invitation by raising a hand and walking an aisle, and the invisible response of a believing heart, which is the real issue. I tried to make this clear by what I said, but it was apparent that people were more influenced by the altar call tradition than by my words. I was simply speaking into the air. On two or three occasions, long after I had stopped giving altar calls, we experienced someone walk forward during the closing prayer, even though no one had asked them to. They were simply responding to a deeply ingrained tradition, and traditions are very difficult to dislodge. When I concluded my last sermon from Matthew chapter seven, I remember wondering on Monday morning, what I should preach the following Sunday. Then it came to me in a flash. Here was a golden opportunity! The next Sunday, I stood in the pulpit and said something like this. "Dear ones, we have spent several months examining carefully what Jesus said in this great sermon. Today, we are going to look at what He

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# Doctrinal History (Part Seven)

Greg Barkman

*(Continued from page 7)*

did not say. Please notice that Jesus did not give an altar call at the end of this sermon.” You could almost hear a pin drop. “Not only did Jesus not give an altar call, but neither did anyone else in the Bible.” I then quickly went through several of the most prominent sermons in the New Testament and showed the congregation where the sermon began and where it ended, and what came next, or more accurately, what didn’t come next. No altar call. Not anywhere. “Since Jesus didn’t give altar calls, nor did Peter, or Paul, or anyone else, I’ve come to the conclusion that altar calls are not Biblical. I have given my last altar call. There will be no more.”

You could hear a soft, audible gasp. It was almost as if I had said that I no longer believed in the second coming of Christ. Perhaps, in the minds of some, this was even worse. Several people tried to persuade me to change my mind, but to no avail. For the next several months, things were a bit tense at Beacon. People were waiting to see what mischief the omitted altar call would have on the health of the church, and what else the pastor would spring upon the unsuspecting congregation. After a while, the tension began to ease, and the congregation realized that nothing detrimental occurred. We could actually function just fine without an altar call. We arranged a different and better way to

register conversions and receive new members. We continued to baptize converts, though not as many as before, and we began to receive new members into the church once again. The crisis was over. The church did not self-destruct. Ministry continued unabated, and we crossed a significant threshold and laid an important foundation for future growth in our understanding of Scripture. This episode forced people to think about what the Bible actually teaches compared to what tradition assumes it teaches. It was good for us, and prepared us for more to follow. The Lord is good, tell it wherever you go.

*In Christ we have a love that can never be fathomed; a life that can never die; a righteousness that can never be tarnished; a peace that can never be understood; a rest that can never be disturbed; a joy that can never be diminished; a hope that can never be disappointed; a glory that can never be clouded; a light that can never be darkened; a happiness that can never be interrupted; a strength that can never be enfeebled; a purity that can never be defiled; a beauty that can never be marred; a wisdom that can never be baffled; and resources that can never be exhausted.*

—Author Unknown

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