



CONNECTED

January—March 2016

A FRUITFUL END TO A BLESSED YEAR

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The Handwriting on the Wall by Eddie Atkinson. He is now in a nursing home in Crockett, Texas

I consider 2015 one of the best years of my life. My health was generally good for a man of my age. Mrs. Hutson was right there with me all the way. God has been really, really gracious to us. We paid all our bills. On time! We had plenty to eat, a good roof over our heads, dependable transportation and lots of love in our lives. We are privileged to live in America; and in spite of her wholesale turn away from God, I'm still glad to be here.

In 2015, the Lord enabled me to preach in 21 churches in 8 states. He also allowed me to conduct 8 full-length seminars, preach a revival, lead one family camp and conduct one book-signing. I conducted 8 funerals, attended 6 conferences, had several radio interviews and was able to teach many Sunday school classes. All total, I preached 82 times including 28 times in my home

church. In addition to that, the Lord enabled me to publish two books and four digital newsletters. Yes! He's been really, really good to me, and that's not just *ministerial speaking*.

At the end of 2015, the Lord allowed me to be home a few days. It was really a joy to catch up on a few things that had been neglected. Mrs. Hutson had plenty of *Honey-do* jobs.

As the New Year, begins I will be in Midland, Texas representing the [Christian Law Association](#). Of course, I will be in Houston for the January *Missions Conference* at [Northwest Baptist Church](#). This event is always a highlight of my year. At the end of January, it will be a joy to conduct my *The Reliability of Your Bible Seminar* at [Creekwood Baptist Church](#) in Beaumont. On the 31st I will be with Bro. Jerry Power at [Friendship Baptist Church](#) in Hurst, Texas for their

Missions Conference. I will spend the Valentine Day weekend with Bro. McJohn Bagley at [Faith Baptist Church](#) in Brownsboro, Texas. I am really looking forward to presenting my *Improving Your Home Seminar* later in February at Parkview Baptist Church in Childress, Texas.

I can't tell you how much I am looking forward to catching a few white bass with my grandsons this spring. I'm making time for that. Lord willing, I will also be giving considerable time to a major edit and republishing of *What We Believe and Why 2*. I am working to make all of my books available on [Amazon](#) in upgraded status.

He Who Aims at Nothing Generally Hits it

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An old Navy Captain inspected his sailors. "Boatswain, these men need to change underwear occasionally." Aye, aye sir, I'll see to it immediately!" The boatswain went straight to the sailors berth deck. The Captain thinks you guys smell bad and wants you to change your underwear. Pittman, you change with Jones, McCarthy, you change with Witkowski, and Brown, you change with Schultz. Now GET TO IT!' THE MORAL OF THE STORY: Someone may promise "Change," but don't count on things smelling better. Keep this in mind. We're moving toward a presidential election.

THE DAY I MET JESUS CHRIST AS MY OWN PERSONAL SAVIOR

I cannot remember my first time to church. My parents were dedicated Christians and determined to make a Christian out of me. They were poor country people unable to pay hospital costs, so I was born at home and taken to church the next Sunday.

Everybody said I was *"a good kid,"* but I knew I was a sinner. No preacher had to tell me; I knew my heart was full of mischief and wicked imaginations. When I was twelve, I prayed a prayer, joined a Baptist church and was baptized. I sincerely wanted to be saved, but I knew that my *religious experience down front in the church* was a sham and didn't change a thing in my lost heart.

Yet, now I was regarded by all as a *"Christian"* and tried my best to act like I thought one should. The next 16 months were miserable. I knew I was still lost and on my way to eternal hell, but I didn't want anybody to find out. During those months I drove myself to be as good as I could possibly be. Time and again I confessed to God every sin I thought I had, and begged Him to save me. In my heart things got progressively worse. I was more and more convicted, miserable and fearful that I would die and go to hell. Every sermon cut me to the core. My sins glared to me. But, I didn't dare let-on to anyone.

On Wednesday night, October 11, 1954 I was in a church service with my parents. A converted Jew preached a message that he titled *Five Minutes Past Midnight*. He dealt with the reality of where your soul will be five minutes after you die without Jesus Christ. He dealt with sham religion and the fact that God knows where every heart really is. He knows who is really saved and who is lost. That night that preacher preached about how foolish it is to hide behind a false profession. He urged lost sinners to come in their hearts to Jesus Christ in simple faith, trusting Him and Him alone to save them upon the strength of His death, burial and resurrection. He preached that nothing short of the shed blood of Jesus Christ can take away sins and give eternal life. I knew he was talking to me.

I barely slept that Wednesday night. The next day at school I could not concentrate on school work. I rode the school bus to our country home and said the usual *Hello* to my stay-home mother. Outwardly I looked as calm as could be. Inside I was a wreck. I told mom that I was going out to the barn. She didn't see me slip my little Bible under my arm.

I went past the barn into thick woods. I sat down on a little hill and read John 3. No one was there except God and me. In my heart I knew I was lost. I also knew that He wanted to save me. I thought to myself, *"God, why don't you save me? Time and again I have prayed to you and begged you to save me. I have tried to be as good as I can possibly be. I have been baptized and joined the church. I want to be saved and you want to save me. What's wrong?"*

I just sat there on the ground, totally helpless, at the end of myself. I remember thinking to myself, *"God, I can't do it. If you don't save me, I'm going to hell. Right here and now I give up on myself and trust you."* In my heart I could truthfully say, *"From this moment forth it's all up to you. My only hope for heaven is you. I know that you died, was buried and rose for me. I know you shed your blood for me. I trust you."* I knew that if He didn't get me to heaven, I wouldn't make it. I didn't confess a sin, pray a prayer, make a promise or hold on to anything I was, had done or ever would do. I simply saw myself as a lost, hell-bound sinner deserving of eternal damnation. I saw Jesus Christ as the Savior and Him alone as capable of saving me. At that moment I simply trusted Him & Him alone to save me. I gave up completely on myself and entrusted my all to Him.

It is hard to describe the relief that I suddenly felt. It was all up to Him. All along, before this moment I had thought in terms of what I could do. I was baptized. I joined the church. I tried to live right. I prayed and prayed and prayed. I confessed every sin I could remember. I worked as hard as I could for God and tried to live right. And I was sincere. All along it had been what *"I"* could do. At that moment, it was no longer *up to me*; it was now all *up to Him*. My hope was no longer resting in myself, in anything I had ever done, was or would ever be. My hope was resting in Jesus Christ and in Him alone.

God saved me that day when I trusted Him. That's the day I finally got to the end of myself, gave up on me and quit thinking that somehow, some day I could help God save my soul. I realized that if I was ever to make it to heaven, He would have to get me there. I knew that He could because He was the God of heaven who had come in person to this earth where He took my sins to the cross and paid my death penalty once and for all. That Thursday afternoon right out there in those woods He saved my soul and I realized first-hand the reality of Ephesians 2:8-9 which says, *"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."*

A minister parked his car in a no-parking zone in a large city because he was short of time and couldn't find a space with a meter. Then he put a note under the windshield wiper that read: *"I have circled the block 10 times. If I don't park here, I'll miss my appointment. Forgive us our trespasses."* When he returned, he found a citation from a police officer along with this note *"I've circled this block for 10 years. If I don't give you a ticket I'll lose my job. Lead us not into temptation."*



***If I could invent the alphabet,
I'd put "U" and "I" together***

MY TOP 2016 GOALS

- ✓ To serve and honor God with my life better than I ever have
- ✓ To love in the truest Bible sense of the word with all my heart
- ✓ To be kind, gentle and truly humble without pretense
- ✓ To be bold and unashamed to stand up for God and His righteousness
- ✓ To be real, genuine and without hypocrisy with a life that speaks of integrity
- ✓ To give my best. All of the time
- ✓ If this is the year I cross the finish line, I want to be at full speed

LOVE IS ALWAYS IN SEASON

- ♦ *Charity begins at home, but it should not end there.*
- ♦ *Love comforteth like sunshine after rain.*
- ♦ *The most important thing a father can do for his children is love their mother.*
- ♦ *When we are not in love too much, we are not in love enough.*
- ♦ *The love you give away is the only love you keep.*
- ♦ *Love, unlike gold, is treasure that gains value by being spent.*
- ♦ *Loving costs a lot, but not loving always costs more.*
- ♦ *Love lives in cottages as well as great castles.*
- ♦ *Love is a fruit in season at all times, & within reach of every hand.*
- ♦ *If I could reinvent the alphabet, I would put “U” and “I” together.*

Paul Harvey told of a traveling executive who called his wife on an airport pay phone. He concluded the call, hung up the receiver & started to walk away when the phone rang. He suspected it was the operator to ask for more money. It was the operator, but instead of asking for more coins she said, “Sir, I thought you’d like to know that just after you hung up, your wife said she loves you.” *Charity begins at home, but it should not end there.*

HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE

Mrs. Hutson and I wish each of you a blessed and spiritually prosperous New Year. May 2016 be the best year of your life to date! Please know that we count you, our many friends, among our greatest treasures. We love you and thank you for your many expressions of love to us. Our prayer is that God will meet all of your needs according to His riches. May each of us give Him our best! Routinely!

A BOOK I HAVE RECENTLY READ & HIGHLY RECOMMEND

Better with Jesus: A Mission 119 Guide Through Hebrews

Hutson Smelley

www.proclaimtheword.me

ISBN 978-0-9861336-0-2 (on [Amazon](#))

Those who are serious about true exegesis of God’s Word will rejoice in this book! It is not only the best commentary that I have read on Hebrews, it is one of the best commentaries I have ever read on any book of the Bible. And I have read lots of commentaries.

Better with Jesus is a verse by verse commentary on the book of Hebrews, but it is far more. While the focus is on Hebrews which is clearly expounded, multitudes of broader biblical explanations are incorporated into this book. In light of the insights from Hebrews, whole vistas of Bible-wide teachings on such issues as the Old and New covenants suddenly crystalize.

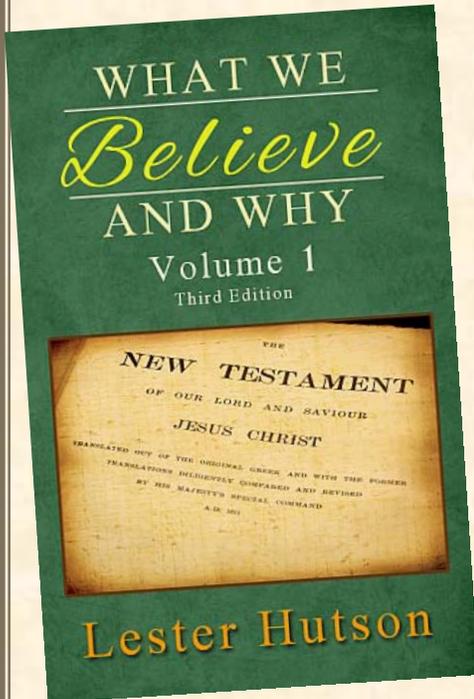
The chief emphasis of Hebrews is on Jesus Christ. This commentary captures that beauty. Jesus is better than angels. He is better than the old order of Moses and the Aaronic Priesthood. Hebrews explains how and why and *Better with Jesus* makes the biblical explanations so easy to understand. As the latter part of Hebrews teaches and Smelley’s book explains so clearly, living with Jesus produces better living on all fronts.

Hebrews is not an easy-to-understand book of the Bible. It is full of complexities. Hutson Smelley makes so many of the difficult passages seem so simple. His explanation (with proof) of the eschatological emphasis of Hebrews simply melts away many of the difficult theological tensions. Once it is understood that the book was written to believers who were under intense persecution as an encouragement for them to stand firm in light of future rewards and rest, there is no argument about losing salvation from sin’s penalty. What a clarion call to stand fast in the faith without compromise and wavering!

I recommend this book with the heartiest of recommendations. It is highly explanatory, positive, uplifting, easy to read, theologically astute and doctrinally sound.

What We Believe and Why 1

For most of my life apologetics have been of prime concern to me. Too often I have listened to people espouse their beliefs, often with great passion, only to crumble and frequently embarrass themselves in face of even a mild challenge.



Back in 1975, I released a book that I called *What We Believe and Why*. Actually it was an expanded edition of an earlier book by the same name. It was mostly an accumulation of sermon notes I wrote in preaching on the 52 subjects at hand. Bro. Thomas and others encouraged me to publish this material, but also to write and publish in general. The Lord blessed the effort and over the years over 6,000 were distributed until the supply was completely exhausted.

Since the spring of 2015, I have been working to revive this book and make it available on the Internet. I do mean re-worked. With help, I have gone back through the book and cleaned up the language which was atrocious. Without changing the content, this book has been transformed into a much clearer and more readable document. It is now available in both electronic and paper formats. The book is [available](#) directly from Amazon or from me. Contact me at lesterhutson@gmail.com. Amazon offers [electronic copies](#) for \$7.99. Paper copies are \$14.99. You can order paper copies from me for \$10 each plus a mailer and postage.

Here is the synopsis that you will find on Amazon.com.

What We Believe and Why - v1 is a collage of essays on key biblical doctrinal issues. It contains detailed explanations loaded with scriptural apologetics and over 1,800 Scripture references. The book is noted for sound exegesis and hermeneutics, making it a primer or anthology on basic Bible doctrine.

What We Believe and Why - v1 deals with the divine inspiration of the Scriptures and how to study effectively, the Trinity, the Holy Spirit and particularly how He convicts lost sinners, eternal security, God's three-fold salvation, church discipline, social drinking, scriptural baptism, why church membership is important, the special ministry of the Apostles, local church theology and much more. This book consists of 52 chapters in annotated outline form making it ideal for teaching and systematic Bible study.

This is the third edition of Dr. Hutson's 1975 book by the same title. The content remains essentially the same, but the grammar, punctuation and wording has been greatly improved."



Travis Jones, Lester Hutson & Larry Atkisson
Faithful Men's Conference
Dearborn Baptist Church, Aurora, Indiana

IT'S NOT A GOOD IDEA TO BELIEVE ALL THE EXPERTS SAY

"Heavier-than-air flying machines are impossible." Lord Kelvin, President of the Royal Society in 1895. He also said, ***"X-rays are a hoax"*** and ***"Radio has no future."***

"The horse is here to stay but the automobile is only a novelty." The president of the Michigan Savings Bank in 1903.