

**NEWS AND VIEWS**  
from  
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***“Southern Baptists with the Full  
Gospel for the Whole World”***

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Do you remember the story about the truck I bought in the November 2009 newsletter? It taught me a lesson about redemption and how Christ purchased me in my sorry condition to take me home with Him. I'll try to recap a little of the story and give an update so you can know what I'm still learning about the risk of redemption and the cost to the redeemer. Here's an excerpt from the November article:

“Some time ago I began to search the State Surplus Property website to see what the State of North Carolina was selling to the public. There are many items that the state is either taking out of service or selling from drug seizure situations. Sometimes you can get a deal. Or sometimes the deal can get you! My latest adventure into this endeavor has been instructive on so many levels. A few weeks ago I saw a photo of a pickup truck advertised for sale at a state facility in Elizabeth City. It was one of those cute little 1991 Chevy S-10 models. (*Actually it was one of the ugliest trucks I've seen lately*). The thing that caught my eye was the phrase, “*running when it was taken out of service last year.*” So I placed my bid. It's like an EBay auction site without the benefit of knowing anyone else's bid. Then I forgot about it...until I was notified that I was the successful bidder...and I had two weeks to remove the item from the property...and the property was located three hours away...can you feel the tension? Sometimes you can get a deal. And sometimes the deal can get you.”

Well, as you might guess, the deal got me! Long story short...(send me an email to [pastor@mobic.org](mailto:pastor@mobic.org) and I'll send the November story back to you), the price paid for the truck was more than a junked truck was worth. I invested more money to rent a trailer. Then I bought a new battery so the truck would start so it could be loaded on the trailer. But the truck was brought home...in one piece...barely. For over a year it sat in the yard. I cleaned it up, relatively speaking, since a lot of heavy cleaning would run the risk of removing the rust that held much of it together. Occasionally I would start it up and let it run for awhile. It never failed to respond, anytime I turned the key. The last couple of months I began to assess the cost of how much it would cost to upgrade the truck to a street legal level. As the estimated costs began to mount, I thought it best to invest in a *For Sale* sign in hopes of recovering my investment. My wife thought it would never sell. I believed the Lord could help me sell it. A short two weeks later I received a phone call. “*How much do you want for the little blue truck?*” asked the potential buyer.

A lightning round of negotiation took place and the truck left my yard within two hours. I would like to tell you that I recovered my investment. The truth is I suffered a significant loss on the transaction. Some expenses just cannot be recovered. It seems to be the nature of this world. But I learned more than I lost. I believe the Lord helped me sell the truck, not to recover money, but to learn another lesson about redemption. Listen to the following passage:

*Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Philippians 2:5-8)*

I'm learning that the Lord surely suffered a grievous loss when He emptied Himself to offer Himself to redeem sin's ruination to the likeness of man. It will certainly take all of eternity to only begin to comprehend the enormous cost to Him for our salvation. As I begin this New Year, I am overwhelmed with gratitude that my Redeemer has not cut His losses and sold me off to some other master. His purpose is still what it has always been. He still intends to restore my fallen, dilapidated, and disabled condition to the glorious image of Christ. He's done that. All by Himself. When we surrender our earthly, man-centered will to the will of God...the eternal gain eclipses any earthly loss.

Many New Year's Blessings,  
Pastor Sam