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INTRODUCTION TO THY PRECEPTS

In offering to my brethren a Christian periodical, it is well to state the following:

THE PURPOSE OF THE MAGAZINE is to bring Christ, His rights, and His claims to bear upon what transpires within and without; so that, having the Word of God before us, and being exercised in our consciences thereby, the truth may dwell in our souls and produce a corresponding practice. The truth of God has been committed to the Christian and we ought to cherish this truth and practice it. When we have the moral bearing of the Word of God before our souls, and we cherish it, we suitably think of His Word as:

THY PRECEPTS

CONCERNING THE EDITORIAL POLICY, I use the words of another, found in The Bible Witness and Review, vol. 2, p. 447: "The editor thinks it just to the truth, the writers, and the readers of this periodical, and to himself, to say that, while he would not put in anything which he believed affected injuriously 'the faith' or 'morals', and must reserve to himself the right of accepting any paper, or not, as he may think it profitable or otherwise, yet he is not to be held responsible for all the opinions or interpretations which he may permit to be published If anything should escape the Editor that affects the faith, so that it is injured, he will be thankful if it is pointed out."

CONCERNING THE CHARACTER OF THIS MAGAZINE, note that Scripture says, "To every man his work" (Mark 13:34). It should not be surprising, therefore, that a Christian magazine will reflect the exercises of its editor and the state to which it is addressed. Thus, there is a general bearing of various periodicals and this one will be no exception. The first issue of THY PRECEPTS will, we trust, inform the reader partially of what may be expected in its character.

Our brethren, R. S. Lundin and D. Ryan, have consented to render regular editorial assistance.

We desire the prayer support of the saints of God for keeping, guidance, and blessing to the Lord's dear people through these pages.

R. A. Huebner

EXTRACT ON PRECEPTS

... God is dealing with living realities in His word. If doctrines tell me that God is dealing with me, precepts tell me that it is with me God is dealing.

God is not revealing an indefinite light that may sparkle before me. He addresses himself to me, a corrupt creature, and says, "Let him that stole steal no more."

There is this beauty in precepts. They do greatly honour the doctrine; they are the expression of the hidden moral virtue that lies in the doctrine. For instance, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God." The doctrine had already taught me, that I had received the Spirit as the seal of salvation. The precept tells me, that the Spirit I have received is sensitive of the least touch of unholiness. So, the doctrine is glorified by the precept.

THE SPIRIT OF FALSE PROPHECY

When the people of God go wrong, there is always the spirit of false prophecy which would make them believe that all goes well. Men in authority love that they should not be discouraged: see the opposition to Jeremiah in Jerusalem. To this the false prophet lends help, to hinder the conscience from turning back to God, who would by chastening bring the conscience into direct contact with Him. The spirit of falsehood would persuade that they are very happy. They that call them blessed are the misleaders. Those that are so called and believe them are swallowed up (Isa. 9 - verse 15).

When the people of God are in a good state, they have at heart the glory of God without which they cannot be satisfied. It is not enough for them that there is no evil going on - this suffices man, but not the glory of God. There are still divisions and miseries because of their iniquities (vers. 18-20). But the people is not yet turned to God, and His hand is stretched out still (ver. 21). God does not crush His people even when He smites. He leaves some consolation. Nevertheless His people take up their pride again (chap. 10:1-4),

J.N.Darby

TRAIN UP A CHILD

As to the question of the education of children, one must not shrink from setting forth the truth, however self-condemned by it as to one's own practice. We begin with the fact that the children are the Lord's property, and they are to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The Lord should be consulted and respected in every stage and branch of their education. Hannah placed Samuel in the house of the Lord and dressed him in keeping with that place. He was connected with God's place on earth from the very start, and from infancy ordered and educated in consonance with it. This is not so easily carried out in practice now. If I have but a faint and imperfect idea of God's place now, I cannot go beyond it in the training and education of my child. I have first to see what is my duty. Next I cannot go beyond my own light and apprehension of what is due to the Lord. I may be very clear as to the broad fact that my child should be trained and brought up for the Lord; but if I have feeble and imperfect ideas of being for the Lord myself, I cannot exceed them in the education of my child. The first great difficulty in bringing up a child for the Lord is the small measure in which I am myself for the Lord. There are the two spheres, as I might say; the church, or God's place, and the world with its god. I am naturally belonging to the latter, and my child naturally adopts and imbibes my worldly ideas and feelings. If I have not renounced my worldly sentiments and ways very distinctly, and replaced them with divine ones genuinely, my child will, to my surprise, grow up the imitator and reflection of my badly suppressed worldliness; and will, I have no doubt, disclose and betray the secret worldliness of my heart in broad and simple lines. The child is more susceptible of what suits him naturally; he has a powerful affinity for it, and there is at once an attraction for the worldly element, which the thin veil of profession does not conceal from the child. There is, as it appears to me, necessarily a double education going on; I am seeking, according to my sincerity, to be less of the world and more of Christ in myself, and I am endeavouring to counteract in the bud the springing up of worldliness in my child, and to touch his conscience about it, as being not of God, but of the world. Now the whole order and aim of one's own education, if brought up in the world, is changed; and I have another standard before my mind. The Lord Jesus Christ, as far as I know Him, is my standard. I train my child that he may be healthy in body, and may have his mind rightly exercised. Everything that would conduce to render his body strong, and his mind clear and useful, I should observe.

The mind is nearly as much an instrument as the body; the great difference is that the mind is coloured by the heart and conscience, and if there be not the latter to influence, the mind is

too independent and freethinking. Hence, the great aim in education is to awaken the conscience as to what is due to God; and at the same time to draw out the heart. I feel assured that parents do not make it their study to promote those two growths. They expect that teaching hymns and verses will (they know not how) help the conscience of the child; and very often there is no thought of the conscience before the mind of the parent, but simply that it is the duty of the Christian parent to teach his or her child the word of God; and the heart is left to learn for itself, as it best may, from the love it receives. I believe if the conscience were more sedulously exercised, as to what is right and wrong before God, and the heart led out by the careful and touching way it was encouraged and ministered to, that the body and mind would become disciplined channels for use when grace comes. The better use they were turned to, the more useful they would be; a child thus educated would, when quickened by the Holy Ghost, and led into real knowledge of God, find his conscience enlightened by a new and spiritual power. In the same way the heart would be led by the Spirit into the perfect and eternal love of God, in addition to or in support of mere natural affection, so that the heart and conscience would be under a new and divine ordering, both according to the divine nature, and the power of the Holy Ghost; and hence the vessel in mind and body would become expressive of the grace of Christ and subservient to Him in all things.

EXTRACT

Who understood the wilderness as He did? Who was ever such a thorough pilgrim, drinking of the brook in the way? "The Man of sorrows" knows well how to lift up your head. How the power of His sympathy in our hearts lifts up His people's heads! He won't forget His backsliding people on earth either.

The heart of God is, with Christ, occupied with a people down here, having all power in heaven and earth to keep them standing in His strength. The Holy Ghost is down here; we have access to His [Christ's] heart; He has associated us with Himself and with what He is going to do in a way immeasurably deeper than Israel.

G.V.W.

"BY HIM ACTIONS ARE WEIGHED "

These weighty words were uttered by inspiration of the Spirit of Truth through the godly Hannah (1 Sam. 2:3). The fact is that she did not want a child to dote on and spoil, else she would not have brought him to Eli. She wanted a man-child from Jehovah, whom He would use to judge the evil at Shiloh, perpetrated by the house of Eli.

Hannah accepted the order that God had appointed to men and women. She had none of the spirit of the modern 'Christian women's liberation'. And so, distressed by the reproach against Jehovah allowed at Shiloh, she cast herself upon Him by whom actions are weighed. She sought a remedy, in accordance with His appointed order for men and women, for His glory and His people's blessing. Therefore, she prayed for a man-child in order that she might present him to the Lord to be used by Him as an instrument for His honor at Shiloh.

But meanwhile, as is always the case whenever there are holy exercises, her adversary (1 Sam. 1:6) oppressed her. My conviction is that Peninah despised Hannah's godly exercises concerning the evil at Shiloh.

Now, this morally great saint of God was very much in earnest. She might have merely talked about the evil, gossiped about it, or even accurately described it, and rightly said that the state was bad. But the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him — and she knew that by Him actions are weighed. Of course, mere talk is an action too, and God weighs that also — and judges it, as we shall see.

Hannah's answer to Eli's undiscerning charge of drinking too much shows that her behavior had the same moral character as is seen in the vow of a Nazarite (1 Sam. 1:15). What a contrast between these two. She was in earnest (are we?) and this earnestness was translated into godly action. And so it pleased Jehovah that the Nazarite mother should bring forth a Nazarite son who would be jealous for His honor at Shiloh.

Eli did have some sense of the dishonor to Jehovah at Shiloh, perpetrated by his sons. Why, he even admonished them about it: "Why do ye such things" (1 Sam. 2:23). He let them know that he disapproved. But Jehovah, by whom actions are weighed, rejected this mere talk. Even in the world we hear the expression, "Talk is cheap". Eli, the leader, the high priest, lacked what the obscure, godly Hannah had; namely, a devotion that translated words into godly actions and self-sacrifice. May we pray for such holiness and grace.

Observe that the following truths are interlocked.

1. BY HIM ACTIONS ARE WEIGHED (1 Sam. 2:3).
2. THOSE THAT HONOR ME, I WILL HONOR (1 Sam. 2:39).

As Eli failed to take godly action, he necessarily failed to honour Jehovah. He had good sounding talk but no actions consonant with those words. As Hannah acted rightly on the first truth, her actions were in accord with the truth that holiness becomes God's house forever (Psa.93:5), thus honoring Jehovah.

It is instructive to note that Eli was charged with honoring his sons more than God (1 Sam. 2:29). Think of that order of things! Yea, the implication of 1 Sam. 2:30 is that the man that admonished his sons actually despised the Lord. This is a most serious and wholesome lesson for us. Oh that we would learn that by Him actions are weighed and those that honor Him He will honor!

But let us pause to observe that though He will honor those that honor Him, He has not promised to do so in this life, though He may do it. Persons who look for that honor in proof that a certain action of theirs was of God may be disappointed. Rather, discernment is needed (1 Cor. 2:15,16; Phil. 1:4-11).

After the solemn words of God to Eli, through Samuel, Eli said, "It is Jehovah; let Him do what is good in His sight" (1 Sam. 3:18). This may sound pious to some, but I see no piety in it. Rather, it was a continued shirking of responsibility -- and in the face of the message. Had he acted on the truth of Prov. 28:13 he would have judged what in reality was his indifference to Jehovah's honor. His words of admonishment do not show that he was not indifferent. It is action that tells the condition. It is true that there may be situations where all one can do is admonish. The Lord knows those cases. But such was not Eli's case. And let us not deceive ourselves about our own pathway. There was more Eli could have done, but he did it not. Therefore Jehovah reckoned it as not honoring Him, but rather honoring his sons.

We often stand in danger of compromising the Lord's honor, especially where our own family is concerned. After that come relatives and friends, or favorite brethren. Partiality (1 Tim. 5:21; James 3:17) is a deplorable evil among the people of God. At bottom it is self-seeking. By Him actions are weighed; and those that honor Him, He will honor.

ed.

HOW TRUTH IS PERVERTED

There is nothing more grievous than the fact that truth can be so perverted that the name of it only is left, and often so much so, that the name stands for the very contrary to that to which it was originally attached. It has often been said that Satan will spoil what he cannot hinder. Man's ideas have been adopted as exponents of the truth, instead of the ideas set forth in the word of God.

We must in this day own that the prediction of our Lord has been verified, namely, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened." The leaven is the introduction of an element which has extended the original thing unnaturally. The human idea is this leaven, and it has so added to the original and divine teaching that the doctrine now called in Christendom after the scriptural name bears little or no resemblance to the doctrine to which the same name is attached in scripture. It is not from outside that this evil occurs. "Of your own selves (Acts 20) shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." If there were no perversion of the truth, there would be no disciples except disciples of Christ. It is in the perversion of truth that disciples are drawn away. The effect of the simple maintenance of truth is to draw to Christ. John the Baptist proclaimed the truth; and his disciples, in adopting it, forsook him to follow Christ.

One may ask, How is it that godly earnest men do not discard everything not scripturally true? I answer, Because they are guided by conscience and not by the word of God. By their consciences they are calmed into the assurance that they are doing the best for the general good; and this they seek. Now it is the word of God which alone should guide me, and my conscience ought not to be satisfied unless I am assured that everything I teach and adhere to is scripturally true. Scripture must be my guide, and not my conscience or the comments of my brethren.

But it is not only from making the conscience umpire that earnest men suffer; there is another snare, which is still more difficult to expose. Perversion of the truth is always to suit a practical state. It is the lower order of practice which, when there is conscience, leads to a lower order of truth, or a misplacement of the order, because it matches the state and quiets the conscience, and the lower order of practice is confirmed and perpetuated by the lower order of truth. Now, when any one attempts to form an idea of a truth from his own practical observance of it, or seeks to make it practicable, of course he shapes the truth to his practice, instead of demanding that his practice should conform to the truth. Man, as is natural, likes to leave out from a doctrine that which makes it

impossible to man in nature, and to substitute something under the same name, and thus deceive the conscience with what is possible for man without self-sacrifice.

Faith is a unity, and can only lead in one way. Every truth, truly apprehended by faith, must lead directly in the same way. It may be differently in measure seen, but the same measure produces the same result. If Mark returns from Pamphylia (Acts 15:38), it is because the truth exacted too much from him. If Peter refuses to eat with the Gentiles (Gal. 2:11), it is because he would spare himself; the truth of the gospel, for which Paul contended, exacted too much of him. Demas cannot bear the exaction of the truth (2 Tim. 4:10). If Timothy knows and follows Paul's doctrine, he must also know and follow his "manner of life". If the doctrine be truly held, the manner of life will be an exemplification of it. If a man say (as has been said) that the Church, the body of Christ, is in heaven, and speaks of Jesus as being here (with man as man), he so entirely misplaces the truth, without denying it, that to hold this doctrine imposes on him no self-death here, and his conscience is lulled, and the truth lost. For if the body of Christ is in heaven, I am not responsible to walk here on earth as of it; and if Jesus, who is really in heaven, and known here by the Holy Ghost, is put on a level with us in the flesh, Christianity is reduced to a mere human thing, and the truth, that now through the Spirit we are united with Him in heaven, and from THENCE receive of Him to fill our place in the body here on earth, is lost. Could there be a greater perversion of truth than that the Church, the body of Christ, is in heaven? The truth is that it is FROM heaven, but ON earth; yet many earnest conscientious souls accept this perversion as the truth; and the consequence is they have lost the truth, and with it the effects which are produced by the truth. Each truth produces its own proper effects; hence, if you lose the truth, you must lose the effects of it.

Again; another will so accept and explain the unity of the Spirit that all Christians can be received as united, because professors of the same life, though they are connected with systems and orders of things most opposed to one another; so that the unity of the Spirit is practically reduced to the socialism of a club. Again, others, with more light, will contend that similar opinions, with soundness in faith, and holy walk (that is, individual propriety), necessarily places in the unity of the Spirit. Then the Spirit is only a common bond for separate and distinct units, and not the unity of the body of Christ, where each is affected by the other, and is necessarily a guardian of the other; for it is the Spirit (who baptizes the whole into one) who must be considered, and not the individual, as to what he holds or does. The unity of the Spirit makes the body of Christ one, because the Holy Ghost is one.

The natural mind cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God; they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. If the natural mind receives it, or knows it, it is not of the Spirit of God. The unity of the Spirit cannot be maintained truly, but as there is a distinct dissociation from and exclusion of all that which is contrary to the Spirit Himself, and in conjunction with all those who are walking in the Spirit.

We are exposed to perversions so long as we are babes. To raise us to maturity is the aim of all ministry, as it is written (Eph. 4:13,14): "Until we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we be no more babes, tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, for a method of deception" (as it may be more freely translated). The force of the passage is that if I am not matured in Christ, I am exposed to human sleight; which, by cunning craftiness, grows into a method of deception. It is man's work and way of escaping the edge and power of the truth, and it ends in a systematized error.

From A Voice to the Faithful, 1869 (abridged).

EXTRACT

Has it ever come into your mind what sort of a thrill the delight of God in Christ must cause in heaven? And is it indeed true that we are accepted in the Beloved, and that God loves us as He loves Christ, because, we are in Him and He is in us? What in you can interfere with the delight of God in His Son? His delight in believers is not in themselves, but in connection with Christ and redemption. His blood has washed all my sin away, my soul is in Him — one with Him; all my guilt and misery judged on the cross. Oh, it makes one feel very little; it sinks one into insignificance as being nothing and Christ everything; God looking on His Son with ever the same delight, seeing His members and loving them as such! It is pure grace from first to last.

G.V.W.

MISUNDERSTOOD/MISUSED TEXTS

1 COR. 2:2

The famous passage of St. Paul has been quoted to some here (1 Cor. 2:2) "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." It is constantly used as an objection against the study of what is found revealed in the word. This arises from two causes. The one is due to that prolific source of error, namely, the citation of a passage without examining the context; the other, alas! from a greater or less want of uprightness -- from a desire (unrecognised, it may be, in our own deceitful hearts) of standing still in the ways of the Lord, by making as little acquaintance with them as may be. It is not true that we are to limit ourselves to the knowledge of Jesus Christ crucified. We must also know Jesus Christ glorified, Jesus Christ at the right hand of God; we must know Him as High Priest, and as advocate with the Father. We ought to know Jesus Christ as much as possible, and not be content with saying, "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." So to say is to take the letter of the word and to abuse it. The apostle, seeing the tendency that there was in the church at Corinth to follow rather the learning and philosophy of man than Christ (a thing not to be wondered at in a city renowned for science), points out, in leading their souls back to Christ, how foreign his entry among them was from earthly wisdom. He "was with them in weakness and in fear; ... his speech and his preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom;" "he determined not to know anything among them but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified" -- Jesus Christ, and even Him as the most despised one among men. He is not speaking of the value of the blood, but of the condition of Jesus Himself, in order to bring down by the cross all their vain glory, and found their faith upon the word of God, and not on human wisdom. But in the same chapter he says that, from the moment he comes into the midst of true Christians, his conduct changes; he speaks "wisdom among them that are perfect." He would have nothing to do with human wisdom; but as soon as he finds himself among the perfect [fullgrown], he says, "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect." Desiring to confine ourselves to Jesus crucified, in the way it is urged, is, I repeat, to confine ourselves to as little as possible of Christianity. In Hebrews 6 the apostle says that he is unwilling to do what they would make him say in this place; he altogether condemns that which is urged upon us. "Leaving the principles of the doctrine [the word of the beginning] of Christ," says he, "let us go on unto perfection!"

The Bible Treasury, vol. 16, p. 29.

**THE NEW
INTERNATIONAL VERSION
&
THE TRANSLATION
BY J.N. DARBY**

*Several Doctrines Considered
in
Two Translations*

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Quotations from the NIV are from The Holy Bible, New International Version, copyright 1978 by the New York International Bible Society, and published by Zondervan Bible publishers, Grand Rapids.

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NKJV refers to The Holy Bible, New King James Version, copyright 1982, Thomas Nelson, Inc.

"Englishman's" refers to The Englishman's Greek Concordance, Bagster ed. or Associated Publishers and Authors ed.

Quotations from the JND translation are from J.N. Darby, The 'Holy Scriptures' a New Translation From the Original Languages, Stow Hill ed., 1966, obtainable from:

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PREFACE

We are going to compare a few Scripture teachings with the NIV. This paper is not intended to be an exhaustive review of doctrine nor of the NIV itself, but merely to examine its suitability and thrust.

Some reviewers reject the NIV because they hold that there is to be virtually no departure from the King James Version (KJV) and the Textus Receptus (TR -- the Greek text underlying it). I do not share some of the theories of providential preservation behind such a viewpoint, though I believe that God has providentially preserved His Word and that it is inerrant in the autographs. I do see God's providential hand in giving us the KJV, and a further blessing in the textual work and translation of J.N. Darby (essentially supported by the able scholar Wm. Kelly).

Scripture has a formative power and we ought to feed our souls on the Word in as accurate a translation as we can obtain. I believe this to be found in the translation by J.N. Darby founded on his own assessment of the Greek text (much to the dismay of TR adherents) as did Wm. Kelly.

Through JND much truth of Christianity was restored to the church, especially regarding the believer's place in Christ, the meaning of life in the Son, the truth of the one body, ministry, the proper hope of the Church, dispensational truth, etc. It is often said that a translator's views affect his translation — no doubt true. And if these recovered doctrines are true, then we have a translation that is informed by these truths. How valuable this is! What a privilege and blessing it is to have it.

Many laud a committee translation over one by an individual. It is alleged that this minimizes individual bias. What is not mentioned is collective bias. But, it is argued, the NIV translators represent a broad background of views and thus there is a check upon individual bias. What such argumentation is worth, will, I hope, become apparent as we examine some of the NIV's doctrinal representations. We will also see that more is required than that the translators subscribe to the teaching that Scripture is inerrant in the autographs.

The use of a good common translation by all professed Christians is indeed desirable. The NIV does not, in fact, hold that position. And if it did, its retrograde renderings still warrant us to refuse it.

I have not addressed the large subject of the Greek text underlying the NIV -- essentially the Westcott-Hort (W/H) text. The introduction to the NIV tells us an eclectic text was used, which, I suppose, means that there were departures from what today represents the W/H text; i.e. the Nestle text. While something can be learned from books that support the Textus Receptus (Hills; Fuller; etc.), they, too, are extreme, going so far as to insist on the inclusion of 1 John 5:7. On the other hand, while some modern translations put brackets around Mark 16:9-20 and John 7:53 - 8:11 to indicate that these portions are not part of Scripture (which they really are), the NIV places after Mark 16:8 the note "[The two most reliable early manuscripts do not have Mark 16:9-20]". That the Vaticanus and the Sinaiticus are the two most reliable is an overstatement. The reader may be interested to know that one of these ancient MSS has blank space left for Mark 16:9-20. Concerning the other passage, the NIV has inserted the comment "[The earliest and most reliable manuscripts do not have John 7:53 - 8:11]". This all is a reflection of Dr. Hort's notion that the Vaticanus was the most pure text -- he said it represented the "neutral" text, meaning the closest to the autographs. There is good reason to regard this notion as a fable. At any rate, the NIV appears to be essentially based on the Nestle text (Westcott/Hort Greek text for all practical purposes), with some departures from it.

As we examine some renderings in the NIV, hopefully the reader will become aware of paraphrase. It seems, too, that there is some use of the translating method called "dynamic equivalence."

I am a layman, not a scholar, and speak and judge as a layman. I am confident that much precious truth was recovered to the church last century and this truth is loved by my soul. I find it in God's Word. My soul feeds on it and as a Christian I judge the NIV by these truths. It falls far short -- even undermining the truth of eternal security and contradicting itself on the matter. The things we shall examine, other laymen, who love the Word also, can look into, and see if these things be so.

ETERNAL SECURITY UNDERMINED

Whether the NIV translators intended to undermine the doctrine of eternal security or not is not the point. They are responsible for the fact that the NIV does undermine it. The undermining is found in the translation of the word skandalizo, or "offend" (Young's Concordance, p. 710). In a footnote to Matt. 13:57 JND says,

The root in the Greek, skandalon, is literally 'the catch of a trap,' that makes it fall when touched. It is generally the occasion, or means, of getting into an evil case, not a stumbling stone.

The NIV translates skandalizo in several ways:

"cause(s) ... to sin"	Matt. 5:29,30; 18:6,9 Mark 9:42,43,45,47 Luke 17:2
"causes sin"	Matt. 13:41
"turn away from the faith"	Matt. 24:10
"offense" or "offend" or "offended"	Matt. 13:57; 15:12; 17:27 Mark 6:3 John 6:61
"cause ... to fall"	Rom. 14:20 1 Cor. 8:13
"cause to fall into sin"	1 Cor. 8:13
"led into sin"	2 Cor. 11:29
"go astray"	John 16:1
"fall(s) away"	Matt. 11:6; 13:21; 26:31,33 Mark 14:27,29 Luke 7:23

Particularly bad is "fall(s) away" because Heb. 6:1-6 teaches that it is impossible to renew again to repentance those who fall away (Greek, parapipto). Heb. 6 describes a case of apostasy from the presence and action of the Spirit while ch. 10 describes it as apostasy from the blood of Christ. There may have

been among the brethren some who were professors only, having "a wicked heart of unbelief" (Heb. 3:12), and who were in danger of apostatizing. Even the NIV reads, "It is impossible ... if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance ..." (Heb. 6:4-6). Then what is a reader of the NIV to think when he finds "fall(s) away" in some of these passages and then reads Heb. 6? The NIV clearly undermines the scriptural teaching of the eternal security of the believer.

But the NIV also contradicts itself on this matter. Heb. 6 teaches that those who fall away cannot repent. The NIV states that our Lord said "You will all fall away" (Mark 14:27). Yet after the resurrection they clearly were His.

Moreover, the addition of extra English words is offensive. The words "sin" and "faith" are not in the Greek text in any of these places.

There is more. Matt. 11:6 in the NIV reads, "Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me". See also Luke 7:23. May not the words "on account of" place the blame for falling away on our Lord?

The NIV is unsound, contradictory and can be understood to put a slight on Christ in this matter. The fact that other verses in the NIV can be used to support the doctrine of eternal security does not mitigate the seriousness of what we are considering. Indeed, someone recently told me he heard a radio preacher using these texts in the NIV to undermine eternal security.

Matt. 26:31 in the KJV reads "offended because of me". JND reads "offended in me" as does Marshall. This is better.

LIFE AND DELIVERENCE

The subjects of life from God and deliverance from a standing called "in the flesh" in Romans, along with collateral truths, are generally ill understood. With respect to such teachings, the NIV represents an impediment to understanding these truths and is a retrograde translation. Some readers of the NIV say to me, 'But it is easier to understand'. No doubt that is true, but I believe it is due to the fact that we do not have in it what can lead the soul into an enlarged understanding of the mind of God and the true position of the Christian as being "in Christ". In particular, it undermines many of the truths recovered last century besides weakening some basic truth.

BORN OF GOD'S WILL

John 1:13 seems strange in the NIV: "children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but of God." What if the man was not married and so not a husband? How did they import this into the text?

This text really tells us that we were not born of:

1. **blood** — while the interpretation is that this means natural descent, it is not translation to put that in the text.
2. **nor of the flesh's will** — not from the self, which, of course, is dominated by the old nature (cp. Rom. 8:7). To equate a person's "will" with a "decision" and the "flesh" with "human" is (erroneous) interpretation, not translation.
3. **nor of man's will** — not from other human agency.

but of God -- showing that new birth is the result of the sovereign action of God.

Similarly, James 1:18 is enervated to read, "He chose to give us birth through the word of truth" (NIV). That puts emphasis on the method, which is far different than, "According to his own will begat he us by the word of truth" (JND), which emphasizes His will, His sovereign action.

CANNOT SIN

The sovereign action of God produces the new birth; i.e., God communicates to the person a new nature, a nature that cannot sin. 1 John 3:9b in the NIV reads, "... he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God." JND has "... he cannot sin ..." as have many others. John's thought (i.e., the Spirit's thought) is that the new nature cannot sin. John's epistle is abstract and draws a sharp distinction between light and darkness and between the old nature and the new. (Verse 6 in the NIV is bad also as is the first half of verse 4).

This error might lead us to wonder whether or not some of these translators think that the Holy One, Him Who is God and man united in one Person, could have sinned.

Heb. 4:15 in the NIV reads "... one who has been tempted in every way, just as we - yet was without sin."

In Heb. 4:15, A. Marshall reads, "... having been tempted but in all respects according to (our) likeness apart from sin." JND has "sin apart". It was not merely that He was without sin but He was not temptable in the sense of being able to sin. He was impeccable — and "sin apart" points to this. But the NIV reads, "... one who has been tempted in every way, just as we - yet was without sin", words that could be used of anyone who was able to sin but chose not to do so. To what does this point?

The incarnation does not mean that the Son united with some person on earth, else there would be two persons. He took His humanity from Mary. There is the union of the human and divine in Him, yet one person. He united humanity to Himself. Had He sinned, would the humanity go to hell? There was no separate human person. The union of the human and divine in Him is inseparable and indissoluble. That "holy thing" (Luke 1:35) was not capable of sinning. To insist He could do so is wickedness. The tendency of such teaching is to divide and defile His person.

In John 14:30 the NIV reads, "... for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me ..." A. Marshall reads, "... and in me he has not no(any)thing". JND reads, "... for the ruler of the world comes, and in me he has nothing ...".

John 14:30 teaches that there was no evil propensity in Him, which seems different than saying that the Enemy had no hold on Him. Is it possible for a believer to have the sinful nature in him and Satan have no hold on him? If so, then on John 14:30 the NIV is wrong, since the text teaches that there was no evil in Him.

And this raises a question concerning what the NIV means in 2 Cor. 5:21, "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us ...". Does this mean only that He did no sin (true enough in itself)? The truth is that "he knew no sin." Sin here is used of the evil nature within. 2 Cor. 5:21 says that He knew none.

While there may be boasting in the fluency of the NIV, the price paid for using it is the loss of the distinctiveness of the truth which defends the blessed person of Christ.

ROMANS 7 and 8

Let us come to Romans now. "I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life ..." (Rom. 7:10 NIV). "And the commandment, which [was] for life ..." (JND). A Marshall has, 'the commandment for [eis] life,' while W. Kelly has, "the commandment that (was) unto life."

It seems to me that we find a theological system at work in the NIV. The fact is that the law could not impart (eternal) life, or anything else. It required; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. The law demanded; but Christ imparts something. The law was "for life" in that if one kept it, he would not die. Perfect law-keeping does not impart eternal life, but the natural life would continue.

Rom. 8:2 in the NIV seems to indicate that the translators do not understand these subjects; "... because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free ..." (NIV). "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free ..." (JND); so, essentially, A. Marshall.

A "law" is a fixed, or uniform, principle of operation and there are a number of laws mentioned in Rom. 7 and 8. Rom. 8:2 is not the law of the Spirit of life, but "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." Old Testament saints had life, but could not be said to have it "in Christ Jesus". Rom. 8:2 connects with John 20:22. On the resurrection day, the great stalk (John 12:24) stood forth in resurrection power, as head of the new creation begun that very day (Rev. 3:14), and imparted to the disciples (not the Spirit as the Pentecostal gift for union with Himself as glorified - Acts 2:32,33) the Spirit as the power of life in Himself, in resurrection; giving them oneness of life IN HIM such that they were one plant with him (John 12:24). This has been well called "resurrection life". In John 10 it is referred to as abundant life. At Pentecost the Spirit was given personally as the power of union with the Head in heaven and of the union of members of the body.

The two things were historically separated and show us the distinction:

1. John 20:22 — the Spirit as the power of oneness of life in Him, in new creation in Him, one plant with Him.
2. Acts 2 — the gift of the indwelling Spirit giving union in one body with the glorified Head in heaven.

However, with the believer since Pentecost, oneness and union are true of him as soon as he is sealed, and thus is in Christ.

By-passing the unsatisfactory Rom. 8:8,9, we may observe that v.10 is translated, "... yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness" (NIV). "... but the Spirit life on account of righteousness" (JND). It is not a question of one's own spirit being alive but of the Spirit of God being the power of the life in the believer (John 20:22; Rom. 8:2).

IN THE FLESH — IN SPIRIT

The translators do not understand what it means to be "in the flesh" as found in Romans 7:5. Hence they change a perfectly good translation to "For when we were controlled by the sinful nature ..." (NIV), though for "sinful nature" a footnote says, "Or the flesh ; also in verse 25". Note that the footnote does not say "in the flesh". Being controlled by the flesh is not the same thing as being "in the flesh", which is a standing.

In Rom. 8, sarx (Englishman's, pp. 680,681), i.e., "flesh", is translated "sinful nature," "sinful man", "sinful" mind in the NIV.

The man of Rom. 7 is born of God but is not delivered (v.24; "rescued", NIV). He has the "inward man" (v.22; "inner being", NIV). He is captive to the law of sin, however (v.23), from which one who has the Spirit is set free, or delivered, as Rom. 8:2 shows. The man in Rom. 7, then, as to his standing, in conscience, is on the ground of law in principle (not necessarily the law, although in some cases it is so, practically). The law addressed man as seen in the flesh, in the Adam standing. The man in Rom. 7 is, in conscience, on this ground before God and is "in the flesh," the "inner man" (the new nature) unsuccessfully struggling for victory until he looks away from within, for power, to Christ (v.24,25) and is then sealed with the Spirit. Rom. 8 then takes up the new place and power for one who is in Christ.

"But ye are not in flesh but in Spirit ..." (JND; Rom. 8:9). This states the new power of the life. The NIV reads, "You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature, but by the Spirit ...", perhaps implying that external control is imposed on the person, something quite different.

JND helps us on Rom. 8:9b, "... but if any one has not [the] Spirit of Christ he is not of him." Interestingly, A. Marshall reads, "... this one is not of him". The NIV reads, "... and if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ." Where do they get the second "Christ" from? This is interpretation, not translation. "... not of him" does not mean that the person is not Christ's in any sense whatsoever. The man in a Rom. 7 condition is safe for the glory but not having "the Spirit of Christ" is "not of him"; i.e., not in the full Christian position. "The Spirit of Christ" denotes the Spirit as the formative power of Christ in the soul. This the man of Rom. 7 does not have though he has the "inner man". The man of Rom. 7 does not have deliverance, as he himself confesses (Rom. 7:24). He says he is a "captive to the law of sin" (v.23). This shows he does not have "liberty"; "... but where the Spirit of [the] Lord [is, there is] liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17). Rom. 8:2 states that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death, thus showing that the man of Rom. 7, who is captive to the law of sin, is not under the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. He has not the indwelling of the Spirit; though as having the "inner man" we see he is born again.

It is clear, then, that the man of Rom. 7 has not the Spirit but the man of Rom. 8 does. Rom. 8:9b means that such a person as ch. 7 describes has not the Spirit of Christ, is not under "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus". The man of ch. 7 is safe for the glory, but he is "not of Him" in the sense of being in the true Christian position — delivered, in Christ and in the Spirit.

"In the flesh" denotes one in the Adam standing, in conscience, before God.

"In the Son" denotes relationship and character of the life, with knowledge of the Father.

"In Christ" denotes place and standing.

"In the Spirit" denotes the characterizing power to express it.

There is a type that illustrates all of this. On passover night, the Israelites were sheltered by the blood. They were safe, but not yet saved from the taskmaster. In Exodus 14 we find them frightened by the taskmaster (the condition of Rom. 7). Who would deliver them

(Rom. 7:24; Ex. 14:10)? But then they were to see "the salvation of Jehovah" (Ex. 14:13). They go through the Red Sea (typifying the death of Christ for us) and reach the other side, but that sea is death to the power of the enemy (the law of sin and death in Rom. 6, 7, 8). On the other side of the Red Sea we get the first recorded song when redemption in type had been accomplished. God had now become their salvation (Ex. 15:2). This is Rom. 8.

There is a parable that illustrates this. When the prodigal came to himself — that is like the new birth. On the way to the Father he had the spirit of a hired servant (Rom. 7). He had a speech about it made up. But he only said so much of it before the father interrupted. The father kissed it all away. Think of that moment when the son's place became known. He was covered with kisses by the father. That was when the spirit of a hired servant was gone and he received the spirit of sonship. This is adoption, or sonship, son-placement, and illustrates coming out of Rom. 7 into Rom. 8. The Spirit of adoption (or sonship) empowers the cry "Abba Father" and the returned one and the Father eat the fatted calf together and begin to make merry. It will never end. Yes, the Son when here, in the garden of Gethsemane, in all intimacy with the Father, addressed Him as Abba, Father (Mark 14:35). And we have been brought so close that by "the Spirit of His Son" we also cry Abba, Father (Gal. 4:6). How unspeakably precious this is. No doubt our Lord Jesus did all in the power of the Spirit and we now have "the Spirit of His Son" to empower us to address the Father as He did.

Cornelius' case is an historical example of these things. There is no doubt he was born again (Acts 10:4) and so safe for the glory. Saved and salvation are great words that include being safe, but include the knowledge of forgiveness of sins, with no more conscience of sins, and include deliverance as seen in Romans. Now, though Cornelius was born again, and so safe from judgment as they were on passover night, Acts 11:14 shows that Peter had to go and tell Cornelius words "whereby thou shalt be saved" Thus, the distinction between new birth and saved, or salvation, is clearly shown.

In Rom. 6, 7 and 8 we have the doctrinal teaching concerning these things.

So, we have these distinctions typically in Ex. 13-15, parabolically in Luke 15, historically in Acts, and doctrinally in Rom. 6, 7, and 8.

The fact is that much that is distinctive of Christianity is set aside by the NIV. It has been pointed out many times that a translator's views affect a translation. No doubt, and we see it here. We also see that the vaunted superiority of committee translations over the work of individuals is not necessarily true.

The KJV translators, no doubt, did not understand such teaching, but the KJV is here quite superior, generally, to the NIV which, as we are seeing, clouds many subjects compared to the KJV, and especially to JND.

ADOPTION

In Rom. 8:15, the NIV has "the Spirit of sonship" but in Gal. 4:5, "that we might receive the full rights of sons", where the underlined words should simply be "sonship." In Eph. 1:4 the NIV reads "adopted as his sons" instead of simply "adoption" or "sonship". All Christians are in God's family by new birth. We are not brought in by adoption in the modern sense of bringing one into a family by adoption. Adoption, or sonship, means the receiving of a position or status, especially as compared to Old Testament saints (see Gal. 3:21-4:7). Let me emphasize that there are no children of God who have not been born again. We receive the new nature, are made partakers of the divine nature, by new birth only. All who are in God's family enter by new birth, not adoption. Adoption brings us into the proper Christian position of sons.

JUSTIFICATION OF LIFE

"Justification of life" is not generally understood and this fact is reflected in the NIV: "... so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men" (Rom. 5:18). What does "justification that brings life for all men" mean? Justification does not bring life. Rather, justification follows having life.

At any rate, JND has, "... so by one righteousness towards all men for justification of life." One translation speaks of justification bringing life and the other of the life itself standing in justification.

This phrase appears in the section of Romans 5:12 -ch. 8 which has to do with sin as a principle, and with deliverance. The phrase does not refer to justification with regard to committed sins as in the earlier part of the book. It has to do with the character of the life we have in the risen One. We reckon ourselves dead to sin, but alive unto God, in Him; and thus we have justification of life. This is the life we previously considered, a life we have in Christ (John 20:22; Rom. 8:2).

RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD

The NIV usually translates "a righteousness from God". But this is not the doctrine of Romans. Such a translation suits, rather, the notion that this righteousness is Christ's righteous law-keeping. While such a notion may avoid the doctrine of our keeping the law for our justification, it is a way to make out our righteousness to be Christ's righteous law-keeping credited to us — and also to bring us under the law as the rule of life. Those who hold such teachings see the law as a transcript of the mind of God. Of course, the law is no such thing. And then such make the law the measure of Christ's life and work. All this is not Christianity, properly speaking.

There is no definite article "the" in the texts we shall consider. But it does not follow that an indefinite "a" should be inserted before "righteousness of God". The reader should consult JND's footnote to Rom. 1:17 which please consult. Also articles by him in his Collected Writings as well as papers in The Bible Treasury may be profitably read concerning this doctrine.

It is not, then, "a righteousness from God" (NIV -- Rom. 1:17; 3:21,22; cp. 10:3) but "righteousness of God". It is God's very own righteousness -- which was displayed in the cross; and is seen also in justifying those that believe. The KJV is much better on this matter, regardless of those translators' doctrine on the subject. They translated -- instead of interpreting as the NIV does.

There is no such thing in Scripture as

... a righteousness legally transferred. A man's being righteous is his standing in the sight of God, not a quantum of righteousness transferred to his credit.

Collected Writings of J.N. Darby v.21, p.254.

Concerning the word "credit", the NIV generally uses that word in Rom. 4 to replace "impute" and "reckon". We should keep in mind that the point in Rom. 4 is the reckoning a man to be something and not the crediting a quantum of righteousness to him that comes from Christ's righteous lawkeeping. Also, Abraham lived before the law, which was given by Moses. The point, then, is the reckoning a man to be something. The believer is accounted to be [the] righteousness of God Himself.

PROPITIATION AND MERCY-SEAT

The NIV translates 1 John 2:2:

He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

First, the words that I have underlined are a myth. They are not part of the Nestle text from which the NIV generally translates. Neither are these words found in The Greek New Testament, 3rd ed., of the United Bible Societies. These words do not appear in The Englishman's Greek New Testament, which uses the Greek text of Stephens (1550), which is basically the foundation for the Textus Receptus. Why, even the NKJV has dropped these words out of the English. The KJV at least italicized the words thus alerting the English reader to the fact that these English words were not represented in Greek.

Second, these words very seriously misrepresent the matter.

If the Lord had been the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, the whole world would get its fruit and go to heaven. If he bore their sins in the way He bore ours, what has God against them?

W. Kelly, Exposition of the Epistles of John, (London: T. Weston), p.64, 1905.

Third, to introduce the word "sacrifice" spoils the meaning. Propitiation is the rendering a satisfaction to God for the outrage of sin against His nature. The point in this text is not that He rendered a propitiatory sacrifice (I do not doubt that He did so), but that He, Himself, is the propitiation. It is the excellence of His Person that imparted such wondrous value to the work; and I see this taught here, a truth not clearly seen in the rendering "the propitiatory sacrifice" or "the atoning sacrifice". This is typically set forth in Lev. 16 verses 2 and 13. We must ignore the NIV's translating "smoke" in v. 13. The word is "cloud" in both places. The cloud of v.2 is sometimes referred to as the Shekinah. It is the cloud of the presence of the glory of Jehovah, the God of Israel, that sitteth between the cherubim. It has been well said that righteousness can meet the claims of righteousness — but only a cloud can meet a cloud! What a thought for the soul to contemplate! Listen, my soul, to what was presented before the cloud upon the mercy-seat.

And he shall take the the censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before Jehovah, and both his hands full of fragrant incense beaten small and bring it inside the veil. And he shall put the incense upon the fire before Jehovah, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy-seat which is upon the testimony, that he die not. And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle with his finger upon the front of the mercy-seat eastward; and before the mercy-seat shall he sprinkle of the blood seven times with his finger (Lev. 16:12-14, JND).

The cloud of the incense, the glory of Christ's person, met the glory of the Shekinah, yea covered the mercy-seat, imparting value to the blood. How unspeakably precious this is. This my soul sees in 1 John 2:2.

In this connection, let us consider the word "mercy-seat" in the N.T. (Chilasteerion -- Englishman's, p. 384). This word is rendered as mercy-seat by JND in Rom. 3:25 and Heb. 9:5 (see his footnote to Rom. 3:25). The NIV has "sacrifice of atonement" in Rom. 3:25 and "place of atonement" in Heb. 9:5. Was not the Holy of Holies the place of atonement? Again, we see not only error, but also how elastic words become as rendered in the NIV.

NOTE: Lord willing, this article will be concluded in twelve pages in the next issue of Thy Precepts. The undermining of true holiness and mainly the undermining of dispensational truth will be examined.

THE TRUTH RECEIVED IN LATE YEARS AND THE OPPOSITION TO IT

If saints are the members of the body of Christ, formed into one body by the Spirit of God, they are bound to preserve this unity in the bond of peace. They have to refuse everything which would grieve or hinder the Spirit. I cannot confine myself to my own conscience, or to the consciences of those immediately in fellowship with me. Whatever is necessarily incumbent on me as of the one body, is equally necessary and incumbent on any other member of it as a member. I am not speaking of matters of mere conscience, but whatever would defile me as a member of Christ's body, I must regard as defiling to any other member; otherwise I do not understand the unity of the body, and that it is formed by the Spirit of God. If I understand that I am a member of the body of Christ on earth, I feel that I have a claim on every saint on the earth, and every one of them has a claim on me; and we are bound, in a common responsibility, to meet together and to avow ourselves as of this oneness—"one loaf"—at the Lord's table, thus expressing our unity. Hence the table must be one, however extended; it is only one, as the Holy Ghost is one, and any one member received or excluded at one place must be received or excluded at every place. If there be but one table (and there is but one), anything done or maintained by any one which disqualifies him from the table, is binding on every one forming the table. The length of the table does not make that right or allowable at one end, which is wrong, contrary to the Lord, at the other. The whole is answerable for a part, for it is an expression of the body. It must be so, otherwise there would be a denial of the unity of the Spirit.

Now the maintenance of this truth would impose on us an order of union and service to one another, unknown and unpracticed in the church generally, and would expose every one maintaining it to painful separation from, and exclusiveness with regard to, every saint refusing to bow to the great responsibility belonging to this high position; for a member, who will not be a true member, is like a dislocated one, causing suffering rather than being of use. There is no truth that the art and malice of Satan so assails as the truth of the mystery of Christ. It connects the saints so distinctly with Christ in heaven, and with one another by the Spirit of God, that one who realizes it is superior to everything of man, although a man himself, and living among men; and hence there is no truth so little known or enjoyed, nor any which so many have in a sense received, but have afterwards surrendered as untenable. There is no truth so difficult to hold in any measure along with what is ordinarily received. Let any one ask himself how much he enters into being united to Christ as Head, and to the saints in one body

here on earth, by the Holy Ghost, and he will see, if he judges truly, that he knows little of this wondrous truth. And it is because it is the greatest and the most blessed truth that Satan, the spirit of evil, is more opposed to it than to any other; and this accounts for the laxity, so deadly and terrible in its character, which has sprung up, and will ever spring up, fiercely, as the truth is maintained fully, in order to neutralize it.

Now the great opposition to this truth does not come from the saints who are utterly ignorant of it, but from those who in word avow that they hold it. New as it is, and long as it was lost to the church, they profess to be enlightened in it and assume that they are all but martyrs for this truth of the unity of the saints, and yet from not understanding the nature and the susceptibilities of this divine union and what it claims, they really undermine the truth by their hollow and partial imitation of it. The greatest wile or by-path is that which comes nearest the true thing, and the curious strategic way in which they defend and propagate their laxity, while avowing this truth in word, is astounding. Brotherly love and social intercourse are in their mind the two great evidences or results of this truth, and thus they are deceived; but however satisfied they may be with themselves, they never come to the knowledge of it divinely, but subvert in principle what they profess to know, and therefore they are as Sanballat and Geshem (Neh. 6:2) in a former day, and to be especially resisted and avoided. The great thing for the faithful to note is the form in which Satan seeks to undermine this truth. Each corps of adversaries is to be known by its facings. But I press that nothing shows the importance of this truth more than the peculiarity of the weapons which have been used to neutralize it, and by those too who in conscience considered they were upholding it. The more one has the anointed eye, the more one is astonished at the art and subtlety in which this strange warfare has been carried on. It is not an open enemy, but mine own familiar friend, he that supped with me, hath lifted up his heel against me. Since the days of Judas down, I suppose there never was a more fearful trespass committed in the church against Christ than the opposition of those who in word accept the truth of the unity of the body, and yet are lax in their separation from those who are in association with unsound teaching. I speak not now of individuals, I only call attention to the fact of the character and nature of the adversary, which by assuming the truth can come near enough to strike the deadliest blow.

But besides the Holy Ghost being here to comfort and establish the individual saint, and to unite each to the other, in one body with the Head in heaven, He is dwelling here to witness for Christ; He is the power of testimony for the absent Christ. The Jew, to whom God had committed the lively oracles, has rejected the Son of God; and the Gentile has used the sword of power, which God had placed in man's hands, against the Lord of glory. Man had in a

twofold way proved his unfitness to be the agent for Christ in His absence. Hence the Holy Ghost is sent down to dwell here, not only to comfort the hearts of the saints, but to testify of Christ, convicting the world, giving evidence of its guilt, and of God's judgment. So distinctly and altogether is the Holy Ghost the instrument of all power that He does not, and could not, accept cooperation or countenance from man as man or from the world, seeing that He is evidence of the world's position before God, and also that He is able to effect everything by Himself according to the mind of God. No human means of any kind whatsoever can impart or secure divine comfort to our hearts, and neither can any other than the Holy Ghost testify for Christ. If through faith I accept Him for the one, I must accept Him for the other; for I am really weak in my apprehension of the first, which I need for my own individual blessing, when I do not see Him in the second. He is neither the Comforter in power for my own heart nor for service. The maintenance of this truth imposes on us a very peculiar path, for everything has been carried on in the professing church in quite a different principle; and as no sect in Christendom accepts this truth in this simple way, I must, if I hold it, run counter in testimony and service to every known denomination. Although that the Holy Ghost as the sole agent of testimony for Christ here is plainly revealed, yet men's minds are so warped by habit and theological tradition that they do not see how they are diverted and debarred from the true path of a servant on the earth. Now as soon as any one seeks and by faith enters on this new path, a path lost sight of until late years, so soon will he be assailed in every conceivable way, according to his earnestness of heart, to go back, in measure, to the things he has left. It makes Satan desperate to see even one able to stand forth and express entire confidence in the Spirit of God on earth, and to work on, patiently, without having recourse to any of the expedients which even the godly use for the dissemination of the gospel. But seeing that this is one of the great truths revived in this day, shall we not boldly insist on it, and maintain it, as in their day the martyrs insisted on justification by faith? Let us not confuse our minds by asking, How can we do without this or that? How can the ark be carried without a cart? We should simply accept the truth of God as set forth in His word. The worst opposition comes from within, and from the true-hearted, who cannot understand how they can carry on the testimony without the means and appliances to which they have been, from time immemorial, accustomed. This is the great trial of this day! but God will vindicate the faithful. May our eyes be more simply turned to Him!

A Voice to the Faithful, v. 6, pp. 245-253.

"THE HEART OF A STRANGER"

EX. 23:9

"Also, ye shall not oppress a stranger: for yet know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." When no longer in the place of strangership, but in their own land, they would still know the heart of a stranger, having been such themselves in Egypt. And how sweet it is to know about our Lord Jesus, that although He is no longer a stranger here, but gone to the Father (John 16:28), yet, having been such when He was down here, He never forgets it, but knows by experience the heart of a stranger still! But how poorly it would express His tender love for "His own," to say that He does "not oppress" those who are "strangers" as following Him who was once a stranger here Himself, and having won their hearts, has carried them up to to heaven where He is! Nay, "He is able to succour them," and He loves to do it; and He does it as One who has Himself "suffered, being tempted."

The strangers in Israel were objects of Jehovah's special care, and were not to be "oppressed," even by His own people. How touching the recollection, that when "the Son of his love" was a stranger in this world, "He was oppressed and afflicted," and though it is said (Ps. 103:6), "Jehovah executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed," yet in His case righteousness and judgment were executed against, and not for Him! "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd" (Zech. 13:7). "He was made sin for us," and righteousness must be against Him on the cross before it could be exercised for Him in resurrection and glory, and for us in Him, and through Him. But now He is crowned with that glory to which He has won new titles, and which He will shortly share with those whom the Father has "purchased" with the blood of His own, and has "given" to His dear Son (John 17:2,6,9,11,12,24). And so the blessed Lord Jesus now is no more a stranger, ... yet He is "the same" - though "ascended up far above all heavens," as He was in weariness at Sychar's lonely well, or in weeping with the Bethany mourners. Nor does He forget in the glory of His present place, the pressure on His spirit of what He met with and witnessed in this world, that knew and owned Him not. And His heart of love has cherished interests down here among the "little flock" of His chosen and redeemed ones. Surely He loves them all. "His own which are in the world," He loves "unto the end." But are there not some among them who may especially enjoy the sweetness of reflecting that the Lord knows their path and their heart, as having trod the same path Himself? It was the heart of a "stranger" that Israel knew, for such they had been in Pharaoh's land, "Seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." Was it not just this that Jesus was in the world? -- His own world, yet unknown in it (John 1:10).

Brought to an "inn," the place of strangers and sojourners to be born, but no room for Him even there! Not even a wayfarer's accommodation in the world full without Him. Rich and increased with goods, and having "need of nothing," as they thought, yet really the land of the "mighty famine," and He alone able to meet the need and fill the hungry with good things, yet for Him "no room!"

"O ever homeless Stranger
Thus dearest Friend to me,
An outcast from the manger,
That Thou might'st with us be!"

And if a certain scribe thought it would be a fine thing to follow One possessed of such extraordinary power and resources as He, the Lord would let Him know that it was a stranger whom he essayed to follow, not to a hole or a nest, but to where He had no place "to lay his head." Such was the path of Jesus here; and hence He knows, by experience and recollection, "the heart of a stranger." Dear reader, does He know your heart and path in this way? If I am finding a nest and rest in this world where He never even sought one, making myself a home where He had not a place to lay His head, I cannot have the consciousness that He knows my heart in this sense. To be sure He knows all about me, for all things are naked and open to His eyes. He knows all about the persons He speaks of in Matt. 7:22, who have prophesied in His name, but to the persons themselves He will say, "I never knew you." So also He knows what sin is - who knows or can know, as He who on the cross bore its judgment, what the enormity of sin is as against God? Yet it remains true that "He knew no sin" (2 Cor. 5:21). And no more does He know the heart of one of His professed followers, who would settle down and make himself at home, where He has called him to be "a stranger and a pilgrim."

But if, on the other hand - like Moses in the bosom of his family, in a land where he was for a while "content to dwell," yet confessing himself, in his son's name, to be a stranger there - you can look up to the Lord from the midst of whatever comforts His gracious hand had surrounded you with, and honestly say, "This is not my rest, Lord; a stranger confessed, Lord; I wait to be blessed at Thy coming again." If thus you can appeal to Him who knoweth all things, and tell Him you have not ceased to be a stranger in a strange land, but would, like Rebekah, gladly slide down from the camel's back at the first glimpse of Himself; then you can delight yourself in this, that He has been before you across this desert, Himself, "a stranger here," and, hence, knows, not your circumstances only, but your heart in all its loneliness, "for He has felt the same." And He provides for us that, if subject to the leading and teaching of "the other Comforter," we may even here

know that which is the very joy of the Father's house itself, even communion with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. He, once a stranger, enters into all the exercises of our hearts as strangers where we are, and He would have us to enter in faith, by His spirit, into all the tender love and sympathy of His heart where He is (John 16:13,14).

W.T. in Words of Truth, vol. 7, pp. 150-152.

EXTRACT

"Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." If you are a believer, He has sent the Spirit of His Son into your heart, whereby you cry Abba, Father. The heart gets its blessed rest in sonship simply by believing in Christ Jesus. The Spirit of His Son in the heart enables its happy throbbings to be expressed, crying this wondrous new name, unknown to the Jews, of Abba, Father. God has set me in His presence as a son, and life flows down to me, so that I can look up and contemplate there the delight which the Father has in His Son; I can have communion and sympathy with the joy of the Father's heart in that Son: and it is this which gives the church its highest point of glory.

Does the thought ever steal over your heart, Well, there the Father's heart is fully satisfied — there the Son is, — and there I have my portion, for I can say My Father; and in that sense alone the Lord calls us brethren, thus alone can we be in association with Himself on the throne of the Father?

G.V.W.

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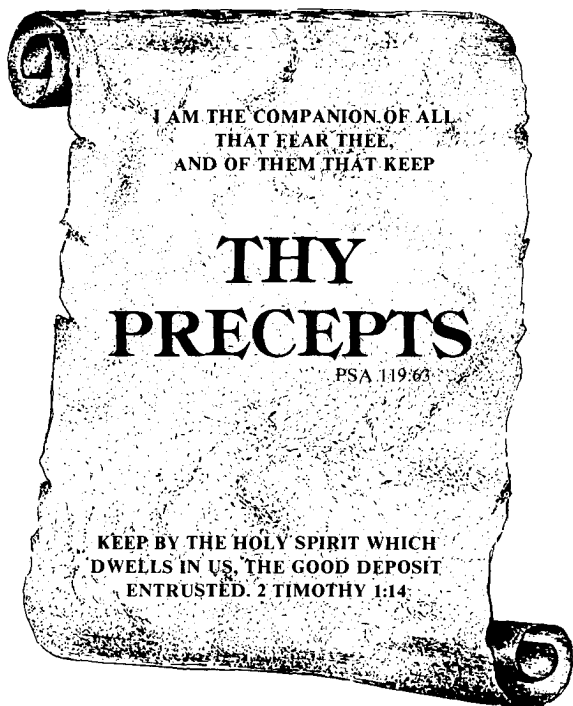
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THE CAUSES OF DIFFERENCE OF OPINION

The first and greatest desire of our Lord for His disciples on earth was that they should be one after the same manner of unity as exists between Himself and the Father. The oneness of all saints in mind and judgment would have been the most impressive evidence to the world; hence He says, "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Nothing could so much arrest and tend to convince the mass of men in general as the astounding, novel, unheard-of fact, that one mind and judgment was maintained by all believers in Christ; there could be no greater evidence that the one God ruled and guided each; that man with all his peculiar feelings and self-concentration had given way, and that one holy, comprehensive mind and judgment directed and governed each and all. The old saying, "every man for himself," is entirely contravened by the great truth that the saints should be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment. It is plain that with God there cannot be two opinions about anything, and therefore if there be difference of opinion in men, there must be a departure from the divine mind on either side, or, as is oftener the case, on both sides. It is therefore a very grave thing to differ in opinion from a saint, for it must be either that I am advocating what is not of God, or that he is. There should not be such a thing as agreeing to differ, though there may be a tolerance of difference of judgment.

Once that it is admitted that it is the natural mind in us which hinders the true and clear acceptance of God's mind, there is at least an opportunity afforded for exercising oneself before the Lord as to the correctness of one's views and opinions. We learn from John 17 that we are either of the world or of the Father. If we are of the Father our opinions must be in perfect harmony; no one could see differently from another; some might see more than others, but all would see in the same direction. There may be different sizes of the same kind of tree, but that is quite another thing to there being different trees with different ways and rules of growth, etc. If we had no judgment of our own, and if our minds were like a tablet on which nothing was ever written, and on which nothing could be written but the word of God, we could not have any mind but the mind of the Lord; and this is the great end of the scriptures; it is not merely that they give us light about certain things, but they form us into the mind of God about everything. You will never find that you learn the Lord's mind from any number of subjects which you may have studied in the scriptures; you must

study the revelation of God as one whole, and as you take it in, your mind begins to regard things as He does. Isolated subjects or doctrines to any extent can only inform you respecting themselves, and though quite necessary, they are of comparatively small moment to the great importance of being in the current of God's judgment about everything; and this wondrous favour you can only obtain by getting a full apprehension, if not comprehension, of all the revelation which He has been pleased to give us. A student of geography must learn the globe before he can determine the latitude of any particular country, so must the Christian student learn the scope and intent of the Bible before he can truly and fully define particular subjects or doctrines.

There are, I may say, four causes for the difference of opinion which, alas, is so wide-spread among us, and so humbling to us all. What can be a more humiliating picture than to see members of the one body, each of whom is a temple of the Holy Ghost, holding and advocating with all the earnestness of their abilities, opinions directly at variance with one another?

The first cause is ignorance. I think many are not sufficiently enlightened as to the word of God so as to be able to see or to accept what others see to be positively revealed. Thomas is an instance of ignorance when he said, "We know not whither thou goest and how can we know the way?" Nicodemus was ignorant; the eunuch was ignorant, and Apollos was ignorant. There is one distinct mark about one who is simply ignorant, and that is, he likes to be informed, and is really receptive; in those cases, and I suppose in every case where there is a sense of ignorance, light is in mercy supplied through some means. Mere ignorance, where there is not will, is no hindrance to the Spirit of God; hence the apostle says, Phil. 3:15, "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." Many are ignorant now of dispensational truth, and they argue that what was approved of by God at one time for His people is consistent for the present time; and surely nothing could cause a greater difference of opinion than darkness as to the varied dispensations from Adam downwards in contrast with a clear apprehension of them. One sincere believer will argue for war and earthly glory because David was a great soldier and a mighty king, whereas another, who sees the rejection of the King of kings, will know that all man's glory has passed away and that the only true greatness now is through the Spirit of God. The difference of opinion between two who hold to each of these creeds must be so wide, so opposed, that there could be no point of agreement anywhere. They differ so essentially that everything said or done bears the mark of the difference, and yet the mass of believers is in this ignorance of dispensational truth at this present moment. The

rejection of Christ is not seen, and there are very few who really and simply see the present period to be characteristically the church period; they do not deny the church, but they do not see that it was formed and disclosed consequent on the rejection of Christ by man upon earth, so that the church must be characteristically heavenly and not earthly.

Now the reason why this ignorance is not enlightened and corrected is, that with the mass it is not simply ignorance as it was with Nicodemus, Thomas or Mary Magdalene; it has grown into prejudice, which is another cause for the difference of opinion. Prejudice springs from being educated in a religious system. The conscience has been under the conviction that it is subject to the only true religion, and hence, the nearer the religion comes to the truth in external form and ceremony, the more difficult it is to free the conscience of that bias which I call prejudice. It is an immense thing to liberate the conscience from any religious imposition or ordinance founded on the authority of God's word. This was the prejudice of the Jews, and it ruled them to such an extent that they thought they did God service in killing the Christians. "They have a zeal of God but not according to knowledge." It is not merely the details of a religion which it is difficult to eradicate, but whatever has laid hold of the conscience as a special claim is clung to with tenacity. And thus it is with believers; what circumcision was to the Jews, so to many Christians at this moment is the law, as the rule of life, as well as the two ordinances baptism and the Lord's supper, in various modes of administration. Prejudice judges everything, even the word of God, in the light of the religious dogma which governs the conscience, and there is no breaking down prejudice but by really setting aside man in death. Hence the apostle Paul, a man of the greatest prejudice - one who could say "after the straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee" - was called out to be the witness in divine power of complete superiority over all prejudices.

The third cause is expediency. This often occurs where there is neither ignorance nor prejudice, and simply arises from looking at things in relation to man instead of in relation to God. James from expediency pressed and induced Paul to shew his zeal for the law (Acts 21). Usefulness is generally grounded on expediency, which urges the claim of need, apart from the mind and pleasure of the Lord. This was Martha's mistake, her work was a useful and a necessary one seeing as man sees; but she consulted her own mind and not the Lord's. It is amazing the divergence of opinion which must exist between a Martha and a Mary; the more expedient the thing seems to be, the more difficult it is to renounce it for the word of God. Nothing seemed more natural than that David, sitting in his own house of cedars, should want to build a house for the

Lord; and though it was good that it was in his heart, yet the word of the Lord countermanded it. It would be as difficult to effect an agreement between the man of expediency and the man of faith who is simply led by the word, as to make a man looking eastward see what the man looking westward sees. The man of expediency can always reason well, and has plenty of evidence to establish his argument. The man of faith sees what God says, and waits in patience to fulfil His mind, but there can be no oneness of judgment between them.

The last cause whereby the mind is warped and hindered from judging according to God is **covetousness**. Covetousness is desiring something for one's own gratification. There is the idol in the heart, and all truth is qualified or reduced in order to spare this idol or taste. We find in Ezekiel 14:4, "Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling-block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet, I the Lord will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols." If I come simply to the word of God I shall always find that the thing which most hinders me is the one which the word most rebukes; but if I am determined at all cost to save my idol, whatever it is, I must limit the action of the word, and this limitation will inevitably run through every subject in the word which I take up. Have we not discovered how differently and boldly we insist on a passage, when a covetous course has been surrendered, which was garbled and glossed over formerly? The covetous man not only differs from the fearless asserter of the full truth, but he shuns the teacher, as the Galatians and all that were in Asia shunned Paul. There is always a two-fold action of the word of God; one is deepening in your soul the truth you have truly and simply received, the other is correcting, and exposing either the working of the flesh in you, or its tendency; and when the heart is simple it likes both; and thus it is led into the mind of the Lord, and all who are so must have the same mind and the same judgment.

May the Lord exercise our hearts and consciences, that we may not be harbouring anything which is a hindrance to oneness of mind and judgment for His name's sake.

A Voice to the Faithful, vol. 8.

A WORD OF EXHORTATION TO CHRISTIAN PARENTS ON EPHESIANS 6:4

PART I "AND YE FATHERS, PROVOKE NOT YOUR CHILDREN TO WRATH"

Beloved Friends,

As a somewhat aged father of several children, I reckon on your kindness in bearing with me while I seek to lay before you a few thoughts that, with God's blessing, may be useful and instructive, chiefly as pointing you to the "Word" itself, our only sure and safe directory. I take as a motto, Ephesians 6:4.

"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Nothing can be more simple, and comprehensive, as in few words a code of instruction to parents. Where authority is vested, whether in parent, master or magistrate, there would always be danger more or less of its being abused. Power often engenders self-importance in the ruler, and this naturally leads to resistance in the one ruled over; the consequence is wrath. The father is here contemplated as liable to become the aggressor, and it is he that by the Spirit of God is so faithfully warned. I need hardly say that the wife is exhorted also as included with her husband, though the father is primarily addressed and responsibility begins with him, (an important thought,) though it does not end there. The Spirit of God, in His perfect knowledge of all things, as soon as ever fathers are addressed puts in a word of wholesome warning and admonition. "And ye fathers," He says, "provoke not your children to wrath."

Now all exhortation in the "Word" is based upon certain doctrinal principles of truth previously adduced and declared. This is of immense importance; the looseness and carelessness with which exhortations are ordinarily treated arise mainly from the fact that grace is not fully and rightly apprehended, the individual not only saved and having eternal life in Christ, but placed in the very same position as Christ Himself, in the presence of God, "holy and without blame before Him in love," - "even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us together with Christ, raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:5,6). Let any one attentively and prayerfully read Eph. 1:4; 2:1-10,

and see if they can make anything else of these passages than our identity in position and blessedness with a risen Christ, together with the forgiveness of all our sins. "As he is, so are we in this world." This is the doctrine of the Epistle; the work of Christ accomplished on the cross is the divine and eternal basis of it all. (Chap. 2:13-17.) The first three chapters form a beautiful compendium of Christian doctrine, the last three are chiefly exhortatory, interspersed as we might naturally expect with truths which are suited to act upon the heart and conscience at the moment the exhortations are given.

Now the Christian parent in this chapter (4) is exhorted as on Christian ground, in a position of the highest possible standing before God, "as Christ is, so are we" (1 John 4:17). He is to know this intelligently, that he may walk as a Christian in all the relationships of life, so as to glorify Christ; and here comes in his strength and wisdom as a parent, and hence his responsibility. We shall most surely find it our privilege to be filling up the position grace has set us in towards our dear children. We then answer to the grace bestowed upon us, and instead of provoking our children to wrath we are to exhibit grace towards them, because we have been made partakers of that grace ourselves. God in the riches of His grace has displayed that grace towards us, and because of it we are debtors to our children to display it towards them, not overlooking the exercise of discipline and admonition if needs be. If a Christian father provokes his child to anger, the Holy Spirit of God is grieved - that same Spirit by which he is sealed unto the day of redemption. If all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking are to be put away from the Christian, with all malice, and he is to be kind, tenderhearted and forgiving others even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven him, surely he is not to provoke his child to that which the word of God condemns, as grieving and dishonouring to the Spirit of God; this is all plain and simple. Upon the confession of naughtiness in our children, we are required to forgive as Christ also hath forgiven us, and to walk in love as Christ also hath loved us and given Himself for us. Thus while the great fundamental truth of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is fully asserted in the former part of this Epistle, and our union with Him as the result and consequence of this, and that we are in the presence of God "without blame before him in love", the heart and conscience are appealed to afresh by this blessed truth that Christ has loved us and given Himself for us. The walk flows from this, as its natural result, and it is a walk of love, embracing all the relationships of life.

But the parent may say that his child is already so disobedient that he cannot bear with him - his own temper is continually ruffled by his conduct, that he provokes his child to wrath, he cannot command himself nor act kindly to him as he

desires. Alas! how quickly the heart forgets how God has saved us, and still deals with us in perfect grace. Let no Christian parent say it is a thing impossible. Beloved friends, God lays no burden upon you when he enjoins this precept as "the God of all grace"; He gives suited and sufficient grace to meet your every need. "He giveth more grace." "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." "Submit yourselves therefore unto God." Mark the way in which His grace works. The case now supposed is that of a child whom the father has failed to bring up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Already the child is a source of sorrow and uneasiness; the father loses all command of his temper in the presence of his child, he provokes him to wrath instead of enquiring diligently before the Lord the cause of this sorrow, seeking thus to know how far he (the parent) may have been to blame.

Beloved in the Lord, let me beseech you to betake yourselves to God about this matter, and rather charge the sin home upon yourselves than throw it upon your children. Think you that the Lord's own nurture and admonition are lost upon us, and that He can let us take our course and share our condemnation with the world? Surely not! No, "As many as He loves He rebukes and chastens," and "we are chastened of the Lord that we should not be condemned with the world." But alas! for the laxity of parents in the bringing up of their children; "as they sow so do they reap," and yet wonder that their children should turn out as they do, as if God and not themselves were to blame. Like Eli, whose sons made themselves vile and he restrained them not, they have left their children to themselves, without proper restraint, and the result is generally what might be expected, sad and sorrowful consequences to them, and heart-breakings and bitter regrets to the parent. Unlike Abraham, of whom the Lord says, "I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him." The Lord will not hide from Abraham the secrets of His heart, but will treat him as a familiar friend, because he had brought up his children and his household in a way pleasing and acceptable to Him. But what were these deep secret purposes that were in the heart of the Lord to communicate to His friend and faithful servant Abraham, and to what did they relate? They were concerning Sodom and Gommorrah, and the terrible destruction and overthrow that awaited those wicked cities. What marvellous condescension on the part of the Lord thus to speak to Abraham as a man speaketh to the friend of his bosom, in easy and familiar terms, telling out the very secrets of His heart. It was a most blessed reward surely too for commanding his children and his household after him, in that he thus morally restrained them, and as might be expected from the moral tuition of such a father, they obeyed him, even in submitting to the painful right of circumcision.

But what about his nephew Lot? Alas! dear friends, the well-watered plain attracts him, and next to that lay Sodom; and spite of its wickedness and at all costs in he goes, but only to get his righteous soul vexed from day to day with the filthy conversation of the wicked, to be mocked by his sons-in-law, violently dragged out of the city by the angels, (in mercy surely) but against his own will, and finally deceived by his own daughters. Solemn warning this to parents who, making riches or honours their object (for Lot was a judge in Sodom), are in the end only vexed and troubled by the world, and distrusted and entangled by their nearest and dearest relatives. What sad and sorrowful results, and yet only the natural consequences of a worldly, covetous, and self-indulgent course.

What a striking contrast is presented in the history of Abraham! As a worshipper he is on the mount with God, and intercedes on the behalf of Lot and the inhabitants of Sodom up to the moment of its overthrow. But in the domestic circle he is the one to "command his children and his household after him," and the Lord said, I know him that he will do it. What a commendation, especially when we think of his advantages and privileges - how very much below ours! If motives so vastly inferior governed him, and brought out such blessed results, what manner of persons ought we to be in relation to the godly training of our children and households? And after all, beloved friends, be assured the secret of all right moral government is the knowledge of our heavenly standing, position and privileges as united to a risen Christ, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Eph. 1:3; 2:4-7).

Reverse the order and train your child for the world or "to make the best of both worlds" as men speak nowadays; teach him to value the smiles of the rich and the great in this world and to esteem very highly the advantages the world offers to him for getting rich and advancing himself in society, and what have you done for your child? You have in truth helped to push him into the world from which (if you know yourself as a Christian according to God's thoughts) you yourself are delivered. "Who gave himself," says the apostle, "for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal. 1:4). Not that we or our children should have a good portion in it, but be delivered out of it, and because it is an evil world, a sin-stricken, Christ-rejecting world; concerning which the Lord Jesus Christ says to His disciples, "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

Dear friends, if Satan tempts you to bring up your children for the world, hear, I beseech you, the Spirit of God's solemn definition of the world and all that is in it, such as the heart of man naturally values and sets store by, "All that is in the world,

the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lusts thereof." Now, says the apostle, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Solemn and searching test this to the heart of the Christian, and to his conscience too!

* * * * *

"FATHERS, PROVOKE NOT YOUR CHILDREN TO ANGER,
lest they be discouraged" (Col. 3:21)

PART II "BRING THEM UP IN THE NURTURE AND ADMONITION OF THE LORD

The first part of the exhortation is rather negative, it tells fathers what they are not to do, - they are not to provoke their children to wrath. The second part is positive - they are to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," that is, bring them up for the Lord, and as the Lord Himself would bring them up. One is very naturally reminded of Pharaoh's daughter's request to the mother of Moses. "Take this child," says she, "and nurse it for me" I ought to know the privilege of having a precious child committed to me, to bring up for Him to whom I owe my all, "my Lord and my God;" but to shift or evade my responsibility by lightly throwing that upon another which the Lord has plainly committed to my hands is most surely wrong. Again, not to study diligently His own word in order that I may fully know how to bring up my child for Him; or to neglect to wait on Him continually that I may have all the wisdom and grace I need for this purpose; in either case the parent is surely culpable before the Lord. I believe the Lord is very jealous on this point, because He has put Himself and His ways before us as His children as our direct rule of guidance, in a manner that deeply involves His own honour and our positive blessing.

Does He wink at or overlook any naughtiness of temper, any act of self-will, any failure in affection or obedience, in His own dear children? Assuredly not; as a Father He loves them too well and is too wise to do that. He may have to rebuke and chasten them, as He surely will if there is carelessness in seeking to know His will or in the observance of it when it is known. And just so in faithful love are you to deal with your beloved children, both because you love them and because God your Father has so dealt in infinite tenderness towards you. Besides which, He does not overlook the minutest matter, as if it were of little or no moment

how one brought into such intimate relationship to Him should behave himself in **everything**. Has He spent all His love upon us, in giving us Jesus, His beloved Son, to die for our sins; and do we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness? What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? Surely this word applies to the inner circle of the relationships of life, including, of course, the parental relationship, as well as our outward testimony before the world. Dear Christian parents, be assured it is a matter of the very highest importance how you seek to enter into and understand God's ways towards you as His children. Study the character of your heavenly Father according to the revelation of His beloved Son, that you may know how to walk before your children in daily circumstances, that by precept and example you may commend His ways of truth and grace to your beloved children.

I said our Father passes by nothing in His children; I would urge this point strongly upon parents in general. I have found great carelessness and indifference about it. A parent should be indifferent and careless about nothing in his child. The minutest matter should not escape his vigilant eye, as it escapes not the eye of Him with whom we have to do. "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure and whether it be right." There is another very interesting and instructive scripture in Prov. 22:6 which I especially commend to the consideration of parents; it is this, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." In other words, know carefully what he is about; diligently enquire into the matter, with a view to the profit and blessing of your child, to restrain what you find to be evil in him, in order to train him in the opposite way - the way in which he should go. If you say what way? I say in few words - Himself declares it, "**I am the way.**" Is there any other? You know there is none, and yet alas! how many Christians appear as if they had found out another way of making their children happy. It is Christ and a large bit of the world, or it is a false Christ such as even the world can admire, not the Christ of God, **despised, rejected, and trampled upon by the world**; whom God has exalted and given Him a name which is **above every name**, because "**He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.**" It is not the Christ who, at the expense of everything to Himself, suffered on the cross, "the just for the unjust, to bring us unto God." It is not fellowship with the despised Nazarene, but an **easy-going Christianity** that prevails so much now, which, while it owns the cross in a certain sense, is so closely linked up with the world that the offense of the cross has ceased; whereas Paul says, "God forbid that I should glory, **save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ**, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

Dear friends, if you are content that your children should float along the current of the world's Christianity, which is certainly running on to destruction, bring them up according to the principles of the world. Yet let me ask you, had Christ any fellowship with the world? As a stranger and a pilgrim He passed through it amidst scoffings and insults, enduring the "contradiction of sinners against himself." Thus He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Is this the Christ you know, love and follow? or an ideal Christ of your own, like the pictures intended to represent a fair human form, instead of the Scripture definition of "a visage so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men"? A believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, if taught by the Spirit, knows his sins are forgiven and that he has eternal life in Jesus. The disciple denies himself, takes up his cross and follows Christ in the path of suffering and reproach. Should the believer and the disciple be ever disunited, or the disciple be above his Lord? "It is enough for the disciple to be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord." Thus it is counted a privilege to follow in the path of self-denial and suffering. But why are Christian parents, it may be asked, exhorted to be so occupied in their thoughts about the Lord and His ways? For this simple reason, beloved friends, it is to the Lord Himself the exhortation in Ephesians so especially directs you. It is in HIS nurture and admonition you are to bring your children up. If therefore it is Himself and His ways toward you that are the standard and the model, it is of the very last moment that you should know what those ways are.

The word translated "nurture" here is the same as the word "chastening", which is repeated four times in Hebrews 12; it implies bending or conforming to a certain standard, under a Father's hand (of course our heavenly Father is meant here), using and applying discipline for the good of His child if needful, but always in love. Thus are we to be imitators of Him as dear children.

The thought of discipline should ever be grievous to the heart of the parent, yet never shrunk from where necessary. Never as retributory, but ever as preventive or restorative. Never to avenge oneself, but to recover and reclaim, and if possible prevent. Therefore with all gentleness and grace, and as being ourselves afflicted in the sorrows of the offender, and in the necessity of the chastisement inflicted, which real love to them would gladly spare if it could. The truth of God, which fortifies the soul against evil and guards it on every hand, is preventive and premonitory. Good training of children will be of the same order, because it is God's order towards us, which is to restrain and deliver from evil and fortify and establish the soul in truth and grace that chastening may not be needed. Yet if needed, He never withholds it from His child,

neither should we from ours. "He hat spareth the rod hateth his child, but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying," or as the margin reads, to his destruction, or to cause him to die. In other words, it is a false, mistaken kindness that spares the rod, if necessary. To let him have his own way and not to rebuke him is lending him a helping hand to his own destruction. Alas! how many parents are really doing this, they spare the rod and thus spoil the child, or they spare themselves a little trial of heart, and exercise of soul, in dealing with their child, only to entail upon themselves years of bitterness and disquietude.

But the great secret of all the evil is that through lack of communion with God, they have lost the power of governing their children, and in reality are governed by them, as we may see many affecting instances of in the present day if we will not shut our eyes to the fact. [The home is] "the sanctuary of the domestic circle which God has formed as a safeguard for those who are growing up in weakness. The precious home (if Christ be acknowledged) of kind affections, in which the heart is trained in the ties which God Himself has formed; and which, by cherishing the affections, preserves from the passions and self-will; and which, where its strength is rightly developed, has a power that, in spite of sin and disorder, awakens the conscience and engages the heart, keeping it away from evil and the direct power of Satan. For it is God's appointment." Most fully assured I am that the practice so common of sending away young children from their own homes, and committing them to others, [as in boarding schools or day care centers permitting mothers to work - R.S.L.] is most pernicious. I see no authority for it in the New Testament; it is not a delegated power, but ruling and training them, that is enjoined. It is not, Ye fathers, commit them to others; but bring them up yourselves. It is too in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, according to the Lord's revelation of Himself and His ways to your soul, and not according to the thoughts of another. Ye parents, you are to nourish and cherish these weak, tender ones, and yet most assuredly, if needful, to rebuke and chasten them, and not "spare for their crying".

But you may say, all this is plain and simple enough, but how can I with such a weight of earthly care continually pressing upon me, train or bring up my children for the Lord, as He would bring them up? (for this I believe is the force of the scripture - Eph. 4:4). But beloved friends, let me ask who laid this burden of earthly care on you? Did the Lord give you precious children to bring up for Him, telling you to do it from the moment they were born, and then lay so heavy a burden upon you that you could not do it? Is it not rather your own burden, a self-created, self-imposed burden, and with which the Lord has nothing to do, save to judge and condemn

it? Be assured this is matter for deep, solemn, searching inquiry. Is He a hard taskmaster or anything less than a loving Father, that He should lay any burden upon you in the path of simple obedience to Himself? O no, He loves you too well for that. It may be said there are religious, benevolent, philanthropic and scientific institutions of the day; but are these to interfere with the plain, intelligent responsibilities of a Christian father in the bringing up of his dear children for the Lord, and as the Lord would bring them up? Nay, more, beloved friends, are you quite sure that this moral or religious machinery as some call it, so current in the present day, is really of the Lord, and such as the Christian can have to do with, as a citizen of heaven, looking shortly to be with Christ, and like Christ? for, beloved friends, this is your proper hope and this your assured portion.

Dear Christian fathers, let me say these claims are primary, absolute and peremptory; next to the wife of your bosom, the relationship between parents and children holds, according to God's order, the very nearest place. Moreover, the husband and wife are one in this place of intimacy and relationship entirely. Unless the father and mother of the children are found in the diligent study of God's word that they may know His mind, and in continued waiting on Him for strength that they may do it - thus walking together as heirs of the grace of life, that their prayers be not hindered - what moral or spiritual blessing to the children can be expected to result? The Lord is very pitiful and patient, we know, but He is jealous too for His own holiness, and He would have us represent His character in our family circles, and be evangelists to our children, reckoning largely upon His grace to make them His own children by faith in His dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word "admonition" in the verse quoted at the head of this paper is simply putting in mind, bringing to remembrance in order to arouse the conscience, and to act upon the heart, thus seeking to bring Him home to the one you desire to appeal to, that that object may be fastened upon the soul. The object here is the Lord Himself. You desire to present Him as an object of faith to the heart of your child.

But more, you ask the Lord to give faith to your child that he may embrace Christ. It is of infinite importance that your child should have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and very blessed too when he becomes a witness to the power of that faith in his father's house. It is a link formed that nothing can break, while all that is of nature dies off and is forgotten. A Christian ought to be an epistle of Christ which his child can read in the daily walk of the father and mother, intelligibly and unmistakably. "It was what I saw of Christ in my father, day by day," said one, "not so much what

he said to me, that acted upon my conscience and led me to the Saviour."

In conclusion, beloved friends, I do most earnestly and affectionately commend to you this whole epistle from whence the exhortation is taken that forms the subject of this paper. In this, as in all the other epistles, doctrinal statements and practical details as to our relationships, and the responsibilities they involve in our everyday life and circumstances, are beautifully brought out in various parts of the epistle, in perfect harmony, and often blended together or put side by side. This is of the last importance in reading the epistle which, while it is at the very height of God's counsels as to Christ and the church, comes down to the minutest practical details of daily life.

It is the knowledge of redemption and the forgiveness of our sins, of our position as being one and the same with the risen and glorified Son of man at God's right hand, and of all the exalted privileges and blessings connected therewith, that gives such divine preciousness to the whole of this epistle, and such emphasis and importance to every precept and exhortation it contains. As soon as ever I see the church there in union with her risen and glorified Head, perfect and complete according to the mind and heart of God, even as Christ Himself, "without blame before him in love," I can but bow my head and worship and adore. For my individual blessing and godly walk through this sin-stricken world I must see and know myself as a member of this body, of which Christ is the Head in heaven; that there is my life, that there am I (as possessed of this new life) identified with Him. Now from that point I take my stand, as "risen with Christ I seek the things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." I judge of things down here and form my estimate of their value and importance according to the place I occupy before God in His beloved Son in heaven. Before Him I am without spot, because of the acceptability of the work of Christ to God on my behalf. God sees me in Christ and delights in me. The conscious enjoyment of this position, through the power of the Holy Ghost, is my privilege; this I shall realize if I am intelligent as to the mind of God and walk in faithfulness to, and according to, the light given. Then will there be power in Christian parents to walk before their children so as to glorify God, when, according to this epistle, they see themselves blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; as dead and risen with Christ, and as members of the one body of which He is the Head. Then, instead of training their children up for the world, and according to its principles, it will be for heaven, the happy home of their own hearts, to which they will long and desire to bring all their children with them, around the person of the Lamb that was slain to redeem us "unto God by his blood, making us kings

and priests unto God and his Father, to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Rev. 1:6; 5:9,10).

* * * * *

"THAT THEY (THE AGED WOMEN) MAY TEACH THE YOUNG WOMEN TO BE SOBER, TO LOVE THEIR HUSBANDS, TO LOVE THEIR CHILDREN, TO BE DISCREET, CHASTE, **KEEPERS** AT HOME, GOOD, OBEDIENT TO THEIR OWN HUSBANDS, THAT THE WORD OF GOD BE NOT BLASPHEMED" (Titus 2:4,5).

"PRAY WITHOUT CEASING."

Abridged by R.S. Lundin from an old paper by J. I.

THE NIV & THE TRANSLATION BY J.N.D. SEVERAL DOCTRINES CONSIDERED

*(Concluded from page 26
in March/April issue)*

Pages 48 through 56 contain the concluding half of the examination of some doctrines in the New International Version. The peculiar arrangement of the article is in view of possibly reproducing it as a separate paper (which additionally would contain an index and a scripture index) if there was a demand for it. The estimated price is \$1.50 each, subject to the regular PTP quantity discounts.

HOLINESS UNDERMINED

In the NIV, 1 Cor. 5:6 reads, "Don't you know a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough?" Compare Gal. 5:9.

Here again we see interpretation substituted for translation. While the fact stated by the NIV is true enough, the point is changed. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. The whole lump is leavened long before everyone is committing the sin. The presence of tolerated leaven anywhere in the lump leavens the lump. There are actually Christians, who, in their anxiety to escape the force of this and the resultant responsibility for associations, claim that the lump is not leavened until everyone in the congregation is committing the sin.

I say "tolerated leaven" because the apostle did not yet say they were leavened, so losing the new lump status. He warned them that if they did not purge out the leaven they would no longer be a new lump. He told them to answer in practice to what they were (in Christ), i.e., unleavened. In Christ, the saints are viewed as unleavened. In practice, they may indeed be leavened — not only because one might be engaging in such evil, but as being part of a congregation where such evil is tolerated. Then the lump is leavened. The presence of known, tolerated leaven changes the character of the lump from an unleavened lump into a leavened lump. This the NIV hides.

And if the lump, as such, is leavened, then association in breaking bread in such a lump leavens a person. This affects reception elsewhere and so this truth is resisted. Most Christians want an easier path. Such shirk responsibility. But we must not receive from a leavened lump because all in that lump are leavened by association with it. To receive one coming from such a lump is to receive one who is leavened.

In 1 Cor. 11:19, the NIV reads, "No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God's approval". 1 Cor. 11:18 speaks of divisions, i.e., schisms -- for example, rips as in a garment that do not rend it into separate pieces. But 1 Cor. 11:19 speaks of heresy (hairesis, Englishman's, p. 17), or sect; for example, when a garment is rent into separate pieces. As W. Kelly said, 'The word denomination has been gotten up to hide the sin and shame of sect'. The NIV is hiding all this also.

Concerning the word ekkathairo (Englishman's, p. 227), "purge"; the NIV renders this "get rid of" in 1 Cor. 5:7 and "cleanses" in 2 Tim. 2:21. "Purge" in both places helps us in understanding our responsibility. In 2 Tim. 2:21 JND has "purified himself from these" with an excellent footnote.

Think of the ease with which practical holiness could be undermined by "The only thing that counts is faith working through love" (Gal. 5:6; NIV). This is paraphrase and fabrication. A. Marshall translates, "... but faith through love operating". But, after all, the NIV does admit that something else counts also: "... what counts is new creation" (Gal. 6:15, NIV; "but new creation", JND).

DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH UNDERMINED

DISPENSATION, OR ADMINISTRATION

Those who understand dispensational truth as it relates to eternal life, the body of Christ, the hope of the Church, etc., have much to be thankful for in having the translation by JND. It is well to have a translation by one acquainted with the full scope of the truth, a spiritual man, an able scholar and one well acquainted with textual criticism — who translated the Word into German (Elberfeld) and French (Vevey) also. The NIV does not at all exhibit such an acquaintance with the mind of God as expressed in His Word. As with other lines of truth examined in this paper, the NIV shows either an ignorance, or a rejection, of dispensational distinctions and undermines the true force of various texts. Let us look at a comparison in three translations of the word oikonomia (Englishman's, p. 526).

VERSE	NIV	KJV	JND
Luke 16:2,3,4	manager " my job	stewardship " "	stewardship " "
1 Cor. 9:17	the trust	dispensation	dispensation
Eph. 1:10	the times	"	"
Eph. 3:2	administration	"	administration
Eph. 3:9	"	fellowship	"
Col. 1:25	commission	dispensation	dispensation
1 Tim. 1:4	work	edifying	"

Compare the NIV with JND in Eph. 1:10.

"... to put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment - to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ" (NIV).

"... For [the] administration of the fulness of times; to head up all things in the Christ, the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth" (JND).

"... for a stewardship of the fulness of the times ..." (A. Marshall).

The NIV would lead easily to an amillennial interpretation, for that system has no room for the millennial reign of Christ. The administration of the fulness of times is a dispensation with Christ as head of the heavenly and the earthly spheres during the millennium. The NIV obliterates this.

THE MYSTERY

Let us consider the NIV's rendering of mystery, i.e. musteeerion (Englishman's, p. 511). The NIV often enough translates using "mystery", exceptions being "secret(s)" (Matt. 13:11; Mark 4:11; Luke 8:10; 1 Cor. 2:7); "secret things" (1 Cor. 4:1); and surprisingly, "secret power" 2 Thess. 2:7; but startlingly, "deep truths" (1 Tim. 3:9). "Mystery" is imported into Eph. 3:6.

What is very disturbing is the translation of Rom. 16:25: "... according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past ..." (NIV). Eph.3:9 is satisfactory in saying "which for ages past was kept hidden in God" (NIV).

Yes, it was not hidden in the Old Testament, as amillennialists, etc., claim; it was "hidden in God". But Rom. 16:25 is stronger than "hidden for long ages past."

"... as to which silence has been kept in [the] times of the ages" (JND).

"... having been kept secret" (The Englishman's Greek New Testament).

"... having been kept silent" (A. Marshall).

"... more accurately, kept in silence" (M.R. Vincent, Word Studies ...).

Another Scripture that is weakened is Col. 1:26:

"The mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations" (NIV).

"The mystery that [has been] hidden from ages and from generations" (JND).

"From" is apo. A. Marshall translates "from", as does W. Kelly. This mystery was not partially known in the Old Testament times. The prophets never spoke of it. It was hidden from ages and generations. The church is not one of the subjects spoken of by the prophets. If saints would bow to what Rom. 16:25 and other scriptures state, they would turn from those theological systems that view the church as the continuation of Israel.

The sense is changed, too, in 1 Cor. 2:7 where in the NIV the dispensational bearing is lost.

WHEN DO THE SAINTS REST (2 Thess. 1:7)?

"... and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven ..."(NIV).

"... and to you that are troubled repose with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven ..."(JND).

"... and to you the being afflicted rest with us at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven ..."(A. Marshall).

The NIV interprets here (as it so often does), not translates. It states that the relief will happen at the revelation. The text does not state that the relief will begin then. It tells us that the saints will be at rest when the judgment falls. The teaching of Scripture shows that the saints will be in glory some time before the judgment falls (at the revelation) and so we will be at rest when it does fall.

THE RAPTURE

Consistent with this treatment of 2 Thess. 1:7 is the translation of 2 Thess. 2:1.

"Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers, not to become easily unsettled or alarmed ..."(NIV).

Here again is a post-tribulational or amillennial translation. This passage opened JND's understanding to the pre-tribulation rapture. That would not have happened if the text means what the NIV says. As translated above, it merges our being gathered together to Him with the appearing of Christ in the glory. It sounds as if Paul is taking up the subject of our gathering together to Christ, whereas it is an appeal to our pre-Antichrist rapture that they should not be

disturbed by their persecutions as if they were in the day of the Lord. Our gathering to Him will precede that day.

"Now we beg you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, nor troubled ..." (JND).

Regarding using the word "touching" in the Revised Version (1881), W. Kelly calls it "grave mischief" (see his The Epistles to the Thessalonians, in loco). His remarks also apply to "concerning" in the NIV.

ISRAEL'S ADOPTION

There will be a future for Israel (Rom. 11:26 etc.). Romans 9:4 reads, in part, in the NIV, "Theirs is the adoption of sons." The words "of sons" is redundant at best. Adoption means sonship. This text refers to Israel's national adoption; the place that the nation, as such, will have under the Messiah in the millennium. "Of sons" weakens this and prepares the mind for some such notion as the post-millennial and post-tribulational notion that Israel will have a place in the church, on earth, in the millennium.

THE ISRAEL OF GOD

Theology tells us that the church is the Israel of God. This is part of a system that sees the church as the continuation of Israel.

Gal. 6:16 reads, "And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace upon them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God" (JND). The NIV seeks to merge these two groups, "Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule, even to the Israel of God" (NIV). A Marshall has "... and on the Israel of God."

The saints are not always looked at in their body character, i.e., as members of one body. Sometimes believing Gentiles are mentioned and sometimes believing Jews. We have both groups noticed in Gal. 6:16. "The Israel of God" refers to believing Jews just as "the election" in Rom. 11:7 does. Note also that some of the adherents of the theological systems cited above tell us that a Christian is a true Jew (Rom. 2:29). A true Jew is one who is one inwardly as well as outwardly. He is one of the Israel of God. The NIV evacuates the force of Gal. 6:16.

THE TESTIMONY OF OUR LORD

The NIV renders 2 Tim. 1:8, "So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord" A. Marshall translates, "the testimony of the Lord."

We ought not to be ashamed to testify about our Lord, but this does not represent the real force of this passage. The following extract from The Christian Friend, 1882, pp. 268, 269, sets out the true bearing of "the testimony of our Lord."

It has long since been pointed out, that the proclamation of accepted truths involves no reproach ... It is new truth — whether for the first time revealed, or recovered after having been long ignored or forgotten — which tests the heart and excites its enmity, and which therefore requires courage on the part of its heralds. This fact will explain the special exhortations addressed to Timothy in this chapter ...

What then are we to understand by this term? Is it to be confined to the truth of "the mystery of Christ"? (Eph. 3:4). All will admit that this was the special ministry confided to Paul, while Colossians 1 makes it plain that it was not the whole of his ministry. It will be perceived that the apostle used the term "gospel" in this same scripture as co-extensive with "the testimony of our Lord," and he connects this again with God's purpose and grace, "which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and brought life and incorruptibility to light through the gospel: whereunto I am appointed a preacher and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles". (vv.8-11). "The testimony of our Lord" could not therefore embrace less than the whole ministry of the apostle, which he often expresses in the one term "the gospel," or "my gospel." (See 1 Tim. 1:11; 2 Tim. 2:8.) But then the far-reaching significance of "the gospel" in the apostle's mouth must be carefully borne in mind. It is so narrowed in our conceptions from its popular use that we are apt to forget what "the gospel" implies. It is a term that will include what we understand as "the gospel of the grace of God," and "the gospel of the glory," according to 2 Cor. 4, a gospel, which, in its fullest expression and consequences, contains the truth of the body of Christ. For the knowledge of the glory of Christ on high, that fact that He is glorified as man at the right hand of God, is fundamentally requisite to the truth of the mystery. As the glorified man, He is the Head of the body, and it is through the reception of the Holy Ghost by those who have believed the gospel (Eph. 1:12) -- thus sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise -- that souls are united to Christ, and made members of His body.

CONCLUSION

Some Christians have rejected the use of thee/thou, etc., in prayer. Various media foster this and influence listeners and readers. There is a connection, I believe, between the elimination of such address to God and the use of such a translation as the NIV. The elimination of such address to God will prove to be the first part of a package of changes. Where will it lead? - or rather, in what direction does such a change point us?

If there were no translation available that supported it, the elimination of such address to God would be extremely difficult. So one change is linked to the other. What is wanted, then, is a change, not merely in the way God is addressed, but a change in the translation of the Word of God that we use. But a change to the NIV involves much more than a change in the way God is addressed, as we have seen.

If the desire was merely to eliminate thee/thou (or "archaisms"), then The New King James Version (NKJV) might have been the choice by such as seek this change. But this does not appear to be the choice. The choice seems to be the NIV, which, of course, eliminates thee and thou, etc. Why is this preferred to the NKJV, even assuming a change is really desirable or necessary? Perhaps a complete break with the KJV and the conservatism it represents is what is also desired.

I suggest, therefore, that there is a direction in which such changes point -- not that everyone advocating change necessarily thinks so. But changes have their consequences and logical outcome. Let us weigh them before we find ourselves in a situation we regret and from which there is no escape.

In any case, the logical third step will be a drastic change in the Little Flock Hymn Book, or its replacement; and a replacement of the Echoes of Grace Hymn Book by something 'modern' (frothy and light).

The fourth step will be a depreciation of J.N. Darby's translation. This will be coupled with a depreciation of our valued written ministry. It will be found difficult to follow the teachings expounded in this ministry without reference to the KJV and JND. Why? Because, as I hope has been shown, the NIV is doctrinally inadequate, to say the least. It would represent a severe, retrograde step.

We have been unfaithful with regard to the truth restored to the church last century. We have not been humbled and owned our sin (cp. Ezra 9 & 10). When truth is brought to bear on the conscience, we act like those in Malachi's day, who repeatedly said, "Wherein?" When the truth is brought forward that judges forms we have fallen into, we prefer our forms. When there is a seeking to restrain the flesh, flesh rises up to defend flesh (Ezra 10:15; Isa. 59:15; Mal. 3:18; Jer. 18:18). Is this not unspeakably humbling?

Is it time, then, for the changes, outlined above, to begin? Will it produce more self-judgment and holiness in walk? Is it more knowledge of the mind of God for the purpose of doing His holy will that motivates (Ezra 7:10)? Do we think that the NIV will help to this end? I am persuaded it will help on the downward course, speedily!

There is a downward course and it is described above. If we do not want to arrive at the end to which this course leads, then we must refuse steps one and two.

APPENDIX 1:

(Is Doctrine Important?)

Scripture tells us that as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. The soul is the dwelling place of truth but the conscience is the door by which it enters (cp. John 4, etc.), else it is but intellectually held. What is in the heart is what governs conduct and this is why Christians so often act in opposite ways. All may have heard the same truth but it is not always received through the conscience. Sound doctrine dwelling in the heart is most important.

It was **early practice** to continue in the apostles' doctrine (Acts 2:42).

The **assembly at Rome** was commended for having "obeyed from the heart the form of teaching into which ye were instructed" (Rom. 6:17) and was told what to do about those "who create divisions and occasions of falling, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learnt" (Rom. 16:17).

One of the qualifications of an **elder** is "clinging to the faithful word, according to the doctrine taught" (Titus 1:8). All elders had to be "apt to teach" (1 Tim. 3:2) -- though some elders were teachers (a gift) and some were not teachers (1 Tim. 5:17).

The servant of the Lord must also be "apt to teach" (2 Tim. 2:24), which also does not necessarily mean he is a teacher (a gift), though he may be. Still, there must be this qualification in all servants of the Lord. Note also that Titus was directed to "speak the things that become sound teaching" (Titus 2:1), "in teaching uncorruptedness" (v.7). Timothy was directed to give himself to teaching (1 Tim. 4:13) but this must be founded on being "nourished with the words of faith and of the good teaching which thou hast fully followed up" (v.6). Very importantly, he was told to "Give heed to thyself and to the teaching; continue in them; for, doing this, thou shalt save both thyself and those that hear thee" (v.16). This refers to being saved from the grief that comes upon us from unwatchfulness over ourselves and inattention to the teaching of Scripture. As to Timothy, he was "thoroughly acquainted" with Paul's teaching (2 Tim. 3:10).

The importance of teaching is also marked by the fact that the Head of the body has given "teachers" (Eph. 4:11); and Rom. 12:7, in context, considers teaching a service to God. Such have an important function in the body (1 Cor. 12:28). There are those that labour in the word and doctrine (1 Tim. 5:17). There are matters that are to be enjoined and taught (1 Tim. 4:11), and Paul taught the same doctrine everywhere (1 Cor. 4:17; Col. 1:28).

All of us have responsibilities in connection with doctrine. Slaves were taught to "adorn the teaching" (Titus 2:10; cp. 1 Tim. 6:1), but we all should do so. How can we adorn it if we do not have it in the heart? We ought to know "the teaching which [is] according to piety" (1 Tim. 6:3).

* * * * *

Proclaim the word; be urgent in season [and] out of season, convict, rebuke, encourage, with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not bear sound teaching ... (2 Tim. 4:2).

Every scripture [is] divinely inspired, and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, fully fitted to every good work (1 Tim. 3:16).

THE LOVE OF CHRIST

John 13

There are, I think, three characters in which the love of Christ is presented to us, and is to be learnt by us; that is, his love to the saints, for I speak not here of his love to the sinner. The first we shall find, I believe, in the third chapter of the Ephesians, that is, his love to the church. Paul had been dwelling there on the mystery of the church, as in union with Christ -- its mystery as to its earthly calling, and constitution, "that the Gentiles, should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel" (chap.3:6), that the middle wall of partition should now be broken down, and that God should form out of Jew and Gentile, "one new man" in Christ, and one "temple," (chap.2) his own habitation by the Spirit. He had dwelt, I say, upon this external character of the mystery, and passed on, I believe, in his mind, to the interior, and essential mystery, in ver. 8, viz., that the body should be in union with Christ in heaven, for this is the "unsearchable riches of Christ," in view of which he becomes but the least of all saints; this is the mystery kept secret from the ages, and hid in God, when he created all things by Jesus Christ, and by which now principalities, and powers, are learning the manifold wisdom of God. It was, I judge, clearly in connection with these thoughts that he here speaks of the love of Christ. They are to learn it "with all the saints." It is the love of Christ to the church. And it is truly of infinite importance to know that there is a body, which Christ loves with a special, and peculiar love, and that body is the church. Christians commonly hindered by the trammeling systems of man, only think of themselves as individuals; they think of Christ's love to them as individuals; but they do not identify themselves with Christ's love to the church, as a body. But let me say, it is utterly impossible ever to enter into Christ's love in its fulness, without this; Christ is not thinking merely of individuals, he is thinking of a body, a body which God prepared for him, and gave to him (John 17:6), a body for which he died (Ephesians 5:25), and for which he lives, and which lives in, and by him (John 14:19), soon, too, to be presented in glory to Him (Ephesians 5:27). I say, upon this body, Christ's love dwells with infinite fulness. We must see this, then in order to comprehend with all the saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and know the love of Christ, that passeth knowledge; yet thus be filled with all the fulness of God.

This is true; yet it is well also to see the love of Christ to us, as individual members of himself. This is presented in (Ephesians 5). He there speaks much of the church, yet still he says, "We are members of his body, we are (Greek) of his flesh, and of his bones," we are individually in union with Him, He with us, "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." And how blessed to think that the love of Christ rests upon us, individually, severally, and specially. What a comfort is this in affliction, and trial! Our flesh might perhaps think that the Lord deals hardly with us; but how impossible! "No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but does nourish and cherish it, even as the Lord the church." Be the stroke ever so rude, and overwhelming, it is but the tender hand of Christ after all. It is wisely and gently dealing. It cannot do otherwise, for "no one ever yet hated his own flesh, but does nourish and cherish it."

But beside these two characters, John, I think, opens to us another thought, which "sealeth the sum;" and that is, that this love which is resting upon us, is a Divine love. That is the character of our Lord, so much brought out in John, viz., as the Son of God; and that is what ever gives it such value to the saints. And so it is, I judge, very much in that character that our Lord acts here (John 13). He knew that he "came forth (Greek) from God, and that he goeth to God." He was in the full possession of what he was, and what he has, "that the Father had given all things into his hands." And then it comes out, that, "having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end." Yes, it is a Divine love that is resting upon us, upon his own; it is the love of the Son of God; it is the love of GOD. The other parts, as shewn, bring out the love of Christ in constituted relationship to us; but this, as I said, brings out a higher thing still, the nature of Him that loves, and the nature of the love. May we learn all more fully that we may more fully adore Him "that loves his own."

I will not dwell here upon the nature of the action he there performs for his own; in type, the priestly intercession, and washing away of His people's defilements. Surely it is blessed to have such a One to "wash our feet"; and may we learn day by day more fully in quiet submissive love to leave all our sins there, where Jesus would put and leave them, in the basin — the laver. Let us not in apparent humility, but in real pride, and self-righteousness of heart, refuse to submit to this washing, saying, like Peter, "Thou shalt never wash my feet;" but since our Lord will have it so, even let it be so; let ours be the blessing, His the glory. "Behold," says Mary, the handmaid of the Lord; "be it unto me according to thy word." Soon shall we come where the streets are of pure gold; there will be nothing that defileth there; meanwhile, whilst wandering here, may we learn more fully the grace of Him with whom we have to do. It

is our privilege, as I said, to leave even all our sins and all our defilements there in the basin, or laver, of Jesus; all our needless worldly cares and anxieties we may leave in the same place too, for, after all, it is but the dust of our feet. Jesus loves us: it is our privilege, like John, here to lean on his bosom; let us do heartily whatsoever we have got to do of earthly business; but as to needless care it should find no place for one leaning on the bosom of Jesus. May sin and sorrow thus be more removed from us!

G., in The Present Testimony, vol. 3.

THE LORD'S NICKEL.

A story says that one time, when ice-cream cones were a nickel, a Sunday school scholar was given two nickels by his mother; one for a Sunday school collection and one for an ice-cream cone on the way home. On the way to Sunday school he was playing with the two coins when one dropped and rolled into the sewer. 'There goes the Lord's nickel', he said. It is not hard to see that his heart would have felt keenly the loss of his own nickel. So to keep his happy feelings he said, 'There goes the Lord's nickel.' And our hearts are such that we can enter into the consideration that moved his heart to give away what might otherwise have been devoted to the Lord.

So when the truth of God is at issue and 'peace' is disturbed, we may criticize one who examines the issue by truth and fact, as being a person without feelings. 'Peace' is the most important consideration, we may think, and feelings displace the truth, feelings distort the facts as they are, and feelings give away what belongs to the Lord. But it is evil for us to give up, or give away, what is His.

C.H.M., in Short Papers, v. 2, p. 241, well said,

We most fully agree with you in saying that our motto should ever be, "Truth, first; unity if you can, but truth." If unity be attained at the sacrifice of truth, it can not be "the unity of the Spirit."

ed.

MISUNDERSTOOD/MISUSED TEXTS

THE LETTER KILLS (2 COR. 3:6)

It is one thing to do one's own will, quite another thing when Scripture is used as a cloak to hide that self-will. And when such a one has brought before him something from the Word, including the N.T., which bears on the case the retort may be: "You are being legal; the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life" (2 Cor. 3:6). Thus is Scripture twisted to condone the flesh.

The "letter" does not mean the N.T. nor even the letter of Scripture; nor indeed the O.T. It means the law as the covenant. Compare the following two sets of descriptions in 2 Cor. 3:

stone tables (v.3)	fleshly tables of the heart (v.3)
the letter kills (v.6)	the Spirit quickens (v.6)
ministry of death in letters graven in stone (v.7)	ministry of the Spirit (v.8)
ministry of condemnation (v.9)	ministry of righteousness (v.9)
that annulled (v.11)	that which abides (v.11)
the old covenant (v.14)	Christ's epistles (v.3)

Another has said,

The letter was what was closely brought out in the Old Testament of God's requirements from man. The law on the ten [sic] tables of stone was glorious, because it was the voice of God, and God can do nothing but what is glorious. What are the two things contrasted here? The ministration of death, and the ministration of righteousness. If the Lord shows out His claims over man, no man can dare approach.

"The letter killeth," or pronounced death against the transgressor. The law condemns, and puts a curse upon all who break it. Then the man says, I have no life, and if God requires that I should keep the law, I am condemned, for I have not done it. Oh, the madness of those who seek to draw near to God by a ministration of wrath and condemnation!

And, oh, the want of heart for Christ that I would misuse this text as a cloak for self-will!

ed.

EYE SALVE

Revelation 3:8

In the symbolic language of scripture nothing is more clear than the use and meaning of such terms as light and darkness, sight and blindness. Light expresses truth, candour, uprightness, intelligence, the very nature and presence of God. Darkness expresses moral evil, that which loveth and maketh a lie, crookedness and deceit, ignorance and depravity, the nature and ways of men blinded by Satan. The application of the terms referred to, and others of a kindred character, is probably more general than any other in the word of God. Alike do Old Testament writers, the Lord Himself, and the writers of the New Testament, uniformly and abundantly use this language. No organ of the body so much as the eye, and no faculty so much as sight, is employed in explaining or enforcing divine things. In a word, the eye is the window of the soul.

If this be recognized, we cannot fail to observe the peculiar fitness of the Lord's word to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans, a closing word, as we may say, to the professing body on earth - "anoint thine eyes with eye-salve that thou mayest see." We have but to look around to observe into what Egyptian darkness that professing body is plunged. In the Old Testament we read "His eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men" (Psa. 11:4); here in the New, and three times over in this one book, we read of His eyes being as a flame of fire! Can the professing body bear His searching gaze? Can we, who, as much as any, form part of it? Shall we reply, "Master, thus saying, thou reproachest us also"? Shall we like the Pharisees say unto Him, "Are we blind also?" Let us hear His own words, for they are surely as suited, in a way, to us as to them, "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin, but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth." Solemn word for us truly! How often have we with self-complacency thanked God that we are not as other men, comparing ourselves with them to their disadvantage! Thus - but they do not see the One body, nor the Lord's coming! they have never seen separation and the heavenly calling! all in the dark as to dispensational truth! not at all clear as to prophecy! not up to Ephesian truth! only see men as trees walking! Are WE up to these things? Do WE see them? If so, will it not be bound to express itself manifestly in the family, in the business, in the assembly? Can we happily - before the eyes which are as a flame of fire! - appeal to these circles in which we move, as our witnesses?

Are our families and our houses unmistakably for the Lord? Are our situations filled or our businesses conducted in the fear of God? Are we in the assembly in all things subject to Christ? Or are we saying with a satisfied air, "We see, we see," while failure and declension is written upon our course in each of these arenas? Surely in our personal relations, whether in the home or the business circle, our principles and our ways should be the practical enthroning of Christ. Alas, how we fail! And as to the assembly, what scathing evidences are arising everywhere of departure in one way or another, in lesser or greater measure, from divine principles, yea, even in some cases, from plain, scriptural precepts. Wonderful has been the truth recovered and communicated. Apparently it was apprehended and appropriated in power. But when a crisis comes, then comes the testing. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart," said one, "that I might not sin against thee." How different this to the saying, "We see". Nothing could be more Laodicean than this pride of knowledge while the heart is barren because the word is not hid there, and the Lord is practically dethroned and outside. Surely we need, when come together as gathered saints, to guard most sedulously against every relinquishment of scriptural order and procedure, cultivating a quick and acute sensibility as to what is due to Christ, which as a delicate perfume emits its fragrance all around His adorable person! But if the word of God has not its practical validity, the authority of Christ will be undermined if not subverted, and a thousand things will go wrong. Laxity will bring in its train coldness and indifference and these will take the place of the invigorating energy and healing unction of an ungrieved Spirit. Only when Christ has his place, has everything else its place. Where every heart is a casket of the word, and a throne for Christ, it is surely well. Nothing is so fruitful in evil - whether as to doctrine or to practice - as the heart getting away from Him. If He be not enshrined in its deepest affections, the soul becomes paralysed, just as all nature would be without the sun, and thus the prey of every evil while knowing it not. It is heart-acquaintance with Christ, and not head-knowledge, which is the safeguard. The apostle prayed for the Ephesians, that the eyes of their heart should be enlightened. And he exhorted them, "Wake up, thou that sleepest, and arise up from among the dead, and the Christ shall shine upon thee." We may safely affirm then that the only effectual eye-salve for the saint of God is that "holy anointing oil" of Exodus 30, which was compounded after the art of the apothecary of myrrh and cinnamon, calamus, cassia and oil-olive. In other words, that "unction from the holy one", by whom alone Christ is habitually and profoundly apprehended and installed before the eyes of the saints, and instated with honour and affection in their hearts. Nothing is more clear than the fact that Laodicea has no heart for Christ. What

wonder there is no moral perception of what is suited to Him, no divine judgment of what is comely before God or estimable in His sight? If the Holy Ghost be a quenched or a grieved Spirit, our eyes lack the eye-salve, Christ loses His place in the heart, and the state of the assembly becomes the deplorable expression, not of the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, but of whence we are fallen, and of the crying need there is that we repent and do the first works (Rev. 2:5), lest we be characterized rather by Ephesian failure than Ephesian truth!

If there have been a real dereliction of what becometh saints separated to Christ, and in assemblies departure from divine principles no less patent than painful, the word of God losing its commanding place before the soul, the authority of the Head over the members virtually set at nought, and genuine subjection to Him a thing of the past, is it any marvel that where spiritual perception so little obtains, differences of judgment should so largely prevail? The apostle prayed for the Philippian saints that they might discern (judge and approve) the things that are more excellent. What can more clearly indicate a low state of spirituality than the not being able to distinguish the things that differ, or to prove the spirits whether they are of God? So little divine discernment by an instinctive spiritual perception of what is or is not of God! The truly spiritual man has his judgment formed and established in the light of God's presence by that word which discerneth the thoughts and intents of the heart, and he accordingly discerneth all things who is himself discerned of none. But never is that the case save where the Spirit of God has reverentially rendered to Him the honour which is His due, thus getting His own definite place as the only power for discernment, for it is He alone who searcheth all things, yea, "even the depths of God" (1 Cor. 2:10-16). Apart from that "holy anointing oil", the ointment of the sanctuary, there can be no such spiritual perception. "It is holy, and it shall be holy unto you." And may we not say, it would be far more venial to be confessing we are Laodicea than with Laodicean arrogance asserting we are Philadelphia? The Lord Himself bring us into deep exercise of soul as to these things, preserving us from saying in the pride of our hearts, "We see, we see," while lacking true spiritual discernment of what is nearest to His heart, our very condition being a louder witness against us than our bitterest enemy! "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:12-14).

W. R.

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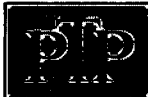
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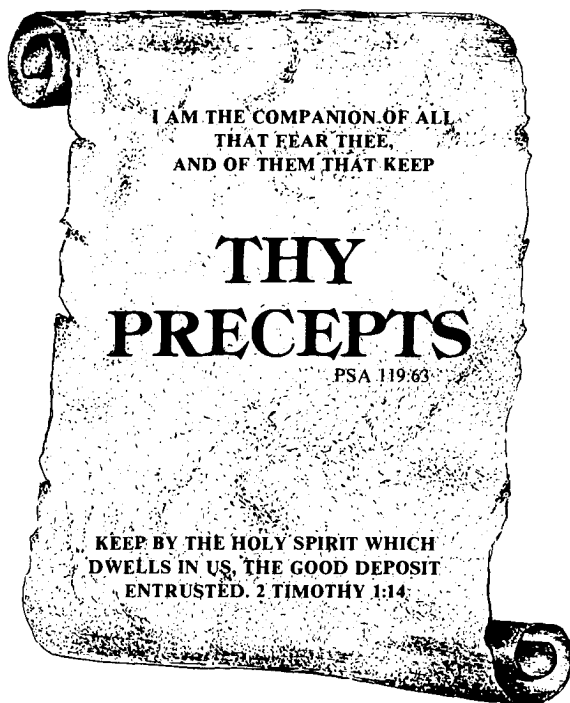
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THE TRAINING OF CHILDREN OF BELIEVERS

Dear Brother, -- I have had your letters seeking for help on the extremely interesting and important subject of the training of the children of those who are Christ's — I mean those of true children of God. I feel how poorly I can speak of such a subject; but am encouraged by that grace of which I learn so much every day.

You ask, How should we regard them? As children of wrath even as others? Part of the "world lying in the wicked one" with the wrath of God "abiding on them", etc., etc.? And here I think I would clearly distinguish between a moral state in God's eye, which all are in by nature, as dead in trespasses and sins, and the privileged place or sphere of blessing in which God regards the "houses" of His people; i.e., all whom God looks upon as attached to the head of that house. That there has always been such a sphere of privilege, certainly from the flood downwards if not always indeed, is clear to me from Scripture. A sphere of blessing into which God has brought His child, and in which He has surrounded him with wife and children, in order that the light which He has lit up in the heart of the head of that house may shine out brightly, and carry by His grace the knowledge of God into the hearts of those in the house around him.

All this is different from the nature of those thus privileged and outwardly blessed of God. Of course IT is just the same ruined undone thing as in the rest of mankind around.

But if God regards them merely as "children of wrath," He would not say to the Christian parent, "Bring them up in the Lord's discipline and admonition" (as we may read the passage). And here you must not settle it in your mind that it is believing children who are before the mind of the Spirit in Eph. 6:1-4. The Apostle leaves it without defining whether they are or are not, addressing them simply as "children". And He tells the parents to "bring them up" for Him (as Jochebed brought up Moses for Pharaoh's daughter) "in the Lord's nurture and admonition," and surely He does not direct this if He intends to cast them off again.

I think there is much involved in the "Lord's nurture and admonition." He exercises it over and with us; and we are to observe a similar course with our children. His tender patience; His persevering love which never wearies, never casts off its object until the end is gained. His faithfulness which never flatters but deals with us, so that we may disallow practically all that savours of our evil nature and the world from which He has delivered us. This disallowance of the flesh and of all that savours of the old Adam and his ways on the one side, and complete conformity to the Son of God on the other, is His aim, and characterizes His ways of discipline with us that He may be glorified. And as we grow conversant with them as observed towards us whom He has brought to Himself, we learn the sort of dealing we are to pass on to our children, under Him. We must seek to show them whence the tendencies and wills of the flesh spring, and where they end; we must disallow them in our children, as the Lord does in us, seeking to draw their minds and hearts to Jesus, and thus with patient grace and persevering love discipline and admonish them for their good.

I feel too that now the family circle is the normal place for the conversion of the child. I am sure that much of what we are told of children's conversions is but the bringing to a definite point what has long been there in the soul. It is most desirable that it should take its definite form in the way of a confession of Christ in the child; but what I fear is anything in the way of excitement by which the young susceptible heart is easily wrought upon, thus forcing into immature development the hardly perceptible pulsations of life in the soul. I believe that in general such cases give a weakly tone to the soul, and in result are often like the too early removal of the shell from the little bird, a feeble state of soul will supervene.

My impression too is, (and the exception proves the rule,) that the child of the believing Christian parent will, as a rule, seldom if ever be able to tell when he was converted, as we speak. It is true that, at the same time, the child or the parent may be able to look back to some moment when the faith and life which had been already in his soul took definite shape, and burst forth into activity and energy. Like the bursting forth into beauty and fragrance of the flower, which has grown up from the little unseen germ or hardly perceptible bud, until the genial warmth of the sun and the gentle showers of the rain caused it to open its petals for the first time.

How lovely was the unquestioning faith of Hannah! Her son, the fruit of her prayer, was brought up to Shiloh, not without the offerings of faith too in her own and her husband's hands. At as early an age as his weaning time, ere living faith could work in the soul of the babe, she said to Eli, "Oh, my lord, as thy soul liveth, my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto Jehovah. For this child I prayed; and Jehovah hath given my petition which I asked of him: therefore also I have returned, whom I have obtained by petition to Jehovah; as long as he liveth he whom I have obtained by petition shall be returned to Jehovah" (1 Sam. 1:26-28, margin).

The contrast too, in the case of Eli's house, is solemn and instructive; it illustrates the linking of the saint and his house in the sight of God. "In that day (said the Lord to Samuel) I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not" (1 Sam. 3:12,13).

Speaking, dear brother, of the conversion of the child of a saint, and noticing that the time of such is but seldom known, if known at all, in the normal state of things, I would cite the case of young Timothy. Brought up "from infancy" (HAPOBREPHOUS) in the knowledge of the holy scriptures, which were able to make him wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus, and trained by a pious believing mother, and perhaps grandmother, of the unfeigned faith of both of whom the aged apostle speaks in a most touching manner (2 Tim. 1:5); the blessed knowledge of the Word of God thus early imbibed into his young and impressible heart, and known as a child may know it too, paved the way for that moment when the life it brought to his soul burst forth into the liberty of grace and knowledge of Christ through the apostle Paul when at Lystra, who names him his "own son in the faith".

Such I believe to be a true example of the conversion of the child of believing parents. He has the priceless boon of being in the circle where the name of Jesus is a household word, and the great circumstance and business of the lives of his parents. His parents feel that they have received him back from the Lord to be brought up under the yoke of Christ from the earliest moments of his existence, and they feel too that

the One who has directed them to do this will not in vain be trusted in for that quickening of soul which he needs, as all do, that he may live indeed. They bring him up in the faith of Christ, never for a moment casting a doubt across his young and impressible heart that he is not the Lord's. They teach him the way that God forgives and saves through the precious blood of Jesus Christ; they explain how the grace of God is received; they show the little one the awful results of unbelief, and of the rejection of Christ; they explain how real faith is known from the false and hollow profession around; they teach him that obedience and those desires to please the Lord under whose yoke he is brought up are the true way in which the life of God displays itself in man. And thus by these teachings the conscience is awakened, and when, alas, failures in these things are seen, the necessity and meaning of the confession of sins and the unburdening of the soul to Christ is pressed and encouraged. The desire too to make known to the Lord the wants of the heart for self or others are directed to their proper outflow - prayer: all these things lead the child onward to a confidence in God, and he grows up to Christ, as he does by the food of infancy by which his natural powers have been gradually developed.

While all this training goes on, how a true-hearted parent will wait on God in secret, that that sovereign quickening power which belongs to Him alone may be put forth in behalf of his child, who he knows is by nature "dead in trespasses and sins."

You will remark too, dear brother, that it is in the "nurture (discipline) and admonition of the Lord." This implies reverence for and owning the authority of One who is over the child. It does not imply a relationship as "Father" or "Christ;" the co-relatives of which would be "son" or "child" and "member of His body." This is important too; because while none can truly please Him but those who are in relationship with Him, still the word "Lord" does not necessarily and exclusively mean this.

To treat children otherwise than thus is in my mind to injure their souls and hinder the work of God's grace as far as we can do it. If a child finds his parent habitually treating him as outside the pale even of external relationship with God (compare Deut. 14:2 with Eph. 2:3; also 1 Cor. 7:14) and hears him praying for him as an unsaved one, he grows up in the thought (which may be true) that this is so. He is led to look

at conversion as something to come to him some day perhaps, and perhaps not. Instead of fixing the eye on Christ and wholly away from himself, he turns it inwards, and thus is injured and hindered in soul: thrown back, it may be for a long season, in darkness, which occupation with self must do, while, if dealt with otherwise, he might, through grace, have been enjoying the favour of God which is better than life.

How Moses indignantly refused such a compromise of Satan as that proposed by Pharaoh (Ex. 10), "Go now ye that are men," with his reply, "We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters," etc., and how often do Christian parents fall into the same wile of the enemy and separate as to the external ground of blessing between the parents and the children both in their own minds and the training they give them. Nay! All must be, as with Noah of old, in the same place of blessing. "Come thou and all thy house into the ark," tells this blessed way of God's goodness and mercy. "Thee have I seen righteous before me," tells of the head of the house being blessed in soul; and even his son, who alas afterwards dishonoured his father, entered with him into the place of safety.

Surely a wise parent will not regard his child as a child of God ere he sees the signs of a quickened conscience and the fear of the Lord in him, but he seeks to lead his heart to Christ in practice, conversation and ways; and thus, dependence on God, thankfulness of heart for His mercies, obedience to His will, is impressed upon his heart, and the faith of a parent will be answered of God in giving living faith to his child. I believe we ought to count on God for our children - every one of them - and where there is true faith in a parent as to this, He who gave it will answer it in making them His own.

There are many lines of thought in connection with this most interesting subject which we might enter upon, and, if the Lord will, we may do so in another letter.

Affectionately yours in Him,

F. G.

From Words of Truth, Vol. 7, pp. 36-40.)

ON MINISTERING CHRIST

The Scriptures testify of Christ. Our Lord said, "They are they which testify of me." Whatever else they may set forth, it is clear that the great subject of God's revelation to man is Christ Jesus the Lord. In various ways, by many instruments, at different times, and under manifold circumstances, the divine glory of His person, His perfect manhood, His moral excellencies, His infinite perfections, His finished work, His fulness, and His offices are blessedly presented to us in the Scriptures of eternal truth.

In our Lord's personal ministry, wherever He was, He declared the Father, and so perfectly showed in His ways and words the characteristics of Him who sent Him, that He could truly say at the close, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father;" and His dealings with those around manifested that He was "full of grace and truth." Instead of casting out any sinner who came to Him, He opened wide His arms and said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He plainly declared that He was the only Saviour of sinners, and the Refuge and resource for His own loved disciples.

While constantly insisting on the divine authenticity of Scripture, and declaring that "the Scripture cannot be broken," He was Himself the living expression of it. The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us. In the sacred writings, as the fitting occasions came, He was presented as the woman's Seed that should bruise the serpent's head, the Seed of Abraham; and yet He could most truly say, "Before Abraham was I am;" the virgin's Child, and yet Emmanuel; the Son given, and yet the perfect Man. Scripture spake of Him as David's son, and yet being David's Lord; the offspring of David, and yet the root; Son of man, yet Son of God. There we read of Him as the Prophet that was to be raised up, the Priest after Melchisedec's order, and the King who shall yet sit on the throne of His father David, and reign over the house of Jacob for ever, of whose kingdom there shall be no end. Songs of triumph and of joy referred to Him; prophets testified by the Spirit of His sufferings, and the glories which should follow;

and we know that "all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." Scripture also teaches us that in the man Christ Jesus eternal life has been manifested, divine love has been manifested, and God has been manifested. By Him God's ways have been vindicated, His counsels and purposes have been and will be carried out, His word fulfilled, His truth established, His righteousness perfectly met, the holy demands of His throne fully answered. There we behold Jesus, when in the path of deepest suffering, even when forsaken of God, glorifying Him with perfect obedience, perfect love and perfect faith. There on the cross was the entire surrender of Himself, and a complete answer to every claim of divine justice on account of our sins. All was divinely perfect, so that at the end of the solitary way He could say, "I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do."

Again, when in company with the evangelists who were inspired to mark out for our comfort the footprints of His blessed path, He is sometimes brought before us as compassionately satisfying hungry thousands with a few loaves and fishes, with abundance of broken food left; and yet He deigned to accept the ministry to Himself of certain women of their substance. We look with wonder at Him at one moment, as the One who carried our griefs, weeping with the sorrowful and bereaved; and at another, raising the dead as "the resurrection and the life." Again we see Him weary and asleep on a pillow in the hinder part of the ship, and when awakened by His distressed disciples, commanding the stormy wind to cease, and the raging waves to be still. Yea, in every page of the inspired narrative enough is recorded to fill our worshipping hearts with wonder, love and praise.

Again and again the written Word speaks of this spotless One, who was "separate from sinners," as having once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God; who came into the world to save sinners, and died for our sins according to the Scriptures. In life we see Him resisting Satan, overcoming him in every temptation, casting out devils with His omnipotent word, and through death destroying him that had the power of death. Mighty Conqueror! In His life the repeated testimony from heaven was, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And God's righteous estimate of His death was, that it entitled Him to the highest glory and honour; while the rent veil, the raising Him up from among the dead for our justification, and the gift to us of the

Holy Ghost, most unquestionably show God's entire satisfaction with His atoning work on the cross for us. If we look at Jesus in His life, there is everything to win our hearts; and in His death, there is everything to meet our consciences. The perfection and glory of Himself fills our souls with joy; the value of His finished work gives us rest and peace. It is to Him, as Son of man, all judgment is committed, and to His name every knee must bow, and every tongue confess that He is Lord; for He will yet, according to the working of His mighty power, subdue all things unto Himself.

Thus, whether we look at the typical days of olden time, at the many shadowy illustrations of a former dispensation, or at the Lord's own ways and ministry in the days of His flesh - whether we view Him in His life or in His death, it is Himself of whom the Scriptures testify, it is Himself who engages our hearts, it is Himself that is ministered to our souls; and though some parts of Scripture appear to the natural man to be only dry records of history, or details of long-forgotten ordinances, they are often found to the soul under divine teaching to be rich in comforting or in instructive ministrations of Christ to the heart.

If in life our Lord emphatically endorsed the writings of Moses as concerning Himself, if He quoted the Psalms of David as the Holy Ghost's testimony of Himself, and referred to the prophets as also having reference to Himself, the same was equally characteristic of His ministry to His disciples after He rose from the dead. He assured some that their mistake and folly arose from not believing all that the prophets had spoken, and He showed them that He Himself was the great subject of Old Testament revelation and ministry; for "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them IN ALL THE SCRIPTURES the things concerning Himself." On another occasion He also said unto His disciples, "that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me" (Luke 24). Thus He not only authenticates the Old Testament writings as a whole, but assures us that their ministry is concerning Himself.

And after our Lord had ascended, and the Holy Ghost had come down at Pentecost, and formed the Church - the body of Christ - though there was greater power with the Word, the ministry had the same characteristics - the divine authority of

Scripture, and their testimony concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. The books of Moses, the Psalms, and the prophets were quoted by the apostles as a divine revelation and a divine ministration of Christ, so that those who heard their preaching, or read their writings, must have known that it was not merely something about Christ, but the ministry of Christ Himself to the heart by a power which brings home the blessedness of Christ, that takes of the things of Christ, and shows them unto us. To their hearers they set forth His person, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and glorification; they spake of the gift of the Holy Ghost, His Godhead, personality, indwelling, and operations as the glorifier of Christ, as well as the abundant love of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; while our Lord's coming again, His kingdom and reign, were constantly proclaimed. It was Christ they so presented to those to whom they ministered, that we are told that "they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus Christ." If Peter's line of things was the kingdom and Paul's the Church, they both enforced the divine authority of the word of God over the heart and conscience; and both set forth Christ. If Peter in his early sermons quoted from Moses, the Psalms, and the prophets, we find Paul reasoning "out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus," he says, "whom I preach unto you is Christ." He quotes from the Psalms when preaching at Antioch; and again we are told that he persuaded others "out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening" (Acts 17:3; 28:23).

It is scarcely necessary to refer to the epistles to trace how often the books of Moses, the Psalms, and the prophets are cited by the apostles in their inspired writings, and that too as positively ministering Christ to souls. Even a careless observer of these writings could scarcely fail to see that the great subject they present, whether occupied with the past, present or future, is the Lord Jesus Christ. Not only is He to be seen as the light and glory of every page, but He is the all-attractive, all-sufficient Object set before us to meet us in every state, and to satisfy every need of our souls. Whether Peter, Paul, John, James, or Jude be the instrument, it is the blessed Lord of whom they write.

Nor is Christ less prominently set forth in the Apocalypse; for not only is the Lamb, and the value of His precious blood, often made to pass before our spiritual vision;

but Christ as Son of man is seen judging the assemblies, and presented to each assembly according to its state, circumstances, and need. Though the book be a revelation for the most part of what had not been known before, yet the golden threads are so interwoven with the testimony of Moses and the prophets that the spiritual eye fails not to perceive that the many books of Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, form a marvellous whole, which, though written by many instruments, must have emanated from an Omniscient and Almighty mind. How truly then do the Scriptures testify of Christ, and tell us that which is concerning Himself! and how clearly too it is manifest that the Holy Ghost, who moved men to write them, has therein been the glorifier and testifier of Christ!

The apostle Paul informs us that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16,17). He therefore charges the faithful servant to "preach the word;" not traditions of men, but "the word;" not deductions from the word, however interesting, but "the word;" not opinions about it, but "the word;" the divine authority of the word of God which is for ever settled in heaven, and liveth and abideth for ever. That which is to be proclaimed (and especially because of the false teaching and fables which abound) is the word of God, which effectually worketh in them that believe. It is in fact the only basis for faith - the incorruptible seed by which we have been born again, and the sincere milk by which those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious can be fed and grow thereby. Can there be, then, the ministry of Christ, if the divine authority of Scripture be not enforced? May the Lord graciously enable us so to love the word of God, understand it by the teaching of the Holy Ghost, mix faith with it, treasure it up in our hearts, and so prove it as to be able to help others effectually by it!

H.H.S.

To be continued.

LAODICEAN UNREALITY

We are living in a day when men and their principles are being plainly manifested; it is verily "man's day", and there is, at this moment, a revelation of that expression of the Spirit, which is both solemn and momentous.

The lapse of fully a quarter of a century has found many as little spiritually competent or able to detect where the rights of Christ, or the principles of truth, were encroached upon, as others were proved to have been previous to that time. In the almost lull which has followed the storm of more than five and twenty years ago, a character of professed Christianity has sprung up and grown, which finds its most appropriate expression in the title **Human**; a degenerate seed has been produced of this stock, in whose hands, mournful though it be to say it, the honour of Christ and the principles and interests of truth are unsafe. At this moment another kind of professed Christianity allies itself with the former; for there are today the antitype of the two and a half tribes, as well as of Lot; these characters are now reproduced.

In former times "coming out" and separation meant what these expressions convey; the expressions remain, but, alas, little more! Nothing appears to be even challenged or questioned which those who first separated left behind them when they came out. Where is "get thee out" now? Alas, there is much **coming in**, or **being brought in**, as well as come in! There is a new form of language even; in this modern phraseology, exclusive means inclusive, separation to God means toleration of evil, unity of the Spirit means coalition, unworldliness means as much of the world as you can keep; and that which scripture designates as covetousness, which is idolatry, money-loving and making, and love of possession, means being prudent and sagacious, and by means of that exalts itself to occupy a place which spirituality and heavenly-mindedness alone could secure in past days. Verily it may be said that "judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey" (Isa. 59:14,15).

The dullness and insensibility to gross outrages upon the truth, at present prevailing, are lamentable. Now this is the spirit of Laodiceanism which is the last phase of the professing church (see Rev. 3), and it is the characteristic feature which will brand it when it shall be spued out of Christ's mouth. There are some peculiar snares attached to Laodicean unreality important to detect; it is well to observe there is nothing in it that would be an outrage upon the conscience; it is not in any way a denial in terms of the truth; on the contrary, the truth is owned instead of opposed, save perhaps that side of it or character of it which is so practical that worldliness of any kind in connection with even doctrinal acquiescence would be condemned by any with even the smallest measure of conscience, or else where the acknowledgment of it would interfere with the world, which so many desire to hold fast, and not break with. Alas, it is sorrowful to be obliged to own that even these exceptions are at present seldom to be found, so fast is the Laodicean shroud being wrapped around the church. Now Satan's great aim in this day is to secure and present in the same person or company of persons an acknowledgment of the truth with a certain credit for it, and at the same time a practical denial of it; in this way he most especially damages the truth, because it is exhibited as held by those on whose conscience it has no power. But not only is this true as regards the truth, it is equally true as regards the position to which the truth conducts the soul; this is accepted and boasted in, as the other is doctrinally believed and owned; so that in this great Laodicean unreality of our day the truth and the ecclesiastical position suited to it are both accepted. Now herein consists the greatest snare of this wide-spreading lukewarmness, that the truth of God can be accepted, without any divine answer to its claims; it is worse than if it had been openly refused, because in the latter case it might be supposed what effects would have followed its reception, but the other presents the glaring inconsistency of truth accepted and its practical power denied; this is the moral swamp in which Satan will land the church, and when thus, nauseous to Christ, He will spue it out of His mouth. This leaven is rapidly at work just now, and finds its most apt expression in principles and ways, openly adopted and contended for on every side. There is nothing which so well suits the devil, or flows on with the tide of corruption which is fast carrying the church into full-blown Laodiceanism, as saints holding a divine position without any practical effect; a divine place accepted and gloried in, and

yet the soul as little affected and controlled thereby as if such things had never been heard; and not only this, but open worldliness and looseness of every kind creeps in unchallenged, under the garb of this divine position; so that the sanction of the position is attached to the terrible indifference which marks the state.

In 2 Timothy 2:5 the apostle by the Spirit describes the state to which this leads: "having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof." This too answers to the description given of Israel by the prophet Ezekiel: "Also thou Son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee, by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another everyone to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord. And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness" (Ezek. 33:30,31). It also answers to the words of Jeremiah - "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these" (Jer. 7:3,4).

When the Lord Jesus, as Son of man, turns His eyes as a flame of fire upon this great unreality in its full blown state, mark His words, "I would thou wert cold or hot, so then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:15,16).

Another snare connected with the Laodicean state is the way in which man by imitation supersedes the real and the true. This is clearly made known by the apostle to Timothy in the scripture already referred to; Satan will reproduce the character of past days, he will have his Jannes and Jambres; and as Moses was withstood, so in like manner and by similar instrumentality is the truth being resisted. How solemn! May the Lord keep us very near and very true to Himself. Where this principle is not now detected, the Laodicean haze blinds the eye. Alas, how common a state this! This leaven is permeating and imbuing the church, of late years, surely and rapidly. It was foreseen long ago, in many and varied phases in service; the human way in which what professed to be the Lord's mind was carried on has been a source of disquiet to all who look beyond the surface of things. Man has been

acknowledged instead of being ignored; man addressed either through his intellect or his senses gives man a place, and inevitably plants the seeds that ripen into Laodiceanism in the end. It is not difficult to see how this kind of work begets a product akin to itself; the human generates the human, and what began in the gospel comes to a head in the church, and it needs but some skillful wile of Satan to introduce by an act a principle which violates the truth of God, in order to show how little near the Lord His saints are in their dullness and insensibility to judge. In what can such principles end but nauseous Laodiceanism? Truly as the acorn contains the oak, so do all such thoughts embody the great unreality spreading abroad on every side. Verily the church is fast becoming a leavened lump, and is rapidly reaching on that state of characteristic indifference to the truth, tested by Him who is "the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God," and is sinking down into declared avowal of a recognition of the truth with no practical answer to its claims! How soon then must the moment come, when it can be no longer in any sense fit for God on the earth. How solemn to see all rushing in that direction. Well may we say, "How is the gold become dim, how is the most fine gold changed. ... Her Nazarites were whiter than milk, they were more ruddy in body than rubies, their polishing was of sapphire: their visage is blacker than a coal; they are not known in the streets: their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick" (Lam. 4:1,7,8).

May the Lord in mercy in the midst of this growing evil preserve to Himself a few of whom it may be said that "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name" (Mal. 3:16).

W.T.T. in A Voice to the Faithful

NEW CREATION, LIFE IN THE SON AND DELIVERANCE FROM THE LAW OF SIN & DEATH

PART I: THE NEW BIRTH AND SEALING WITH THE SPIRIT

INTRODUCTION

The general teaching maintained in this paper regarding life in the Son and sealing with the Spirit is that neither of these is the same thing as the new birth; nor does a person receive life in the Son and the seal with the Spirit at the same precise instant that the new birth occurs. God does not seal a sinner and so there must be an interval, be it unnoticeably short or be it very long, between when the sinner is made a saint by the new birth and when the saint is sealed. God seals saints, not sinners; He seals those who have been cleansed by the blood. Hopefully, it will also be made clear, among many other things, that though a person who is born again is safe for the glory, as made fit by the blood of Christ, the word **saved** includes more than this. In other words, a person does not receive all at the instant the new birth occurs. Thus, for example, we want to know what happened when the risen Lord breathed on His disciples (John 20) who already had been born again. We want to know what 'the new creation' is and when it began. Also, later in this series of articles, we shall see, the Lord willing, that the man of Rom. 7, who has the "inner man" (i.e., the new nature), is, in the position described, in **bondage**, and not in the position and liberty of sonship described in Rom. 8. The man in Rom. 7 has not the "Spirit of adoption", i.e., the Spirit of sonship, as described in Rom. 8.

The general teaching maintained in these articles was restored to the saints of God through the instrumentality of the same servant of the Lord through whom dispensational truth was recovered: J.N. Darby. Since the recovery of the truths regarding 'abundant life', 'life in the Son', 'the new

creation', etc., due to various causes (such as lack of teaching; or wilfulness, worldliness, slothfulness), there have occurred misapprehensions and ignorance concerning these precious truths. In view of this, we shall utilize many citations from those who ably expounded these precious doctrines. Footnotes will contain additional references in order to assist those who wish to locate more help on the various subjects that we shall examine. May our Lord make these things to be valued by our souls.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE BORN AGAIN?

NEW BIRTH, QUICKENING AND CONVERSION

Distinctive Christian blessings are brought to the soul when the person is sealed with the Spirit. God does not seal a sinner; He seals a saint, one who has been born again. There may be cases where one is born again and sealed so soon afterward that we do not notice any lapse of time. In other cases there is a longer lapse of time. Whether the interval is but momentary or longer, the fact is that the person must be first born again in order to be sealed. Therefore new birth and sealing with the Spirit can not be the same thing. New birth involves the communication of divine life from God and thus the person has a new nature. He is quickened, i.e., made alive spiritually. Then when the Spirit is given, the person is put into the place of sonship before God.

The case of the prodigal son illustrates this sequence. The words "he came to himself" (Luke 15:17) picture the moment of quickening (making alive spiritually in this case).

I find in the case of the younger son, in the parable (Luke 15), a happy illustration of the various divine actions of God with a soul. When he "came to himself" he was quickened, and faith was in exercise. This produced a judgment of his state before God, and, as measured by His goodness, when he said, "I perish with hunger." This was repentance -- the action of the new life. Then came conversion, in, "I will arise and go to my father." Conversion means simply that the heart is turned towards God, which had been

turned away, from two Latin words, which signify to turn towards. Hence a man may be converted, according to its simple literal meaning, more than once; as Peter, to whom the Lord said, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren," i.e., when his heart was turned back again after his fall. But while one could be thus converted more than once -- the heart turned back to God when turned away (how blessed that it is so!), one can only be once born again, or born of God, and this never can be undone or redone.

Thus, when the prodigal was on his journey to meet his father, all the exercises of his soul present those passed through by the soul before sealing takes place. The father's kiss would typify the time, probably, when sealing took place. (1)

From this we see that there was a time between the prodigal's coming to himself and the moment he was put into the position of sonship. While traveling to the father, he had what I shall call **the spirit of a hired servant** (answering to Romans 7) and not the Spirit of sonship (answering to Romans 8). We will return later in this paper to the subject of deliverance from the spirit of a hired servant.

Repentance follows new birth. Before the new birth occurs a person has nothing with which to repent. There is no divine life in the unbeliever. Man is naturally lost and is characterized by the old nature within. He is a slave to it. He has not moral free-will, hence God must act sovereignly (James 1:18) to communicate to the person a new nature, a new life. The person must be born anew, or quickened, by the action of God, Who uses the Word of God. Then the person can repent.

1. Words of Truth, New Series 1: 212,213. See also Letters of J.N. Darby 3: 117; 2: 452; 3: 167; Collected writings of J.N. Darby 10: 217, 19: 323; 31: 260,261; A.C. Ord, The Glory of the Person of the Son of God ..., pp. 16-18; Things New and Old 27: 225; A.P. Cecil, Remarks on a Paper Called "Life and the Spirit," & Etc., pp. 18-22.

The new birth is not the reworking of something in the sinner or the improvement of something already there. No. It is the communication from God of something not possessed before; a new life. We are born of water (a figure for the Word of God -- cp. Eph. 5:26, 1 Peter 1:23) and of the Spirit (John 3). "According to His own will begat He us by the word of truth" (James 1:18) leaves us with no doubt. Water baptism is not meant. It is the Word of God and the Spirit of God that cause the new birth to occur. (Sealing with the Spirit is, however, a distinctly different operation of God). Other forces or causes are excluded by scripture: John 1:13 specifically excludes three things. "Who have been born," we read:

1. "Not by blood" -- not by natural birth; say, of Christian parents.
2. "Not of flesh's will" -- not by an act of one's own will, "because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God; for neither indeed can it be"(Romans 8:7). Cp. John 6:6.
3. "Nor of man's will" -- referring to someone else's influence. Cp. John 5:4.

And that leaves only "of God" as James 1:18 and other Scriptures show. All that is of man is excluded; and therefore the Scriptures show that until the new birth occurs, man cannot repent (2). And thus repentance follows new birth. Yes, the first action is the sovereign act of God that implants a new life into the person. Being thus born anew, the person repents.

Born anew is the Scriptural expression which indicates the teaching of John 3:3-8. The conventional expression in common usage is "new birth". This has less force than the words "born anew". A footnote in J. N. Darby's translation says, "Not only 'again,' but 'entirely afresh,' as from a new source of life and point of departure; translated in Luke 1:3, 'from the origin.' It

2. See Letters of J.N. Darby 2: 168,478.

is a new source and beginning of life." (3) Moreover, the new birth has reference to the Word and the Spirit as the source of the new life communicated, as well as to the fact that it is a new life come from outside of man and not something in man which is improved or sanctified in some way.

Quickening is, in the N.T., the new birth looked at in reference to being made alive from a state of spiritual death. ("Quickening with Christ" (Eph. 2) brings in additional things beyond mere quickening, but discussion of this is reserved until later). The Father, Son and Spirit quicken (John 5:21; 6:63). All quickened souls are children of God, and this is true in all dispensations (John 11:52; Rom. 9:7; Gal. 4:3). (4) Consult the word "Quicken" in Morrish's Bible Dictionary for the use of the word in the O.T.

Conversion means that one is turned about towards God. All persons born anew are both quickened and converted. All quickened souls are both born anew and converted. One who is a child of God as Peter, having failed as he did, may upon repentance of that sin be converted (Luke 22:32). This means freshly turned about to God, from the sin, but there is no such thing as another new birth. Peter remained all through a child of God.

IS EVERYONE WHO IS BORN ANEW ALSO "SAVED"?

Everyone who is born anew is **safe** for being in glory above. The blood of Christ makes such fit. But **saved** is a word that includes much, much more than being safe, blessed and essential as that is. Being saved includes new birth but includes many additional blessings with which our giving Father has richly endowed us. Indeed, we shall see that the new birth in itself does not include the blessings that are distinctive of Christianity, but that "saved," or "salvation," coupled with the seal with the Spirit, does embrace these distinctive truths, at least in the present dispensation. And this will help us to better understand the position of the O.T. saints as well as

3. See J.N Darby's stricture's on the Wesleyan view of these things in Letters 2:503.

4. See Notes and Jottings, p. 41, 1 vol. ed.

some of the children of God now. It is also a step toward understanding Rom. 6, 7 & 8.

Many valued writers have commented on the typical teaching of the Passover and the crossing of the Red Sea. (5) With the blood on the doorposts the Israelite was safe from the judgment, but God was outside and apprehended as Judge. They experienced 'safety' that night but not 'salvation'. They did not yet know God as deliverer, though safe from judgment. Read Exodus 14 and see how they were still frightened by the taskmaster. Their condition as depicted in Ex. 14 typifies the condition of the man of Rom. 7, who has the "inward man" (has the new nature) but is not delivered from the power of the taskmaster -- the law of sin and death (cp. Rom. 8:2). Such a one is not yet "saved" in the sense in which the N.T. speaks of a child of God who has been sealed with the Spirit, though such a one is safe and is born again. Such have not salvation (Eph. 1:12,13). Israel faced the sea on one side and were hemmed in on the other while the power of the taskmaster pressed upon them from behind. But salvation, deliverance and redemption were about to be obtained through the sea of death. (We will consider deliverance through death in detail later. Suffice it to say here that the Red Sea typifies Christ's death and resurrection for us. This is the destruction of the power of the taskmaster, and deliverance for the saint). Concerning the relationship between deliverance from Egypt and redemption, W.T. Turpin wrote,

For remember, redemption always supposes change of place. The word "salvation," in scripture, always means a change in position, though, perhaps, we limit it in our minds to the thought of some favor or blessing that would extenuate our circumstances spiritually. I do not mean that in what concerns us in this world, but spiritually. And so the Passover, by itself, was not redemption, no doubt it goes along with the Red Sea in the history of redemption, and, in a certain sense, the passover had a deeper aspect in it

5. See the expositions by J.N. Darby, W. Kelly, C.H. Mackintosh, and E. Dennett on Exodus. See the index to The Bible Treasury, The Collected Writings of J.N.D. and Letters of J.N.D. under the words "Red Sea". Also see W.T. Turpin, The Salvation of Jehovah.

than the Red Sea. But still, the Passover was the shelter which God provided for that people whilst they were in Egypt, and God was only known in the character of an appeased judge in the Passover. He "passed over" the people when He judged Egypt, but they were not removed out of the place of bondage, their position was not changed; they were sheltered by the blood, but they were in bondage still. The Red Sea took them clean out of everything they were in as to bondage, the Passover met the deeper claims of God when He passed through the land as a judge. I say this to make it clear to you that when scripture speaks of redemption, it means not merely that God's righteous, holy claims have been met, as they were by the blood of the Passover Lamb, but that the people themselves, who were sheltered by the blood, have been entirely extricated from the place of bondage, and completely brought to God. That is redemption. They left Egypt behind forever; they had done with it. And the place they were in, is typical of the position we are in, until we know redemption. Now it is a pertinent question to ask, Have you got in your souls the knowledge of redemption? I believe there are a great many people that have not. They know shelter, they are perfectly certain they will never go to hell, or come into judgment, (6) but that is not redemption. An Israelite was sheltered in Egypt but was in Egypt still. And shelter, wonderful and blessed as that is-- do not think I want to make little of it -- is short of what has been truly called "extrication;" redemption is extrication, by it we are clean out altogether by the mighty power of God, through blood and power. The blood has met His own righteous, holy claims; and the power has completely submerged every hostile foe that could raise up its head. Through blood and power we have been brought out of the house of bondage, and brought to God -- that is redemption. Liberty, and freedom, and blessedness are all connected with it, but it is not a matter of experience. There is experience, but this is fact, and it is fact for faith to possess.

6. I beg to differ here with the esteemed writer. Often souls in this position do wonder about the judgment and have no sense of eternal security.

Here is the wonderful thing that must underlie all experience, in order to have it upon its true and proper basis. I am speaking of a great reality that has been accomplished, whether I accept and enjoy it or not; and whether I possess it or not, at any rate it is there for me to take, possess, and know. And if I enjoyed it a thousand times more, it would not make it one single whit more true; and if I never enjoyed it at all, it would not take away from the truth of it. I am speaking of a thing that exists, and did in this day when God effected His own purpose -- He did redeem the people. And that is what faith always delights to rest in. It cannot take pleasure in the use it has made of it, but it always goes back to what God did; and there is no failure, nor flaw, nor imperfection, nor drawback in what He has done. And that is the estimate on which God looks at His people

For in Exodus 15 you find that in the very earliest moments of their victory, these were the notes of their song, "Thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation," that is to say, they were brought to God. That is the meaning of it. Though they had not trod an inch of the desert land, had not as yet got into Canaan, yet that is celebrated too, "Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance." No sooner do the opened waters of the Red Sea roll between the people and the hosts of Pharaoh, no sooner does God strike the keynote of that song on the resurrection shores of the Red Sea, than they celebrate the whole thing, not part of it but the whole. (7)

And so "Moses said to the people, Fear not: stand still, and see the **salvation** of Jehovah, which he will work for you today" (Ex. 14:13). So they were safe from judgment at the Passover, but not yet saved. "Thus Jehovah **saved** Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians" (Ex. 14:30). Now they were redeemed (in type, of course, Ex. 15:13) and in Ex. 15 we

7. The Salvation of Jehovah, pp. 6-9, 26. See also Letters of J.N. Darby 2: 313; Notes and Jottings, p. 107; W. Kelly, Lectures Introductory to the Study of the Pentateuch, p. 166; Collected Writings of J.N. Darby 33: 406.

find the first recorded song in Scripture. Only the redeemed have a real song and a theme, praise God. When redemption in type was accomplished at the Red Sea, when the power of the taskmaster was broken, then the song of redemption began. Now God was become their salvation (Ex. 15:2); and "holiness" comes forward (v. 11) as does the "holy habitation" (v. 13), "thine inheritance" and the "sanctuary" (v. 17).

"Ye have seen what I have done to the Egyptians, and [how] I have borne you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself" (Ex. 19:4). Through the Red Sea they were brought to Himself, free from the power of the taskmaster.

The crossing of the Red Sea answers to the consciousness, the knowledge, of the forgiven status in the believer. When the soul rests not only on the Person, but on the finished work of Christ for the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins, as Scripture speaks of that forgiveness, the person is sealed with the Spirit. And so Peter preached to Cornelius and those with him and the Spirit fell upon those listening. This is deliverance: "... knowledge of deliverance to his people by [the] remission of their sins ..." (Luke 1:77). This is the salvation of God. This is peace and joy, liberty and song, redemption and the knowledge of eternal security. This is being brought to God and making merry with Him (Luke 15). To be born again, but still to be in Ex. 14, on the road to the Father (Luke 15:18,19), in the condition of Rom. 7, is not to have the Spirit of Sonship (Rom. 8). "For ye have not received a spirit of bondage again for fear, but ye have received a spirit of adoption" [i.e., sonship -- which is in addition to new birth] "whereby we cry Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15).

The parable of the prodigal well illustrates these things. When he came to himself -- that is like the new birth. On the way to the Father he had the spirit of a hired servant (Rom. 7). He had a speech about it made up. He did not yet know the Father's heart toward himself. But he only said so much of his speech before the Father interrupted. **The Father kissed it all away!** -- covering him with kisses. Think of that moment when the son's place was revealed to his soul. That was when the spirit of a hired servant was gone and he received the Spirit of sonship, so to speak. This is "adoption", or sonship, son placement, and illustrates coming out of the condition of Rom. 7 into the liberty described in Rom. 8. The Spirit of adoption (i.e., sonship) empowers the cry, "Abba, Father" and

the returned one and the Father eat the fatted calf together and **begin** to make merry. That will never end! Yes, the Son when here in holy manhood, in the garden of Gethsemane, in all intimacy with the Father, addressed Him as Abba, Father (Mark 14:35). And we have been brought so close that by "the Spirit of His Son" we also cry Abba, Father (Gal. 4:6). How unspeakably precious this is. No doubt our Lord Jesus did all in the power of the Spirit; and now we have "the Spirit of His Son" to empower us to address the Father as He did.

Cornelius' case is an historical example of these things. There is no doubt that he was born again (Acts 10:4) and so safe for the glory. "Saved" and "salvation" are great words that include being 'safe', but also include the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins (knowledge of the forgiven position), with no more conscience of sins as standing between oneself and a holy God, and includes deliverance as seen in Romans. Now, though Cornelius was born again, and therefore safe from judgment, Acts 11:14 says that Peter had to go and tell Cornelius words "whereby thou shalt be saved" Thus, the distinction between new birth and "saved," or salvation, is clearly shown.

Then in Rom. 6, 7 & 8 we have the doctrinal teaching concerning these things.

Notice, then, that these distinctions can be seen typically in Ex. 12-15 parabolically in Luke 15, historically in Acts, and doctrinally in Romans.

As to the application of these truths to individual cases, someone wrote,

When a man is quickened, he does not always receive liberty. I have known a soul (who, I cannot doubt, being quickened, has gone for thirty or forty years without being sealed at all) to remain still in bondage of spirit, a lady who passes too much of her time in capricious judgments, too harsh here, too light there; the end of all which is that she finds the word a two-edged sword, which, while it has an edge against other people, has one against herself. Constantly doubting whether such or such a person is saved, she goes from one thing or person to another, but always comes back to herself, and never yet has seen for her

own soul that God rolled everything upon Christ, never yet for her own need been able to rest on Him as the Lamb. The consequence is that she is not what Scripture calls "saved." It is not that she doubts He is the Son of God, but she constantly hesitates about her own interest in Him when it comes to the point. She is like a person who would say, "I am not content with the High Priest confessing the sins of the people. If I could only hear Him mentioning my name and my sins, it would give me true comfort; but I only hear about sins in general, which I cannot believe to be a confession for me." This is not the faith of the gospel really. (8)

W. Kelly remarked,

Indeed I think a great vice at the present moment is making "salvation" too cheap and too common a word. You will find many evangelicals constantly saying when a man is converted that he is saved; whereas it is probably quite premature to say so. If truly converted he will be saved; but it is unwarrantable to say that every converted person is saved, because he may still be under doubts and fears -- that is, under law more or less in conscience. "Saved" brings one out from all sense of condemnation -- brings one to God consciously free in Christ, not merely before God with earnestness of desire after godliness. A soul is not converted unless brought to God in conscience; but then one might be the more miserable and all but despairing in this state. Does scripture allow us to call such an one "saved"? Certainly not. He who is saved ... is one who being justified by faith has peace with God. It seems therefore that the distinction between what some call being safe and being saved is quite true and even helpful. Not that those safe could be lost, but that they are not yet brought out of all difficulties into rest of soul by faith. Then they are not safe only but

saved. But it is clearly not possible that a converted person can be lost, for the life is eternal. (9)

J.N. Darby wrote,

I should say a quickened soul was safe, but not saved. (10)

We cannot say a person is saved until God has put His seal upon Him. (11)

No doubt the interval between these two things accounts for the state of soul of some that we meet, with their continued ups and downs spiritually. Some are even taught to doubt and others are taught that one can be lost again. Happily, with some of these, their hearts are better than what they are taught; and in secret can utter the cry of the Spirit of sonship "Abba, Father."

ed.

TO BE CONTINUED, LORD WILLING.

9. Lectures Introductory to the Study of the Minor Prophets, pp. 375,376. See also pp. 380,381.

10. Collected Writings 28: 369. See also pp.368-370; Letters 3: 118; Notes and Jottings, p. 186.

11. Collected Writings 26: 275.

THY TESTIMONIES ... ARE MY ... COUNSELORS (Psalm 119:24)

The balance of truth in scripture is marvelous. Our incurably wicked hearts always want to accept only that portion of the truth which is compatible with the plans and purposes to which we have committed ourselves. In every issue of life the scriptures provide complete guidance for our pathway. Sometimes it is unpleasant to the natural man, and so we are reminded to "keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23). If we do not keep our hearts we may allow our emotions to govern us rather than our spirits as taught by the word of God, and thus will not be able to see clearly what the real issue is, as in the light of the sanctuary (Psa. 73).

THE SPIRIT OF LAWLESSNESS AROUND US

The society in which we live is committed to a casting off of restraint. We hear of it everywhere. Lawlessness has become a way of life, and an accepted way of life among the godless mass of professing christendom which will culminate in "Babylon the great" (Rev. 18). Those of us who are the Lord's stand in great danger of becoming infected with the spirit of the world around us.

The disregard for constituted authority is unprecedented since the flood, and as never before youth emerges to overthrow the established order of things. It is not our purpose, however, to dwell on the social ills of society other than to call attention to the spirit which prevails in the world in order that we may be on our guard to avoid any semblance of the same in the things of God and in our relationship with one another as Christians.

SUBJECTION & YOUTH'S DUE RESPECT FOR THE AGED

In scripture youth is properly seen as subject to the aged, just as all Christians are enjoined to be "subject to the powers that be" (Rom. 13) and wives are enjoined to be subject to their husbands (Eph. 5:22) and children to parents (Eph. 6:1). It is clear, however, that such injunctions preclude subjection requiring disobedience to the Word of God (Acts 5:29).

We learn what God thinks about disrespect for old age by the judgment He brought on the youths who mocked Elisha (2 Kings 2:24), who was their elder although himself relatively young. We see too the disastrous result of Rehoboam's accepting the counsel of the young men and rejecting the counsel of the old men (1 Kings 12:13), (although we know that the Lord had said, "This thing is from me" - the instrumentality, however, being Rehoboam's receiving the counsel of the young men). It is not without significance too that Titus was exhorted to instruct the young men to be discreet (Titus 2:6), and Peter exhorts the "younger to be subject to the elder" (1 Peter 5:5).

AGE NO GUARANTEE OF WISDOM AND GODLINESS

While recognizing the duty we have according to the Word to show due respect for those older than ourselves, let us never be so foolish as to think that an "old prophet" can never give bad advice, i.e. that age alone is a guarantee of sound advice based on wisdom and godliness. Scripture shows this to be true (1 Kings 13; 1 Sam. 1,2; Job 42:7), and we must guard against falling prey to such a notion as much as we must guard against falling prey to the spirit of casting off restraint. It is but an idle and deceptive dream that age itself guarantees wisdom and godliness, or that those who occupy a certain place of prominence or seniority among the saints necessarily have the Lord's mind in EVERY situation simply BECAUSE of their age and prominence. Even Joshua and the princes of Israel were fooled by the Gibeonites (Josh. 9:15-21).

MISUSE OF CERTAIN SCRIPTURES

A certain use is made of 1 Kings 12:13 to support the idea that advice given by older men should be taken (whether good or bad). We should remember that Eli (an old man) lacked discernment, and the three older men gave Job bad advice,

after which Elihu says, "... multitude of years SHOULD teach wisdom. ... Great men are not always wise; neither do the aged understand judgment" (Job 32:7,9). One is also reminded of Solomon's words on this: "Better is a poor but wise youth than an old and foolish king, who knoweth no more how to be admonished" (Eccl. 4:13).

The idea that wisdom cannot be in a youth is a rather unspiritual pretension (1 Tim. 4:12), generally applied when the will is at work. It is clear that something more than merely the question of the relationship of younger to older is at the root of such incorrect use of 1 Kings 12:13. What better lever could be found than 1 Kings 12:13 to get rid of unwanted questions? The idea of applying 1 Kings 12:13 to every situation, and especially to certain situations, has UNHOLINESS at the root.

SAFETY IN A MULTITUDE OF COUNSELORS

Many think that when a multitude of counsellors agree the advice must be right (based on Prov. 11:14). Consider, however, that David's new cart had the sanction of his captains of thousands and hundreds, with every prince (1 Chron. 13:1). Apparently no one called attention to the violation of scripture **EVEN THOUGH SO MANY WERE PRESENT!** The safety in the "multitude of counsellors" is only insofar as they have the mind of God. "For with **GOOD** advice thou shalt make thy war; and in the multitude of counsellors there is safety" (Prov. 24:6). David did not receive **GOOD** advice from his counsellors. As a general pattern in scripture, the "minority" were seen to have the mind of God.

GODLY COUNSEL SHOULD BE WELCOMED

Nothing herein said should be construed to imply any lack of value and respect for godly, scriptural advice and counsel given by older brethren. Far be the thought! We have received such and value it highly. What we seek to call attention to, however, is the unprincipled use of a scriptural teaching (that of respect for age) to promote a blind acceptance of a matter by the saints without applying the supreme test - God's Word. Let us guard as vigilantly against the notion that an "old prophet" can never give bad advice as we do against disrespect for age; both ideas are warned against in scripture (1 Kings 13:15,18 and Lev. 19:32).

Godliness, spiritual discernment and good counsel are not functions of how long one has been gathered to the Lord's name, where one came from (cp. 2 Chron 30:10-14), or or one's age (cp. Judges 8:5-21), but primarily on whether or not there is a purpose of heart to cleave unto the Lord and to His Word. (cp. Deut 33:8-12 and 2 Chron 30:21; Ezra 7:10). Let us seek the counsel of those who show such purpose of heart and whose counsel is according to the Word of God.

"HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED ... COUNSELLOR" (Isa.9:6)

R. S. Lundin

“CHRIST PLEASED NOT HIMSELF”

It has just struck me, that we may continually observe all absence in the Lord to merely please His disciples. He never did this. Nay, I am sure that He passed by many little opportunities of gratifying them, as we speak of, or of introducing Himself to their favour. He did not seek to please, and yet He bound them deeply and intimately to Himself.

This was very blessed; and the same thing in any one is always a symptom of moral power.

"If we seek to please, we shall scarcely fail to please." This is true, I doubt not; but nothing can be morally lower. It makes a fellow-creature supreme; and we deal with him as though his favour was life to us, which God's is, but His only.

But to bind one in full confidence to us - to draw the heart - to have ourselves in the esteem and affection of others, without ever in one single instance having that as our object - this is morally great. For nothing can account for this, but that constant course of love which, by necessity of its own virtue, tells others that their real interests, and prosperity, and blessing are in deed and in truth the purpose and desire of our hearts.

And this was the Lord. Nothing that He did told them that He sought to please them; but everything that He did told them that He sought to bless them.

And again I say - I believe that He passed by many little opportunities of gratifying them, or of introducing Himself to their favour. And yet He met them graciously and tenderly on many occasions which WE might have resented. And both of these, the one as well as the other, came from those springs and sources of moral perfection which took their rise in Him. For if vanity had no part in Him to put Him to an effort to please, malice had no part in Him to make Him quick to resent. He could not be flattered into graciousness, nor provoked into unkindness. Look at Luke 22:24-30. They had just betrayed nature, striving through pride about the highest place. He corrects this; but He does not hold that object long before Him, but allows another to command His heart and His

thoughts respecting them - "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations."

Was that exactly the moment for remembering this fact? Was it just the time for looking at them so steadily in so favourable a light? No, not for nature to do so; but for Jesus it was just the time. And He is our example, that we should follow His steps, and partake of His mind. And after the pattern of this little occasion, we have to remember that it is not the present act that has to decide our thoughts and hearts respecting each other. It may have much of the vileness or working of nature in it, as this strife had; but it may be, as this strife was, the act of those in whom much of the preciousness of the Spirit dwells; and "the precious" should be remembered for the commanding of our thoughts often, even in the very presence of "the vile".

Strange this may appear. Yes, and the ways of divine unselfish love are strange. Here is our pilgrim part, and the part of a stranger in a scene of multiform selfishness like this. It may not be well to be always understood. Joseph spoke roughly to his brethren in a moment of their sorrow. But Joseph was not to be the servant of the present moment, but of their good. He was seeking to bless them, not to please them. Jesus told Thomas in a moment of repentance, that there was a character of still higher blessing to which he did not belong. But Jesus was true to the truth, true to us all, true to Thomas himself, when he might have been flattered into softness. Like Joseph, He was serving Thomas, and not the moment or occasion.

O the perfectness of it all! O the unspottedness of the path of His spirit within, as of His feet abroad! O the beauty of all which love does or says! We shall understand it all bye-and-bye, and have pages open to us which now we have no eyes to read. Through selfishness, we mistake the doings of love, and expect gratifications, when we find ourselves passed by; and are sent away with the material of some solid lasting benefit, when we hoped for a mere present pleasurable excitement.

O, for more of that love that is "in deed and in truth," which eyes the solid good of others, and can sacrifice their favour towards ourselves to their own blessing.

J.G.B. in The Bible Treasury, 1884

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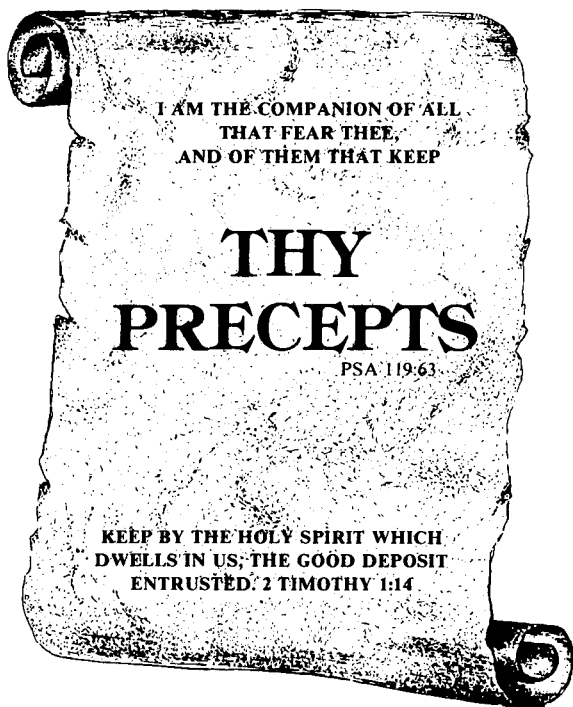
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DECOYS

It is a blessed fact that every saint of God possesses eternal life, and that it is perfectly secure to him. Unlike the life of the first Adam which was committed to his responsibility and consequently lost, "God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." Hence it is that while exhorted to "work out our salvation with fear and trembling" such exhortation does not contemplate any possible interference with our standing in eternal life, but solely and exclusively bears upon our responsibilities consequent upon the possession of that life, and of the wondrous relationship with God into which we have been brought "by faith in Christ Jesus." Thus the Christian, as one whose every interest has been perfectly and for ever secured by a work outside himself altogether, is called to be alive to, and occupied in, maintaining the interests of the One who has so wrought for him and to whom he now belongs.

Now the enemy of souls knows all this, and since he has no power to touch the life, his efforts are ever directed to the destruction of everything which has been committed to the responsibility of the saint. Hence the need of "the fear and trembling" to maintain us in the attitude of constant dependence and watchfulness, without which we are open to every attack which Satan's subtlety can devise.

Now it is most important to note that it is **subtlety** which characterizes every such attack on those who have been delivered from the "power of darkness." Hence the "whole armour of God" is not a defense against **power** merely, but that we "may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph. 6:11). A character of attack this which is peculiarly dangerous, but, blessed be God, we are not left, as we have seen, without provision to meet it. An armed man is one who has no point open to the enemy, and we have to see to it that we so maintain the armour that no opportunity is allowed for an attack. But the moment we present an unprotected part to the enemy, that moment we become the objects of attack and the mode thereof is determined by the part which is exposed. It is of course well to be able to say we are not ignorant of his

devices, but to be proof against attack we must depend not upon our knowledge of the enemy's tactics, but upon the practical maintenance in the power of the Spirit of God, of our standing.

"In vain is the net spread in the sight of anything on the wing," and if this be so, then the fowler must have recourse to decoys. A bird which has already been entangled is made to do service in bringing shy birds within the meshes of the net. The attractive grains are scattered around the snare, while the decoy bird in simulated liberty, but really captive, is proffered (so to speak) as a guarantee of safety. This in natural things is perfectly intelligible. But who are the decoys which Satan can and does use for his purposes? Alas, that it should be so, no other than the saints of God themselves. How often is the remark heard, there can be no harm in such and such a thing for So-and-so does not mind it and you know he is a dear Christian! And so the higher the reputation for godliness of the one thus quoted as an example, the more successful decoy does he or she become. I suppose the best decoy is the bird which has scope to flutter and fly a bit within the circle of its tether rather than one pinned to the ground or secured in a cage. And so the worldly-minded saint who seems to have the power of using his wing at will, is all the more dangerous when ensnared with things here, for he leads others more readily into the entanglements of his own condition, by tempting them on to the false conclusion that they may taste this and that delight without fear of losing their liberty.

Now it follows that a decoy can only be used against me when I am actually seeking a sanction with more or less of wilfulness for what my natural heart desires, and when this is the case, it is easy to find one whose presumed standing as a Christian I can quote as a reason for adopting his low practice. But if the eye be single and the whole body consequently full of light, a decoy is used in vain, for the one who is in this condition has no attraction for which he seeks a sanction in the example of another. This is the only condition of safety. The object of my heart must be the One who is outside this scene and that will keep me ever on the wing, knowing but one place where I can fold it; and that I have yet to reach it. In this state of soul, and so long as it is maintained, nothing here has power over me; not that I have to lay aside the fear and the trembling which must be preserved all the while the wing is spread. When I fold it in the only place for rest I

shall have then no object to cause fear and trembling. If I fold it here, I am at once in the power of anything which may be presented to me. The fluttering decoy bird deceives the one on a free-wing into the belief that he may pick up the grains without fear, and he learns his mistake only when the trap has fallen and made him captive. The entrapped saint is, alas, often not immediately sensible of what he has lost, but, through mercy, may be led to a knowledge of what his loss is, and at last to magnify the grace which breaks the net and delivers him. It is well if such an one can say at last, "my soul is escaped as a bird out of the net of the fowler, the net is broken and I am escaped." But how much better to be so on the wing that the decoy, as well as the net, are put before us in vain.

Voice to the Faithful, vol.7.

LORD, my soul with pleasure springs
 When Jesus' name I hear;
 And when God the Spirit brings
 The word of promise near:
 Beauties too, in holiness
 Still delighted I perceive;
 Nor have words that can express
 The joys thy precepts give.

Clothed in sanctity and grace,
 How sweet it is to see
 Those who love thee as they pass,
 Or when they wait on thee!
 Pleasant too, to sit and tell
 What we owe to love divine;
 Till our bosoms grateful swell,
 And eyes begin to shine.

Those the comforts I possess,
 Which God shall still increase,
 All his ways are pleasantness,
 And all his paths are peace.
 Nothing Jesus did or spoke,
 Henceforth let me ever slight;
 For I love his easy yoke,
 And find his burden light.

EXTRACT ON TRAINING UP A CHILD

**Train up the child at the entry of his way (margin),
and when he is old he will not depart from it.**

(Proverbs 22:6)

We believe the whole business of Christian education is summed up in two brief sentences: Count on God for your children, and, Train your children for God. The first without the second is lawlessness; the second without the first is legality; to take both together is sound, practical Christianity.

It is the sweet privilege of every Christian parent to count upon God for his children with all possible confidence. There is, however, in the government of God, an inseparable link connecting this privilege with the most solemn responsibility as to training. For a Christian parent to speak of counting on God for the salvation of his children and for the moral integrity of their future career in this world while the duty of training is neglected, is simply a miserable delusion.

We press this most solemnly upon all Christian parents, but especially upon those who have just entered upon the relationship. There is great danger of shirking our duty to our children, of shifting it over upon others, or neglecting it altogether. We do not like the trouble of it; we shrink from the constant worry. But we shall find that the trouble and the worry and the sorrow and the heart-scalding arising from the neglect of our duty will be a thousand times worse than all that can be involved in the discharge of it.

To every true lover of God there is deep delight in treading the path of duty. Every step taken in that path can always count upon the infinite resources that we have in God when we are keeping His commandments. We have simply to take ourselves, morning by morning, hour by hour, to our Father's exhaustless treasury, and there get all we want in the way of grace and wisdom and moral power to enable us to discharge aright the holy functions of our responsibilities as a Christian parent.

C. H. Mackintosh

THE FACE OF JESUS

In Isaiah 50 we learn the Creator-greatness and the lowliness of the Lord Jesus. The One who said of Himself, "I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering," also said, "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned" (or learner).

The heart could not do without the two - the Deity and manhood of the blessed Lord. He who is our Redeemer is very man; but also "over all, God blessed for ever" (Rom. 9:5). The heart delights in this. He who lay in Bethlehem's stable, cradled in a manger, was indeed very God; He who wept at the grave of Lazarus could say, "Lazarus, come forth," and the dead came forth; He who sat, the weary stranger, at Sychar's well, asking a drink of water of the Samaritan woman, was at that very moment the mighty Creator and the Upholder of the universe; He who stood as the unresisting One at man's judgment-bar was in very deed the King of kings, and into whose hand all power and judgment were committed; He who hung dead upon the cross of Calvary had said, "I lay down my life, that I might take it again. ... I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (John 10:17,18); and He who adorns the throne of heaven unites in His own glorious person Deity and humanity.

"Who could say but a Divine Being, "I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering"? And who but the same Being, become man, - a man in perfect lowliness, and dependence, and obedience - could say, "The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed"? These are the words of the only perfect man that ever trod this earth, the Lord Jesus. Having taken the place of man, in

dependence and obedience, it involved the humiliation, the rejection, the shame, the spitting, the smiting; yea, above all, the cross, as the display of man's hatred, and God's judgment of sin. But what did He say? "I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." His holy face was set to do the will of God, though the accomplishment of that will involved for Him the deep, unutterable woes of the cross. His face was set like a flint, and He knew that He would not be ashamed. Obedience and God's vindication go together. The two were united in Jesus. He obeyed and swerved not, and left His cause and vindication with Him who judges righteously.

What a lesson for the saints! He has left us an example that we should follow His steps (1 Peter 2:21). Not that we can go where His unswerving obedience carried Him - to the cross as a sin-bearer, as we find Him in Isaiah 53; but we can, according to our measure, set our face like a flint, to follow His holy steps in the paths of dependence and obedience, leaving our vindication with Him who judges righteously. But this needs the single eye and the undivided heart. No sanctified flesh or nature can tread this path; nothing but the power of the Spirit, and the energy of faith, will enable us to begin and continue in a path where mere nature meets with death at every step, and where the leaves of mere sentimentality are withered in a moment. Peter attempted it in the energy of nature, but utterly failed. Thousands have followed his steps, and have most thoroughly broken down; and, alas! mere head knowledge of the truth, however beautiful, will only make the failure the more apparent and terrible. Are we not eye-witnesses of this? An unsanctified mind, and a divided heart, dealing with God's truths, and attempting to tread the path it prescribes, must end in catastrophe.

As we have said, His path of holy devotedness led to the cross. He set His face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem, knowing well that Gethsemane, the judgment hall, the cross, and the grave, were all before Him. His holy "visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men," and on the cross behold that holy face bowed in death. Here is devotedness and obedience that must ever stand alone. There is none like it. As with the ark and the people on crossing Jordan, there must ever be a space left between what was absolutely perfect and what is in the most devoted of His devoted followers imperfect. We are indeed to follow His

steps; but we know the more we get into the presence of His life, the more are we made to feel the inconsistencies and contradictions of our own. And yet He has left us an example that we should follow His steps!

Obedience to God, as we have seen, needs no human vindication. "He is near that justifieth me," the lowly Jesus could say. God vindicates those who act for Him. He vindicated His Son by taking Him out of death, and putting Him at His right hand in glory, and the face once marred in death on the cross made radiant with the glory of God. The glory of God shines in His blessed face. What a sight! Of old the people gathered from far to "behold that sight" of Calvary, and the marred face of the dying sufferer; but another sight meets the eye of faith now as it penetrates the heavens. It is the same face, but illumined with the glory of God. That glory shining in the face of the ascended Jesus is to the one who believes a divine proof that his sins are no more, and that his acceptance, as his justification, is clear, settled and eternal. For how could the glory of God shine in His face if the sins that He made His own on the cross were not put away according to God? They were put away, and God was glorified. He therefore can have His Son at His own right hand as man, and cause His glory to shine in His blessed face. What settled conviction this gives, that our sins are no more, that they are gone for ever, and we are accepted in the One who is accepted of God in His own glory!

But more, "We all, with unveiled face beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." What a place is ours! With unveiled face looking on the glory that shines in the face of Jesus. No cloud between. Sins all gone, conscience purged, the heart at rest, the soul enrapt as it gazes by faith upon that peerless One, and into His once marred face, now all glorious with the glory of God. Thus engaged with Him, a moral assimilation takes place. "We are changed into His image from glory to glory," and His life is seen in our ways.

But this by faith and only as faith is in exercise. Soon faith will cease, the wilderness be over, the blots and blemishes wiped out for ever, and in His own likeness we shall stand in His presence, behold His face, His name shall be in our forehead, and with Him we shall reign for ever and ever. Lord, haste that blessed day!

E. A., The Christian Friend, 1881.

GIFT AND ABILITY

For it is as if a man going away out of a country called his own bondmen and delivered to them his substance. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to each according to his particular ability. (Matt. 25:14-15)

God gives and forms intellectual power. That is what is called in Scripture "the ability". But examine our Lord's parable where He alludes to this very thing, and you will find that He distinguishes between "the gift" and "the ability" - "He gave to every man according to his several ability." God in calling men to serve Him, even before they are converted, fashions the vessel for His purposes. His providence singles out a person from his very birth, and He orders all the circumstances of his entire life thereafter.

You have in Paul a most remarkable natural character, as well as no ordinary training and acquirements. All this was providentially ordered in Saul of Tarsus; but besides, when called by the grace of God, a gift was put into him, that he did not possess before - a capacity by the Holy Ghost of laying hold of the truth, and of enforcing it on people's souls. God wrought through his natural character, and his manner of utterance, and particular style of writing; but everything, though flowing through his natural ability, was done in this new power of the Holy Ghost communicated to his soul.

Thus there are these two things: the ability which is the vessel of the gift, and the gift itself which is, under the Lord, the directing energy of the ability. There is no such thing as gift apart from the vessel in which the gift acts.

W. Kelly

PHILADELPHIAN DECLINE

It is, and has ever been, the tendency of our nature to settle down at a point where an awakened conscience has experienced a measure of ease. We become dull in responding to the claim of the latter, especially when it is brought under the influence of fuller light; listless if invited to try sweeter pastures beyond a point of present attainment, having found comfort here - a comfort perhaps not now enjoyed as hitherto; and energy of heart flags, no longer counterbalancing the premature desire for rest; all leading into a state of moral prostration, in which there may certainly be an abundance of outward activity, but only as a form of godliness without the power. This comes not as a consequence of evil altogether, but through a selfish use of what grace has given. (Deut. 32:15)

Many details of Old Testament history verify such a law; but the grace which records this testimony to what man is, as warning for us, has moved alongside its unworthy object, and ever and anon found opportunity to address the lulled conscience, and recall the callous heart to a sense of its need. Israel, in the days of Hezekiah, Josiah, and Ezra, furnishes striking illustrations; and we constantly notice in the recipients of blessing, as accompaniments and evidences of the operations of divine grace in them, acknowledgment of guilt, subduedness of expression, and self-abasement, together with a readiness to apprehend, and willingness to take, the path provident grace rendered available for the true-hearted in the midst of failure. Thus Ezra, as mouthpiece for those who "trembled at the words of the God of Israel," speaks with shame and blushing of "a little reviving in our bondage" (chap. 9:4,6,8). This does not preserve the remnant from again wandering grievously through love of ease and self-occupation (Hag. 1:4; Ezra 4:23,24; 5:12), affording never-failing grace a fresh occasion of shining forth in urgent appeal through the prophets Haggai and Zechariah. The people were forgetting the prime object in their restoration (Ezra 9:9); (how full of instructive warning to us, gathered for worship, as well as testimony!) and are rallied, but again fail, as seen in Mal. 3, to which Calvary forms, as far as their responsibility was concerned, the lamentable sequel.

Nor can we here end with the history of perpetual backsliding, of this sad tendency to failure. Perfectly revealed as grace now is, one might almost entertain the not uncommon thought that of failure there could be no more, were it not that such scriptures as 2 Timothy, 2 Peter, Jude, etc. teach the reverse. The failure warned of, and foretold by the apostles, has indeed come in, and one can see its withering shadow flit along the pages of history from the very days of the apostles themselves to the great white throne. There it ends, and for ever, thank God. Rather does perfect grace manifest the wretchedness of what induces failure, and how deep are its roots in weak unworthy man. And not alone have we God's grace and man's sin thus reciprocally proved, but the New Testament also in several places prophetically furnishes a development of the latter (1 Cor. 10:5-10; Jude 11, etc.). Again, there is a blending of the former with the latter in an historical way, as in the case of Israel, in the epistles to the seven churches of Asia; for here the spiritual eye discerns more than a mere superficial bearing in Christ's words (Rev. 2,3). The epistles, though doubtless primarily addressed to the assemblies named, then existing, are believed to constitute a resume of the Church's history, responsibly considered, from the time of John to the moment when it will be rejected as an irretrievably failed testimony, the saints being, about the same juncture, taken away to be for ever with the Lord. One can admire the divine wisdom displayed in veiling the history so as to be of effect to those whom it immediately concerned; and the beautiful consistency shown in avoiding the formal shape which would in them interfere with immediate expectancy of our Lord's return, and thus also with the sanctifying effect of "that blessed hope" (1 John 3:3; Col. 3:3-5, etc.); whilst the gracious Shepherd's care for us is also manifest, who now can peculiarly profit by it, the whole thing being fully before us, in a day of such peculiar need.

As has often been explained, each epistle gives marks distinctive of seven phases or stages through which the Church has to pass. The second, third and fourth replace the first, second and third respectively. The fourth and last three coexist at the Lord's return (2:25; 3:3,11,21), each arising in the order given, and each in turn characterizing the state of things in the Church, from the Lord's point of view.

It is also very widely admitted that several phases have had their day, and that even the marks of Philadelphia have also been discernible in these days, when everybody is

beginning to feel that events rush forward toward the solemn climax. But whether or not the stage of the Church's history marked by Philadelphian intelligent devotedness to the Person of our precious Lord, has ceased to be characteristic, and that in this respect the phase determined by Laodicean indifference to His claims has taken its place, may still be questioned, though doubtless a well-defined Laodicean position even now exists alongside Thyatira, Sardis and Philadelphia, lacking only development. But may we not inquire, Does the Philadelphian assembly of our day, the true expression of the Church as Christ's body, as well as the evident testimony to failure in its responsible aspect - called forth by abounding grace after centuries of darkness - does this enjoy an immunity from the tendency which caused departure from the Pentecostal state, and which, as we have seen, brought in such complete failure after a similar manifestation of grace to the remnant restored from Babylon? Can we boast of better prospects, as to faithfulness, at the Lord's second coming than obtained at His first?

We see a remnant in Thyatira, another in Sardis, and room for a true heart even in Laodicea. There is, however, compunction felt in supposing the possibility of the same in Philadelphia at the Lord's return; for this would imply decline in the mass, by no means flattering, but full of warning for each soul; but surely its suitability to the Lord's eye at one point in its history no more precludes the possibility of its decline than that the beautiful thing He set up at Pentecost should so completely fail. As a matter of fact, individuals do drop out of Philadelphia - abandon the confession of the truth as a whole - and pass on to Laodicean ground, not so often to Thyatira or Sardis, which are too wide of the truth. But what if they lack the honesty which leads some to the place characterized by lukewarmness, and remain in the form of godliness unsustained by its power? One can easily see from the state of things and of persons, where the truth is professed in many cases, that though Philadelphia should go on to the Lord's coming, alongside a gradually developing Laodicea - ultimately characteristic - Laodiceanism may give increasingly distinct colouring to much of the material built upon the ground of the truth. Many who outwardly tread God's path in ecclesiastical matters may, by boastfulness, perhaps based on the nature of the position they occupy, deny the truth they profess, and be distinguished by little else than a feeling best expressed in Laodicean words: "I am rich and increased

with goods," etc. Blessed grace indeed it was which removed the accumulations of eighteen centuries and discovered to us the sure foundation of God with its seal; but how ill does boasting in the matter comport with the beautiful example seen in Ezra's case, already alluded to (chap. 9:6-8)!

Hence, without assuming anything beyond the mere possibility of such a state of things being found amongst us at any time (and oh, are we free from it?), it is evident that upon the ground where once the Lord could address a poor weak **company** in terms of loving, encouraging approval, circumstances may be apprehended - if they are not come - which would test all, cause some to drop aside, prove others to have little more than a form of godliness without the power; and, as a consequence, render faithful testimony to our Lord, largely individual in its character, brighter perhaps as hearts true to Him realize the effects of growing laxity. There can be little doubt that the truth alone must ever guide faith. They who walk in it can assert nothing short of this; i.e. that they occupy ground established by what it teaches, while pressing its claims upon all who profess allegiance to it untruly - this, together with a clear testimony to the nature of the position so established, as well as to the power which can alone set and maintain any truly on it. But in view of all this one can conceive how powerlessly and arrogantly the claims may be made and the testimony given, how easy it is in giving an answer to "every man that asketh," etc. to slip from the becoming "meekness and fear" of a consciously unworthy receiver into the spirit of the sad boast already mentioned; so that the anomaly enters of a believer even on Philadelphian ground possessing traits of Laodicean state!

Again, it is clear that an influx of formation through want of watchfulness (Jude 4; Matt. 13:25) - as possible now as at the outset of this (the Church) period - would surround those really true to the Lord with numbers, for the sake of advantages or to suit some taste, who, it might be easy enough to perceive, are not even seeking to walk up to their profession, just as in the case already spoken of, of the restored remnant gathered to their true centre, Jerusalem. There were the few mentioned in Malachi 3 who "feared the Lord and thought upon His name" associated with others, outwardly on the true ground, who were quite otherwise minded (see verses 14,15 etc.). This is a solemn contemplation, and the prospects, should the Lord tarry, offer little to cherish a boastful spirit. But amid the gloom of such reflections,

there exists one point of purest light, this precious consolation, that God's aim in everything is the glory of His Son: this too, it may be, at the cost of a painful manifestation of failure in those who occupy the privileged place of testimony, when the testimony only denies the Name it professes to set forth. The true heart, ever also desirous of this, may continue in the enjoyment of sweetest communion whatever betides - a communion of which that aim forms both the link and theme. It is a mercy God has given us "a nail in His holy place" (Ezra 9:8; Isa. 22:23); the real secret of enlightenment and a "little reviving," as well as a "remnant to escape," which at every step proves its increasing feebleness. May God so keep our hearts occupied with Christ above that while learning His perfections as the Father delights to unfold them to us, we may be able calmly to view all the tossings, which do but manifest the weakness of man, and the unchangeableness of condescending grace!

J. K. From The Christian Friend, 1887.

ADORNMENT

"Whose adorning let it not be that outward one of tressing of hair, and wearing gold, or putting on apparel; but the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price" (1 Peter 3:3-4).

Both here and in 1 Timothy 2:9-10 the temptation is recognized which so often presents itself to the mind of a wife - of appearing as beautiful as possible in the eyes of her husband, and at the same time of stimulating and feeding her personal vanity by outward adornments and costly array.

It is sometimes said that matters of ornaments and dress are best left to individual consciences; but it is difficult to accept this in light of these precise directions. Where the heart is satisfied with Christ, there may be no need for their application. But the slightest acquaintance with God's assemblies reveals the humbling fact that they are composed of immense numbers whose hearts are not thus satisfied.

Nothing can be more sad than the scene often presented at the Lord's table where we are gathered to show the Lord's death until He come. Surely, as we remember Him in His death, we are reminded also that by His cross the world is crucified to us, and we to the world (Gal. 6:14). What a contradiction, therefore, if any appear there with evident traces of the world upon them. And how grieving to the Lord Himself to see those who are professedly outside the camp bearing His reproach, with so many outward signs of worldliness in dress and ornaments - evidences of being "alive in the world", whatever may be true for them before God.

All the Scriptures bearing upon this subject demand the prayerful consideration of all Christian women. The results would surely be to the Lord's glory in a more distinct outward testimony to the place of rejection (in fellowship with the sufferings of Christ) and of separation into which we have been called by the grace of our God.

E. Dennett

NEW CREATION, LIFE IN THE SON AND DELIVERANCE FROM THE LAW OF SIN & DEATH

(CONTINUED FROM P.90)

FORGIVENESS OF SINS AND SEALING WITH THE SPIRIT

FORGIVENESS OF SINS: WHEN?

There are at least two ways in which a child of God might view the subject of forgiveness of sins; and only one of these is according to the N.T. Scripture. (1). Knowing the forgiveness of sins that is connected with the knowledge of salvation (Luke 1:77) results from resting on the Person and on the finished work of Christ. This means all is eternally settled and includes the knowledge of the eternal security of the believer. This is the truth presented in the N.T. scripture. (2). The other view regards only the forgiveness of past sins and raises a question as to the future -- allowing the possibility of being lost again. It is a faith somewhat like a Jewish perception. Such is not the meaning of "the forgiveness of sins" as used in the Acts and Epistles, or in Luke 1:77. Nor is this the gospel of our salvation (Eph. 1:13,14) which upon believing we are sealed.

A person having this second perception of forgiveness does not know what it means to be in the forgiven position before God and it cannot be said of him that he has **"no more conscience of sins"** (Heb. 10:2). In his conscience he is something like an O.T. Israelite whose conscience could not be perfected as to the standing before God (Heb. 10:1). They had to have fresh recourse to something with respect to sins committed. Such a position "could not make him that did the service perfect, **as pertaining to the conscience**" (Heb. 9:9). And those quickened souls who do not know the forgiven position have recourse to something, whatever form it may take, to deal with fresh sins in an unscriptural way. They do not know what Heb. 10:14

means: "For by one offering he has perfected in perpetuity the sanctified" (cited from J.N.D.).

The difference in these two positions was pointed out by J. N. Darby, noting view (2) above, first:

Forgiveness is looked at as forgiveness of so much past sins,* of sins up to our conversion, what was really Jewish forgiveness, which is contrasted in Scripture with Christian; Heb. 9,10. [* Past sins in Romans 3 are the sins of Old Testament Saints. It is clear that the moment I am forgiven, I can only apply it to sins already committed; I have no other. But this does not touch the question and extent of the bearing of Christ's death, which was before I had committed any. It is confounding the Spirit's work and Christ's.] What Scripture calls eternal redemption is not believed in. As to Christians in general, what it is to have no more conscience of sins, they cannot tell you, or even of the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord imputes no sin. No, all their past sins were forgiven when they believed, but sins since? well, they must be sprinkled again, or the present priesthood of Christ on high applies to it, neither of which is in Scripture.

Ask them what it means, when it says that by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified; they cannot tell you: each sin, after its commission, has to find its forgiveness as and when it may; and people are taught that it is a very dangerous doctrine to think otherwise. Now there is an interruption of communion; there is a gracious washing of the feet with water; but when I have believed in Christ's work there is no more imputation of sin, I am perfected as to conscience. We have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. He who bore our sins, and put them away long ago, is there. We must not confound the work of the Spirit, which makes me own my faults, and the work of Christ, finished and effectual once and forever. He bore my sins when I had not committed one of them, and if forgiveness, in the sense of non-imputation, has to be gained now, it would be impossible; for Christ would have to suffer for them as the apostle says, "For then he must often

have suffered from the foundation of the world." Hence he who has not the sense of redemption in his soul by faith, and he who really has, are by current teaching put on the same footing, though one has the Spirit of adoption, and the other has not - one looks for mercy, not yet obtained by faith, and the other, with God, cries Abba, Father; but both are taught to suppose sin imputable alike, and to search if they are children, and the delivered man is thrown back by false teaching under law in Romans 7. If you can really cry, Abba, Father, you are surely sealed; but then no sin can be imputed to you, or Christ is dead in vain. Judaism was, as to that, better than this half Christianity. There, if a man sinned, was a sacrifice, and his sin was forgiven. Here, once, perhaps, pardoned for what was gone before, he has nothing but uncertainty for all that follows. But Christ has obtained eternal redemption, and blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputes no sin. And the work being complete, and he who is sanctified perfected for ever, the worshipper **once purged** has no more conscience of sins, and Christ is **sitting down** on the Father's throne because all is finished. Of this the Holy Ghost is witness; being born of God is not [1].

In his letters he sometimes (confusingly) used the phrase "forgiveness of sins" in connection with one quickened but not yet delivered (Rom. 7:24) [2]. Do you not see from that scripture that there is a situation where a person who has "the inner man" (v. 22) is undelivered (whatever that may mean) and then cries out for deliverance, and is delivered? The Lord willing, we shall consider Rom. 7 in detail in future articles. Suffice it here to say the undelivered person is quickened, but

1. Collected writings of J.N. Darby 31:275,276. See also p. 263. Cp. Notes and Jottings p. 40.

2. Read the following. Letters of J.N. Darby 2:452,453; 3:434,435,436,117,118; 1:500. A.C. Ord, The Teaching of Scripture ... on Spiritual Life and The Sealing of the Holy Ghost ... pp.21,22; Ed. Dennett, Exodus, pp.114,115; W. Story, A Brief Review of a Book Entitled "Life in Christ and Sealing with the Spirit", p.12; J.A. Trench, An Answer to "Life and the Spirit", p.16; Words of Truth, New Series, 1:212.

has not the indwelling Spirit, has no perfected conscience as to sins and knows not what it is to be before God in a forgiven position, an unalterable position and relationship. The one in Rom. 7 is in a soul struggle about the question of fresh sins, and about how to have power and victory in the life over the indwelling sin-root. He is "sold under sin" (v. 14) and "in captivity to the law of sin in his members" (v. 23). Now, Rom. 8:2 expressly states that one who has the Spirit is not under that law, but under a new one which has set the person free from the law of sin and death. And so 2 Cor. 3:17 expressly tells us that where the Spirit is there is "liberty" (not "captivity"). It is clear that the quickened soul of Rom. 7 has not the indwelling Spirit.

Returning now to the comments of J.N. Darby, if we see that what he really meant in such cases was the quickened one's thought, namely, forgiveness of past sins and a question of standing raised about a fresh sin, then all his letters on this subject will be found to be consistent. One of these letters takes up the difference between knowing only the forgiveness of past sins and knowingly being in a forgiven position before God in the following words:

We are sealed when we believe in Christ for the forgiveness of sins; but when it is only a clearing of conscience as to past sins, we have to learn afterwards what we are, the state being vague and uncertain as to the present: the forgiveness of what is actually on the conscience is real, but goes no further. If I have learned my weakness by a legal process: before, I find myself in Christ, through grace in Christ, and my whole case is clear. The church having in its ordinary gospel neither this, nor even Hebrews 9, 10 is at a loss to know what to do when sin recurs. It is absolution, looking back to baptism (Calvin), re-sprinkling with the blood of Christ - all the ignoring that "by one offering, he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." But it is by the Holy Ghost given we know that we are in Christ; and this is in contrast with law (see 2 Cor. 3), and connected with the knowledge of God's righteousness. The forgiveness of past sins is not being in a forgiven condition; were it not complete as to the work, Christ must often suffer: and if sealed thereon, we have to learn - in a modified form perhaps - complete

forgiveness, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord **imputeth not iniquity**," learnt after forgiveness when that is only of the past - relieving, but not purging fully, the conscience. Being sealed, we get into a wholly new standing, and conflicts where we did not succeed looked back on; for that is the true character of Romans 7 -- the estimate of it, "we know" (ver. 14) when we are out of it, and at liberty through the presence of the Holy Ghost, who, being present, makes us know our place in Christ, and Christ in us. But forgiveness as to the past is different from "imputes no sin."

As a general truth then, sealing takes place when we believe -- but believe the gospel as preached by Paul, "the gospel of your salvation." Present forgiveness is a true and blessed thing; but, as at present preached, it is only administrative forgiveness, thus Jewish forgiveness, with which Christian is contrasted in Hebrews, in Romans 4, as in Acts 13, "By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Being in Christ is yet another thing, known, with other blessings, through the Holy Ghost given to us. But even forgiveness is, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." Where a soul is, is a matter of spiritual discernment [3].

The underlining in this letter is my emphasis. In the last paragraph he speaks of what was preached by those who did not know what "the forgiveness of sins" really meant and hence as the high priest went into the holy of holies every year, and remembrance of sins was thus made, the work not being complete, so this preaching amounted to having recourse to the blood afresh each time -- "thus Jewish forgiveness." It means that the true Christian standing is not known. Hence in the next to the last paragraph, he wrote, "The forgiveness of past sins is not being in a forgiven condition."

So when a quickened soul has before it the notion that merely past sins are dealt with, i.e., forgiven, but that each subsequent sin raises a question of standing before God, there

is no knowledge of "the forgiveness of sins" or of "the gospel of your salvation" as these truths are taught in Scripture. Such a soul is safe for heaven but not "saved" in the sense in which the N.T. uses this word of one who is in his conscience perfected (Heb. 9:9; 10:2); and so has not the knowledge of the scriptural force of the words "forgiveness of sins." He is not resting on the Person and finished work for the knowledge of the forgiveness of his sins. He is not in the forgiven position. He knows not acceptance as the prodigal learned it when the best robe was put on, with the ring and the shoes. Such a soul does not know the true meaning of sonship or acceptance in the Beloved. He is like the prodigal on the way to the Father, with the spirit of a hired servant (as the quickened soul in Rom. 7).

As you have already, no doubt, noticed, the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins, i.e., being in the forgiven position before God as to the basis of God's dealing with the soul, is connected with being sealed with the Spirit. Since these truths are connected, there will necessarily be some repetition as we consider the next question: **Sealing with the Spirit: When?**

SEALING WITH THE SPIRIT: WHEN?

The erroneous idea that a person receives all the moment he is quickened supposes that a person who is looking to Christ but is not resting on the finished work is sealed. It supposes that the man of Rom. 7 is sealed. It supposes that one who shows signs of the new birth but is anxious, troubled, and lacks security is sealed; one who is safe but as Israel in Ex. 14, is sealed; one who has the spirit of a hired servant, as the prodigal on the road to the Father, is sealed. Indeed, it amounts to this: the prodigal had all -- the robe, shoes and ring and was actually in the house and eating the fatted calf, making merry with his father -- while he was in the far country but was ignorant of it and only needed ministry to convince him that these things were all true of him. If this were true, then a person has peace with God and does not know it. He has not really believed the gospel of his salvation, yet is sealed as if he believed it (Eph. 1:13). He has a Jewish notion of forgiveness of sins, yet is sealed. Although the Scripture says, "But because ye are sons, God has sent out the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. 4:6), yet he cannot really express such intimacy.

Allegedly having the Spirit, and "where the Spirit of [the] Lord [is there is] liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17), he is not in liberty before God. He is in Rom. 7, in bondage to the law of sin and death and yet, as (allegedly) having the Spirit, Rom. 8:2 is true of him: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death." He trusts in flesh in Rom. 7; but Phil. 3:3 says he does not. The answer to these confusing contradictions is found in the distinction makes between the time at which quickening and sealing occur; i.e. they do not occur at the same instant, though the interval may be short or long.

We do not doubt that one who is sealed has much to learn about blessings into which he is brought when sealed, and profits by ministry concerning these blessings -- that he may know what they are and also grow in apprehension of them. The point is that there are blessings that do not come at the same time as quickening. Nor is it true that a merely quickened soul needs to understand advanced truth to be sealed. He does need to rest on the finished work of Christ for the knowledge of his sins being forgiven (i.e., the knowledge of the forgiven position) and not every quickened soul does this at once.

We will now consider a number of helpful comments [4] and then reserve other points until we take up the subject of deliverance.

J. N. Darby wrote,

It does not follow that a person is clear as to the efficacy of Christ's work, because he believes in, and loves, Christ. The sealing of the Spirit goes, as to the detail of the work, I believe, with faith in the work, as well as the Person. See Acts 2:37,38, and

4. Besides these citations, the following references are helpful. See index of the Collected Writings of J.N. Darby, the word "sealing", and see 31:258,260,264. Also, Letters of J.N. Darby 2:351; 3:90; The Bible Treasury 15:132,139,166; The Bible Treasury, New Series 5:379; W. Story, op. cit., pp.4-6,29,30; A.J. Trench, op. cit., p.12; Words of Truth 5:69; W. Kelly, Ephesians, pp.38,39 (F.E. Race ed.).

10:43; Ephesians 1:13. But in a plain gospel they go together [5].

The following appeared in a magazine edited by F. G. Patterson -- but I am not aware that the answer supplied was his. Note the careful use of the word "believer". It often is used as carelessly as the word "saved" - not that we should make a man an offender for a word. A "believer" is a person who has the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins, having **believed** the gospel of his salvation (Eph. 1:12-13). The "gospel of your salvation" is not the gospel that your past sins are forgiven, but in future fresh sin may raise the question of your no longer being a child of God. Souls may be quickened by such a defective gospel, but not sealed.

"A.N.L." -- Does sealing take place immediately on believing; or, is it possible for a person to be a believer and not be sealed in **this dispensation**?

A. Sealing takes place at once on believing. Eph. 1:13 is plain on the subject: "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed (or, having believed') ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." The Apostle connects sealing with "the gospel of **your salvation**." God's salvation is announced by the gospel; I have believed in the gospel of my salvation, and forthwith I am sealed by the Spirit. A saved man is one who has no doubts. Scripture never speaks of a man being "saved" who has any. We must not confound the state of many **quickened** souls with those who have **believed**. The action of God in quickening and in sealing are as distinct as possible. He quickens a sinner who wants life; He does not seal a sinner as such, surely; that were to seal him in his sins; nor does He seal a quickened soul in his misery. He does not seal Peter when he cried out "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke 5); or when the soul is crying out "O wretched man that I am." He seals a believer; and "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;" not doubts, and bondage, and fears.

These two actions of the Holy Ghost are never, as far as I know, synchronous - they do not happen at the same moment; while on God's part there is of course no reason why it should not be so. Many cases testify as to this in Scripture.

The disciples were quickened before the day of Pentecost, yet they were not sealed till then. The Samaritans received the gospel and were quickened before Peter and John came down, and they were not sealed till then; ("as yet he was fallen upon none of them." See Acts 8:5-17.) "There was great **joy**" we read, and there is often this without **peace** with God. Peace is a full and perfect word; it is far more than joy. A soul that has peace with God has been sealed by the Spirit. Paul was quickened by a voice from heaven (Acts 10:4), and yet he did not receive the Holy Ghost till the third day after, when he had gone through all the deep work in his soul for the three days. (See 5:17.). Cornelius was a devout man, one that feared God, and prayed to God always - a **quickened** soul. He is told to send for Peter to hear words of him, whereby he and all his house would be **saved**. (Acts 11:14.). God does not call him a **saved** man, as merely quickened. When Peter comes he does not tell him he must be born again, which as a sinner he needed and had been, but he points him to Christ, ['by this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.'] and they accept the message, and the Holy Ghost fell on them. You get the same thing in Acts 19; those at Ephesus who were quickened souls had not as yet received the Holy Ghost.

It is not possible for a person to be a **believer** in the present dispensation without being sealed. There are many **quickened** souls who are not sealed, but no Christian ever **dies** and passes away from this scene, where as to personal place the Holy Ghost is since Pentecost, without being sealed. This is why you see cases in which there was no liberty, or peace with God, enjoyed during the lifetime, with occasional gleams of joy; and yet when on a death-bed they have got perfect peace with God, and are sealed.

I think we use the word "believer" too indiscriminately, for every state of soul in which God is working. A believer in Scripture language is one who is sealed. Scripture allows but one basis, or normal condition, for Christians. When we come to look at the condition of souls we find that in many cases they are not there; while there is no reason on God's part why they should not be [6].

Here is another extract from F. G. Patterson's magazine, not by him. (In his Lessons from the Wilderness, he stated that the man of Rom. 7 could have the Spirit (a mistake) but he did not sympathize with the idea that a person is in possession of every Christian blessing from the first instant of quickening).

As to when a person is sealed - on conversion, or afterwards? Does a soul believe before he is quickened? Does believing, quickening, and conversion all take place at the same moment of time, and then at some future period sealing takes place? A few words will suffice, I think. The sealing of the Spirit takes place, generally speaking, when the person has believed in Christ for remission of sins. Quickening takes place in the action of the Holy Ghost, through the Word of God, or the truths revealed therein, on the dead soul. This action produces and imparts faith, which is simultaneous with the quickening. A soul believes in what has been directly revealed, though forgiveness and salvation may not be known for long after. The new life thus imparted, being in action, finds the incongruity of the evil within. It begins to find its sins, as measured before God, a burden it cannot bear; even when forgiveness of these sins is known, it finds an evil nature over which it has no power, and this leads to the exercises of Rom. vii. till deliverance is known. In fact the sinner requires two things for peace: forgiveness for what it has **done** and deliverance from what it **is**. When it learns to look out of self at Christ for forgiveness, the sealing of the Spirit takes place. And at times there may be the

6. Words of Truth 3:137 ff. See also W. Kelly, Galatians, pp.66,67 (Morrish ed.).

experiences of Rom. vii, pure and simple, it does not suppose that the Holy Ghost has been received; it is an abstract case that is assumed. Generally speaking, however, the Holy Ghost is given as a seal, when Christ is rested upon for remission of sins; this is never the case at the moment, when the soul is born again [7].

A.C. Ord wrote an excellent paper on this subject to refute the teaching that a person possesses every Christian blessing from the instant of quickening. In it he said,

Throughout the Acts it is the name of Jesus Christ in which repentance and remission of sins was to be preached, being owned to which this blessing attaches. The disciples at Ephesus, who, previously, did not know that the Holy Ghost was come, were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus, only that in this case, as at Samaria, the gift came through the apostles' hands; but in each case, as in that of Cornelius and his house, we have additional evidence that a man may be converted, and not have received the Holy Ghost.* [* Here, again, we have the opposition between Mr. ...'s statements and those of scripture. "Thus the one born of God can never be in the flesh, and thus we obtain additional confirmation of the truth of our interpretation of Rom. vii. 9. 'If you are not in the Spirit, you are in the flesh, you are none of his.' This must be taken in the largest sense - You are not His at all."] In the address of the apostle to the house of Cornelius, it is, as has been remarked, when the apostle comes to the full value of the name of Christ, and remission of sins flowing from it, that "the Holy Ghost fell upon all them that heard the word." This corresponds with the doctrinal statement of the apostle in the Epistle to the Ephesians: "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, **the gospel of your salvation.**" It was that full gospel of salvation, not **merely** the first operations of grace in the conviction of sin, but, as at Caesarea, the words of salvation, that were received, and with the same result--"in

whom also, having believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." (Eph. 1:13.)

In Romans 5, it is the great display of the love of God in the death of His Son, which He commends to us, and which **the Holy Ghost**, given to us, sheds abroad in our hearts. ...

What a wondrous testimony on God's part is this seal, the witness of His favour and of the soul's acceptance by the presence of a divine Person resting on the believer and dwelling in him; it is a testimony so real, so emphatic, so powerful in its effects, and so entirely from God in its assuring nature, in the soul, that it is suitably called the seal, as expressive of its nature, meaning, and object. Were His presence and witness contingent on our faithfulness, He could not stay with us an hour, but if it is for the sake of what Christ has done, He can "abide with us for ever." But as the evidence of the reception of the Spirit is rendered indistinct and hazy by the teaching we are opposing, for you may have the Spirit and not know it, "for there is practically no middle class that have not received it" (pp. 25,27), so also as a consequence of the separation of this gift from the soul's apprehension of the work of Christ, we find it taught, that you may "slip, not surely out of the possession, but out of the knowledge of the possession, of the Spirit." ("Life and the Spirit," p. 5.) Thus the seal, or witness, of God is virtually rendered null and void, "for error in doctrine, or unholiness may, almost to any extent, hinder His witness, and our realization." (p. 53).

The word of God teaches, on the contrary, that the Holy Ghost never can thus deny what Christ has done; He is the Witness of the eternal efficacy of the value of the blood of Christ in the sight of God, and that sin is no more imputed. He could not have come, nor have sealed us, otherwise, and that is the reason He was never given to dwell in man before redemption. Hence the apostle says, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." (Eph. iv. 30.) He does not cease to make His presence felt, nor do we lose the consciousness of it, if we fail; though it is felt in a

painful way, and as a reprover, rather than a comforter. He lets us know that He has been grieved by practical inconsistency with what Christ has done, and with that nearness to God in the light, into which that work has introduced us, and of which the presence of the Spirit is the witness, and it is by this place of privilege that the sin is measured.

What is felt in failure is, therefore, a sensible effect of the Holy Spirit's presence, so true and faithful both to God and to us, that He cannot pass over what is evil in us; and we are to listen the more to the grief He expresses, because He is a Friend who will never leave us. How could He act otherwise without denying Himself or falsifying the very ground on which He has come to dwell with us as the Seal of God, "till the day of redemption"? "The Spirit lusts against the flesh, and the flesh against the Spirit, and these are contrary the one to the other," says the apostle (Gal. v. 17); but no such thought as the silence of the Spirit and ceasing to be conscious of His presence, an idea destructive of the very nature of a seal altogether. To support this view, however, Mr. ... quotes, "He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst." (John iv. 14.) One would suppose that this passage taught plainly the contrary, that is, that the effects of the presence of the Spirit were abiding and not transient; "but who would argue from this, that if a man ever thirsted he had never received the Holy Ghost?" (Page 63.) Could Scripture be used in a sense more opposite to that for which the Lord spoke it? It is really reasoning away Scripture, and destroying its effect to support a theory [8].

It might be well to note here that those not sealed are not members of the body [9] until sealed; because union in that body is by the indwelling of the Spirit (1 Cor. 6:17; 12:13; etc.).

8. A.C. Ord, op.cit. pp.31-34.

9. Cp. Notes and Jottings, p.103.

ADOPTION

When we believe on the Person and work of Christ for the knowledge of our sins forgiven, this is "the faith" of which the N.T. speaks. Certainly the O.T. saints believed God, had faith in what He had revealed. But Gal. 5:25, "But, faith having come, we [Jews] are no longer under a tutor [the law]; for ye are all God's sons by faith in Christ Jesus," indicates a fullness, concerning faith, has come. This is the faith in Christ Jesus, One Who has finished the work on which we rest for the knowledge of sins forgiven and has risen from the dead and is seated above. This is not a Jewish kind of faith, which we considered before, as if a fresh application of blood was required consequent upon sinning. No. This is faith that brings into a forgiven position and gives the child of God the status and position of son. **Child** denotes relationship; **son** denotes position, status. And as soon as one receives this status, he immediately receives the Spirit: "But because ye are sons, God has sent out the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Gal. 4:6).

However feeble that apprehension of the finished work is, the child of God is sealed, in virtue of the infinite value of that work.

"But we, when we believe the atonement, are anointed and sealed, because of, and as a testimony to, the value of His work ..." [10].

"...the presence of the Holy Spirit in us is the seal of the value of the blood" [11].

We cannot become a child of God by any other way than new birth. For example, we are not made a child of God by an act of adoption. That would be reading a modern usage of

10. Collected Writings of J.N. Darby 26:91; also 31:250,260.

11. Ibid. 19:484. More on the subject of adoption will be found in expositions of Rom. 8 and Gal. 4. See also The Bible Treasury, New Series 6:107; The Bible Treasury 12:363,364; E. Dennett, The Children of God, ch.3.

the word into it. Adoption in scripture means "sonship" and refers to status. For example, "adoption" is used to describe Israel's national status during the millennium (Rom. 9:4). For the Christian, adoption, or sonship, denotes status and maturity. With reference to the line of things we have been considering, the Old Testament children are viewed as in their minority, whereas we are looked at as in our majority (Gal. 3:25 to 4:7).

"Adoption of children" in Eph. 1:5 is a mistake. J. N. Darby's translation reads, we are "marked out beforehand for the adoption through Jesus Christ to Himself".

We are sons and have received the Spirit of adoption (Spirit of sonship) and are empowered to cry "Abba, Father" (Gal. 4:6) as did our blessed Savior in the garden (Mark 14:36). Praise God! What nearness we have to our Father! And finally this blessing is going to be completely manifested, for we are "awaiting adoption, [that is] the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23). Then it will be complete as to our very bodies.

(To be continued, Lord willing)

ed.

PROPHETIC FALLACIES: DATE SETTING

Date setting has had a long, dreary (and unscriptural) history under "the year-day theory". In this system, introduced by Joachim of Flora, born ca. 1130, the 1260 days of prophecy were assigned a value of 1260 years. The extract cited below will give an idea of where this led. This extract was written in 1849 when a certain set of calculations tied to other calculations regarding the French revolution, had been falsified by the passage of time.

Mr. Darby says that he once tried his hand at this (no doubt before 1831). W. Kelly exposed the system in his "Elements of Prophecy" found in The Bible Treasury. Let us see how these date setting schemes worked.

The imaginary period of 1260 years is more to be found in history than in Scripture. That a period of this length may be fixed upon, anywhere in the course of the last eighteen centuries, cannot be denied; but, beyond this, even the writers of the year-day school are not agreed. For the first who attempted to count the 1260 years reckoned from Christ's birth and resurrection; but how these events contributed to set up the desolating abomination (Daniel 12:11; Matt. 24:15; Rev. 13:15), they left their readers to guess. The next event fixed upon was Constantine's public establishment of Christianity. These 1260 years, with a little contrivance, were made to end at the Reformation; a result which somewhat redeemed the theory. As time went on, they dated from Justinian's decree in favour of Trinitarianism, and this date also succeeded in its way; for, precisely 1260 years afterwards, Christianity was suppressed in France, and thus, in a manner, the sanctuary was cleansed. If, as the Arians say, Trinitarianism was Antichristianity, and the worship of the Son the "strong delusion," there might be some truth in this calculation; but, to a believer in the Trinity, it is in danger of seeming itself an abomination.

The next date is 606, when Phocas is supposed to have settled the dispute for precedence in favour of the church of the mother city. This date will run out in 1866.¹

History, by continually falsifying the calculations of this school, signally avenges the cause of divine prophecy.²

Yes, history has falsified the year-day theory, but it has not destroyed the date-setting enthusiasm. Today there are those who believe in a pretribulation rapture and who set dates. For example:

1. The Jews were regathered in 1948. (This is another prophetic fallacy. They will be regathered after Messiah appears; cp. Ezek. 20, etc.)

1. Among the number of dates thrown out, it is surprising that so few have come right by chance. One of the most successful schemes is that of Fleming, published in 1703, and twice reprinted since. The system was judiciously laid down according to the political aspect of his times: the fourth vial, he supposed, began to be poured out in 1648, upon the houses of Austria and Bourbon, the political sun. St. John describes that vial as increasing the power of the sun; but Mr. Fleming, belonging to the school of red Dragon notoriety, takes the opposite view, and supposes that the vial will diminish the power of the sun of Europe. "As to the remaining part of this vial," he continues, "I do humbly suppose that it will come to its highest pitch about 1717, and that it will run out about 1794." But the Bourbon misfortunes were at their height, not in 1717, but in 1792, 1830, and 1848; while the house of Austria suffered most disgrace in 1806 and 1848. The other guesses are not nearer the mark; the sixth vial, which he makes the destruction of the Turkish power, "will probably take up most of the time between 1848 and 2000." The Pope's spiritual power is to begin to fall in 1848, his temporal power in 2000.

2. Charles Maitland, The Apostles' School of Prophetic Interpretation ... London: Longman, etc., 1849.

3. Isa. 18:5 does not yet appear to be fulfilled. Some think that this gathering was the result of Britain being the maritime power indicated in this prophecy. The book, Terror Out of Zion, will, I think, dispel that thought.

2. A generation is 40 years (another fallacy).
3. "This generation" means the one that sees certain signs (another fallacy; it is a moral class of persons living from when our Lord spoke until He comes again).
4. 1948 plus 40 = 1988.
5. 1988 minus 7 years for the great tribulation = the Lord will come in 1981.

The only correct thing here is point 4!

It is likely that as the year two thousand approaches, or some years earlier than that due to a calendar error, the prognosticators (christian and astrological) will become increasingly busy. There is 'money' in such books as well as 'fame'; or to be more generous, perhaps a 'burden' to alert Christians; but a 'burden' not of the Spirit.

Note: Keep in mind that Scripture neither states or denies that there will be a period of time between the Rapture and the opening of Daniel's seventieth week. This also invalidates date setting for the rapture.

ed.

LOVE IN THE TRUTH

Read 2 and 3 John

The semblance of love which does not maintain the truth, but accommodates itself to that which is not the truth, is not love according to God; it is taking advantage of the name of love in order to help on the seductions of Satan. In the last days the test of true love is the maintenance of the truth. God would have us love one another; but the Holy Ghost, by whose power we receive the divine nature, and who pours the love of God into our hearts, is the Spirit of truth, and His office is to glorify Christ. Therefore it is impossible that a love which can put up with a doctrine that falsifies Christ, or which is indifferent to anything that concerns His glory, can be of the Holy Ghost - still less so, if such indifference be set up as the proof of that love. Compare also 1 John 5:2,3 and 2 John 6.

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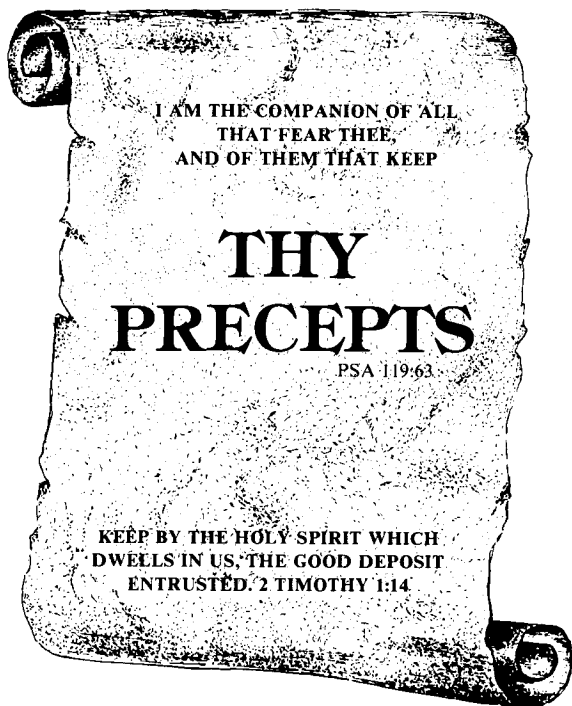
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THE PROSPECT

Beloved, let us sit down, and consider how long it will be before we shall see His face! His face, His own, even His, who is the chiefest amongst ten thousand, the altogether lovely - Jesus, our Lord. Some of us are but young, others are hoar-headed. Even should He not come in our lifetime, it cannot be long, a very few more years at the very longest, and we shall see Jesus.

It will do you good, beloved, to sit still in your chambers, and to meditate upon the greeting, the meeting, so close at hand. Perhaps it shall be that, lying upon your bed, the flesh failing, the body perishing, your last hour shall come, the last moments of which shall be the soul's straining to catch a sight of Him. Then He shall smile upon you, and your friends shall see His beauty beaming upon your dying countenance, and shall watch your responding smiles of greeting, as your spirit hastes away to be "for ever with the Lord."

What is this life? A vapour that appeareth for a short time, and then vanisheth away. Yes; but it is our time for learning the Lord, and longing to see Him. Come back, brethren, to the love of Jesus. True, of many of us our springtime is past - true, the early sweetness of our affectionate devotedness to Him is gone by. What have we penned? Is it true? Is it so that we love Him not as once we did? Is the measure, as well as the manner, less? He knows all things, let Him answer; we will be silent. But the early freshness has gone, like the bloom of childhood from our cheeks; we are getting into years, and the years, each one of them, declare to us, "Nearer home, nearer to the Lord Jesus." Those who have lived to middle age have lived long enough to have their hearts broken. This, it would seem, is one great object for which we are allowed to live a handful of years in life's school. We have seen our parents die, we have seen our children's spirits wing their way home; and we have seen and felt His presence by the dying couches of the aged and the young. Yet we have lived long enough to have our hearts bound up by His hand, beloved, as we are broken by the

sorrows of life. And each succeeding year heaven becomes not only nearer, but dearer to our hearts; more treasures are stored there yearly, as the years roll by, and each period of time teaches us what we could never have conceived of Jesus, had it not been for sorrow.

He is so real, as a person who is the beloved of our hearts; so near as a Friend who sticketh closer than a brother. Hence, we say again, let us sit down, and count up the longest time that it possibly can be before we shall see His face. We know the shortest time it may be - "a moment, the twinkling of an eye;" yes, we may be winging our way home before the next tick of the clock, for come He will, and will not tarry. But the longest, how long shall it be? Sit down in your solitude, alone with the Lord, and consider His greeting, and your meeting of His eye!

What is life? It is the privileged moment for glorifying the Lord on earth. Here we are set to walk as He walked - to shine as lights in the world for Him - to be His epistle, known and read of all men. And as we think of seeing Him, we can but think of pleasing Him. Is it too much to say that many of the Lord's people have a tissue between their affections and the Lord's heart? A something exists. They are not bright. Peace, this through His blood, they have, but His peace does not fill their hearts. It is of no use disguising the truth - many of God's people are not at this hour in personal intercourse with Christ. The spiritual countenance lacks expression. The features of Christianity are there, but the spiritual eye lacks lustre, Jesus is not close to the soul, Christ is not dwelling in the heart by faith.

This is not heaven upon earth, nor is it longing after Himself. Spiritual intelligence is not spiritual affection, and without its love the lamp is dim. And with such thoughts, again, we say, Come, sit in your chamber alone; meditate upon the hour beyond this life and this world, when we shall behold His face. What a remedy this is for present spiritual ailments! Some have one nostrum for the soul's state, then another, but all fail, save "Jesus only". We thank God for the doctrines, and thank Him more that each doctrine is a door opening into the presence of the Lord. Are we outside these doors? Many are! They know well what they are like. There is that of shittim wood, and that of silver and that of gold; there is knowledge of His spotless humanity, of His redeeming blood, of His God and Father's glory through Him. But open the door

of His humanity, and behold Himself, beloved. Before you is the perfect Man; open the silver door of redemption, and behold His once streaming wounds; open the golden door, and see Him where He is in the glory on high. It is Jesus only with these hearts of ours; let us seek more of His blest company. His presence will shed its holy glow over our very selves. It is but a little while, and we shall walk with Him in white; and now, in this day of Christian talk, our words shall speak the one language of heaven, if only we are in His presence.

Ah! fellow-Christians, our souls sigh out, "What a change there would be in us if Christ formed our hearts." The strife of tongues would cease, pride would vanish, sin would be confessed, and men would take knowledge of us that we had been with Jesus.

H. F. W. The Bible Treasury, vol. 13, p. 110

(Continued from page 160)

only that of physical beauty and there is no linking of minds and spirits, even if legal union follows, are the prospects good that together they will grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ for mutual help, comfort and enjoyment through the years?

WHO IS ON THE LORD'S SIDE

Once sin entered, and man was governed by his own will, with Satan ever ready to aid him, to stand for God was a conflict, and opposed to all around. The man of God had no resource but in faith; neither from himself, nor from any other man, must he look for succour. He can only "endure, seeing him that is invisible." Where the opposition is open and avowed, the man of God has less difficulty in seeing his course. But when there is the profession by the many of doing what is right, and yet not according to God, the true path is more difficult, and attended with more suffering. Nay; the nearer the mass approach in terms or form to the revelation of God, the more arduous and exacting is it for the faithful. If Cain had made no profession or attempt to be accepted of God, it would not have been fatal to Abel to have offered what was simply true. Cain, frustrated in his attempt to secure a desired end, in his own wilful way, slew his brother, who in faith, seeing Him who is invisible, acted according to the mind of God. Abel acted in faith; and having God before His mind, he did not think of consequences; he thought only of what was due to God. There was no effort on his part to effect a compromise with Cain. He presented the right thing; God accepted him and was on his side, though his own brother, in deadly hate, rose up against him.

That which occurred at the very beginning, between only two brothers, depicts the two lines which have coursed the earth from that day to this. It is not only that all who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, but the more divinely anyone adheres to the call of God, the more will he, at the same time, suffer not only from the ignorant unbeliever, but from those who hold the truth avowedly, but unspiritually. It is a great help to the man of God to see that his greatest opponent and enemy is the brother who dippeth in the same dish with him, and with whom he has gone in company to the house of the Lord, if he be not really and truly in the place he has taken. It was God's accepting Abel's offering which awoke all the diabolical rage of Cain, and so has it been ever since; the favour of God in communicating His mind to the faithful has evoked the deadliest opposition from those

who considered themselves entitled to it. It was the grace and goodness of our Lord on the earth which woke up the bitter, unrelenting hate of the great professors of the hour. It was not the cavillers or indifferent who were His chief enemies, but those who assumed to be leaders and guides of God's people on the earth. To any reflecting mind it must be clear that there is a deeper opposition from those who accept the truth in form, against those who are seeking to hold to it spiritually, than from those quite ignorant of it. Moses suffered more from his own immediate relations and associates than from any. The men Paul had a right to count on were the ones who most openly deserted him and damaged the truth. If you accept the truth and are not in true exercise of soul in the maintenance of it, you neither gain anything by the profession of it, nor by any step you may have taken on account of it; while on the other hand there is a (though often concealed) repugnance in your heart to those who, however little, are eager before God to reach on to the greatness of the blessing ensured by the truth they have accepted, and which in mercy they taste of.

Now having seen in some measure the quarter from whence the deadliest opposition will come, let us examine what would be the only true course for the man of God with regard to those from whom he will suffer most. His course will, I apprehend, be marked by a twofold action; the first, more of a negative character, no temporising; the other aggressive. I mean by no temporising, no concession of any principle, in theory or practice. Abel best considered for Cain when he kept fully and distinctly before his mind that which was due from a sinner to God. True, Abel did not live to practise the aggressive part, but God follows it up, and Cain was a marked man on the earth. Thus with Moses, he not only resisted the envy of his brother and sister (Num. 12), but Aaron has to entreat of him that the judgment of God might be removed from Miriam. In like manner Moses does not yield at all to Korah, Dathan and Abiram; but he is aggressive; he seeks judgment from God upon their heads; and it was in this spirit he had charged the sons of Levi when he "stood in the gate of the camp and said, Who is on the Lord's side, let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every

man his brother and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour" (Ex. 32:26,27).

Thus our blessed Lord, the true Israelite, not only did not in any way temporise with the religious leaders of the people, but He eventually denounced and exposed them as blind guides, etc. We see the same with the apostle Paul; he was not content with the most distinct line with regard to them, but while he consigned Hymeneus and Philetus to the judgment of God, he openly warns of Alexander, and looks to God to reward him according to his works.

The instruction I gather from all these examples is that a time may come when one is not to think so much of the congregation as of God. The truth and glory of Christ must be considered far more than the feelings of any; nay, that the best way to ensure the true and solid blessing of every believer is by the most decided maintenance of the truth in its integrity. "Whoso believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments" (1 John 5:1,2). It is the man who gives the uncertain sound who does the real mischief. (See Ezek. 33:6.) "But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand."

But besides this, while there will I trust be an increased interest in and care for the poor of the flock who seek the Lord, there will be less seeking after numbers, as there is a deeper sense of the responsibility of the hour. Numbers impede when they are not whole-hearted. Hence Gideon's thirty thousand were reduced first to ten thousand, and eventually to three hundred. He did not strive to retain the many; he sought, as faithfulness would seek now, those who would do as the Lord directed. The gravity of the hour spiritually has not been understood, or there never would have been the godless haste, or urging believers to take a step for which they were not in heart prepared. There has been a time, and there is a time now, when it is true and proper, because of the demoralized condition of the congregation of God's people, to inquire, "Who is on the Lord's side?" Any on His side are called to distinct and peculiar faithfulness, involving not only separation from others, but aggression. It is a delusion to

urge that the terms of Acts 2 must be the terms now. Of course there can be no other terms for reception at the Lord's table, no more than there could be any other but the one circumcision entitling the children of Israel to the blessings of their covenant. But the circumstances are morally lower now than they were in Moses' day, and if it were necessary in that day to invite those who were on the Lord's side to act irrespectively of natural feelings, how much more in this day? Timothy is exhorted not only to purge himself from the vessels to dishonour, but "to follow righteousness, peace, faith, charity, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." Does not the term "pure heart" imply that there must be something in addition to the terms in Acts 2? Is it just or true to accept anyone ignorant of the responsibilities to which he is called? I do not advocate mere intelligence, but I press the necessity of faith; and if a believer, however young or ignorant, have simple faith to follow the Lord, he will be led of Him to contend valiantly like an Ittai, in a day like this. Can everyone assuming to be on the ground of the church of God and in the unity of the Spirit be said to be faithful in refusing and condemning the worldliness and unholy association into which members of his own family descend, while outwardly connected with the testimony? If the children of Levi were required to declare their faithfulness by their unsparing cutting off of their nearest relations, how much more now, when the uniting bond of peace is disturbed by every one persisting in a course painful to the Spirit of God?

Alas! if parents wink at children, and children yield to parents in their ways and manner of life, how can we expect the manifest interposition of God on our behalf?

From A Voice to the Faithful

**Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy
lips from speaking guile.**

Psalm 34:13

ON MINISTERING CHRIST

(Continued from page 74)

It is most interesting to observe that one result of our Lord's ministry after His resurrection from the dead, when their understandings were opened to understand the Scriptures concerning Himself, was that it made them all happy. Whatever their mistakes, or state of soul had been, all were set right, and all were filled with joy in having to do with the Lord Himself. Not only did those who had been depressed and sorrowful exclaim, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?" but it is said of the timid ones, who had been fearing the Jews, "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord." When affrighted ones were told by Him that He was not a spirit, and He said, "It is I myself; handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have . . . and He showed them His hands and His feet," then we are told that "they believed not for joy, and wondered." So happy did their precious Saviour leave them when "He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven," that we are told "they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy" (Luke 24). John too writes his first epistle to the saints that their joy might be full. Peter speaks of those who, though "in heaviness through manifold temptations," were so believing in Him whom having not seen they loved, as to "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Paul enjoins the saints to "rejoice in the Lord always," and prays that the God of peace might fill them with all joy and peace in believing. Is it not clear then that one result to be looked for, when Christ is ministered, is that souls are made happy in Him? But how can we expect to be instrumental in filling others with joy, if we are not rejoicing in the Lord ourselves? A glance at some of the epistles is enough to show how fully and pointedly Christ was ministered in apostolic times, whatever might be the state or circumstances of the saints addressed.

John wrote at a time when the person of our Lord was blasphemously assailed, when there were many antichrists, many false prophets gone out into the world; and of others he had to say, "They went out from us because they were not of us." And how does he begin his inspired letter? He begins by setting forth the divine and eternal excellence of the Son - "that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." Who was the eternal life with the FATHER but the SON? He then asserts the precious truth, that true Christian fellowship is "with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." He repeatedly speaks of the Father, and of His love in bringing us into new relationships, and giving us eternal life in the Son, all founded on the work of the cross. He declares that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin," and that if we sin, the Righteous One (Christ) is our Advocate with the Father, who is also the propitiation for our sins. He shows that those who are born of God do not practise sin; but, having eternal life, this life will be manifested in obedience, righteousness, and love.

Now it is easily seen that by this ministry of Christ, brought home by the power of the Holy Ghost, they would be delivered from a false Christ, by knowing the true One, of whom he speaks at the end of his letter as "the true God, and eternal life." By being established in their new and eternal relationships with the Father and the Son, and therefore with each other, they would be separated from false people and untrue associations; and by knowing they had eternal life in Christ, and that the Spirit was given to abide with them, they would be encouraged in the life of obedience, righteousness, and love. They would see that "he that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself so to walk, even as He walked." It was certainly a most trying state of things, but the blessed and effectual remedy of the Holy Ghost was the suited and pointed ministry of Christ.

Look also at the epistle to the Hebrews. A very different state is here seen. They were in such a low condition as to be in danger of giving up Christianity and returning to the Jews' religion. And how were they met? By the ministry of Christ; and remarkably so out of their own Scriptures - the books of Moses, Psalms, and prophets. The Son in His deity, as well as true humanity, was most blessedly brought before them in the first two chapters. He is seen to be greater than angels, worthy of more glory than Moses and Aaron, Joshua, David, and

even Abraham, so that all retire when the glory of His person is introduced, like the brightest stars cease to shine before the rising of the sun. The eternal Son - the heir of all things - who made all things, upholds all things, and is to have all things put under His feet, is here brought out. He is looked at before time, in time, and after time shall have passed away. His incarnation, life of sufferings and temptation, death, resurrection, glorification, and reign, when everything will be put under His feet, all pass before us. We see Him as the Purger of sins, the Captain of our salvation, the Destroyer of the devil, the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, the Son over His own house, the Forerunner who is for us entered, an unchangeable Priest after the order of Melchisedec, the Leader and Completer of faith, the Mediator of the new covenant, and the Great Shepherd of the sheep, who was brought again from the dead through the blood of the everlasting covenant; and we are assured that "yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

We cannot fail to notice in what a variety of aspects the Lord Jesus is brought before the readers of this epistle, which no doubt is intended to teach us that we need the full revelation which God has given us of His own Son, and not merely to know Him as the Purger of our sins. Why the glory of His person is so clearly and richly unfolded in the beginning is because the prominent point in this epistle is the perfection of the one sacrifice and unchangeable priesthood of Christ, as contrasted with the oft-repeated sacrifices and many priests of a former dispensation, which was a time of types and shadows of the substantial realities in Christ. When one grasps the truth of the infinite perfections and glory of His person, it then becomes clear that an everlasting value is stamped on His work and offices. Thus the Hebrew believers were entitled to know that their sins were purged, and that God would remember them no more; that by that one offering they were purged worshippers, should have no more conscience of sins, and were perfected for ever. They had, as to God, liberty to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus; and as regards men, their place was with Christ outside the camp of formal religiousness, bearing His reproach, and, before the Lord comes, to be running the race of faith with patience, and looking to Him, at God's right hand, for all the sustainment and encouragement they need. Can we conceive anything more calculated to deliver souls from Judaism, and to set them right with God than this full and clear ministry of Christ? Well

might the writer end his letter by enjoining them "to offer by Him (Christ) the sacrifice of praise to God continually," and not to forget "to do good, and to communicate;" "for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

In the first epistle to the Corinthians a state very different from those we have considered meets us. We here see the assembly in the greatest disorder, with rich gifts, flagrant sins, and erroneous doctrine. A brief look into the inspired letter is enough to show how simply and - as we learn from the second epistle - how effectually it was met by the suited ministry of Christ. But first let us observe that the three things which marked the Lord's epistles to the seven churches in the Revelation were also carried out by the apostle here: 1st, He approves in them everything he can; 2nd, He brings before them their evil ways and doctrines; and 3rd, He presents the remedy, which is always found in having to do with Christ Himself, as set forth in Scripture. And will not these points always characterize a divinely-given ministry to saints? The apostle knew well that "Christ is all," and that all our blessings are in Him, and through Him, and not at all after the flesh. He therefore addresses the Corinthians as "sanctified in Christ Jesus," where divine grace has set the feeblest believer. After having acknowledged with thankfulness to God the grace given them by Christ Jesus, their utterance, knowledge, and gifts, and their waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, he reminds them of God's faithfulness, and of His having called them unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which is also true of every believer.

Having thus shown them that they are set apart for God in Christ, and called to have partnership with Christ in His thoughts, love, joy, service, etc., he now turns to their faults. Having exposed the divisions among them, he meets all by bringing in Christ and His cross. He says, "Is Christ divided?" Are not all believers joined to the Lord one body? Then how can divisions be right? Can the human body be divided into parts, and still be in connection with the head? "Was Paul crucified for you?" Then why take up his name? Then he

1. [In ch. 1 of 1 Cor., what is commended is that with which God had endowed them, but nothing in their walk is commended. In Gal. 1 nothing at all is commended, Ed.]

refers to their boasted wisdom: "The Greeks seek after wisdom." The Corinthians were not free from this. But the world by wisdom knew not God, and Christ crucified is the wisdom of God. The apostle says, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." A crucified Christ, and a message of salvation to every one that believeth on Him, are counted by the wise Gentiles to be "foolishness;" and yet that cross shows man to be so ignorant that he did not know God, and so bad that he hated Him without a cause. Moreover, in the death of Christ not only were sins judged, but our old man was crucified with Him, which shows that man has now no place in the flesh before God, either as to righteousness or wisdom, but that He has given us a new life and standing in Christ Jesus, "who of God is made unto us wisdom." The cross put an end to man's boasted wisdom; this is why Paul would know nothing among them, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Next he touches their consciences about a flagrant sin; and how does he meet it? By ministering Christ. "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." At the passover all leaven was to be put out of their houses; therefore this manifest uncleanness - leaven - must be purged out of their midst. Again, when gathered together in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is in the midst, and where the Holy Spirit is the power, how could such wickedness be associated with the Lord's name? And further, how can you eat and have fellowship with one who has so openly dishonoured the Lord who is holy? Therefore do not eat with such, but "put away from among yourselves that wicked person." They were to put away not only from the Lord's table, but also from among themselves, and were with such not even to eat (1 Cor. 5). The sin of fornication is further met in two ways: 1st, Being joined to the Lord, one spirit, and our bodies being the members of Christ, shall we "take the members of Christ and make them the members of an harlot"? 2nd, Being bought with a price, we are not our own, but are to glorify God in our bodies, especially remembering that our "body is the temple of the Holy Ghost" (chap. 6:15-20).

Why should not a Christian be a bondman of men? Because he is the Lord's freeman; he has been bought with a price, and is Christ's bondman (chap. 7:22,23). As to not partaking at an idol's temple, not having communion there, not

partaking of the table of demons, he shows that the communion God has graciously brought us into is the communion at the Lord's table of those who have a common ground of fellowship in the blood of Christ, and a common expression of it as members of one body in breaking and eating the same loaf. Thus being identified with Christ in His death, we are necessarily separated from every false fellowship, and every table not the Lord's (chap. 10).

In the next chapter, where we find that the Lord's supper had been mixed up with such carnality as to have lost its proper character among them, he brings in the Lord again to set all right. He shows that they had missed the Lord in it - had not discerned the Lord's body. He instructs them that it is the time for remembering the Lord, and showing the Lord's death till He come, who said, "Do this in remembrance of me." He shows them that here the Lord was everything; that the supper was in respect of the body and blood of the Lord, and that the chastening of the Lord had come in because they had not discerned the Lord's body (1 Cor. 11).

As to the doctrine which denied the resurrection of the body, the apostle at once brings in the Lord. He says, "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen... and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished," etc. He asserts the fact that "He rose again the third day," that He did so "according to the Scriptures," and that His resurrection had been verified by the most ample, and competent, and incontrovertible testimony. He teaches that "Christ" has risen as "the first-fruits," and the next in order to rise are "they that are Christ's at His coming." He concludes by 'showing that Christ in His abounding grace has thus triumphed over death and the grave for us; so that we are now entitled to say, "Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." How manifold, then, are the ways in which Christ is ministered to us in the word of God, and how dear it is that the ministry of the Holy Ghost is that which ministers Christ to souls!

In the Lord's epistles to the seven churches, the various aspects in which He presents Himself to each assembly, according to its need and condition, is most striking. We would only now direct attention to one point. Looking at the seven epistles as giving the seven phases of the Church's course on earth in the place of corporate responsibility to the

Lord, and considering that the last four have reference to the Lord's coming, and will go on together to the end, as Popery, Protestantism, Philadelphianism, and Laodiceanism, it is interesting to observe how the Lord presents Himself to them; for it is clear, if this be the fourfold state of Christendom to the end, that these presentations of the Lord must be the last kinds of His ministry till He come. And, briefly, what are they? His Person - "the Son of God." The Giver of the Holy Ghost, and source of gift - "He that hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars." The holiness and truth suited to those gathered together in His name - "The Holy and the True." And the truth of the new creation - "the beginning of the creation of God." It becomes then a serious question whether, from the ministry that has gone forth in these last days, it is not Christ presenting Himself to Christendom in His last aspects? If so, how soon His word may be fulfilled; "Behold, I come quickly!"

It would be highly interesting to trace in other epistles the various ways in which the Lord Jesus Christ was presented to the saints, did our limits admit of it. We trust, however, that enough has been advanced to show that ministering Christ according to God will carry with it the authority of Scripture - - "preach the Word," and therefore present Him to souls of whom the Scripture testifies; it will thus have a positive and definite character - "we preach Christ Jesus the Lord." Surely the WISDOM and GUIDANCE of THE HOLY GHOST alone can direct the servant of the Lord as to the kind of pasture the sheep and lambs of Christ need, and the POWER OF THE HOLY GHOST alone can carry it home to the heart. How otherwise can the flock of God be fed? How can any one be fitted for this holy yet happy service, unless he is living in the enjoyment of the Lord and His truth in his own soul? Unless he is waiting on the Lord, how will he be able to give his household meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall find so doing.

H. H. S.

NEW CREATION, LIFE IN THE SON AND DELIVERANCE FROM THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH

(continued from p. 125)

THE POSITION OF O.T. SAINTS

O.T. SAINTS WERE CHILDREN OF GOD

Scripture tells us O.T. saints were children of God (John 11:52; Rom. 9:7,8; Gal. 4:1-3). Where are we told they were sons? Nowhere. Another said, "Now the communication of life was nothing new in itself. It was communicated to the O.T. saints, yet it did not make them sons of God" [1]. The O.T. saints were children of God, had divine life from the Son, were born anew, but were not in the position of sons.

J.N. Darby remarked, as have many others, "... the Son quickened souls from Adam onwards." "The Son had quickened whom He would, no doubt, all along ..." [2]. The O.T. saints had life from the Son but not life in the Son. This will be considered in detail later. We observe here, though, that "life in the Son" is "abundant life" (meaning the character of the life) -- being one plant with Himself (John 12:24). Sonship, life in the Son, forgiveness of sins as a revealed position, etc., O.T. saints did not have, nor could they until the work of atonement was accomplished. F. G. Patterson wrote,

The Spirit of God wrought in souls, and they were born again of the Word and Spirit of God. They had a new nature, which longed for complete deliverance before the cross made it possible that God could make known to any that all their sins were there put away. The children of God were then in bondage,

1. J.A. Trench, An Answer to "Life and the Spirit", pp. 17,18.

2. Collected writings 29:217,218. See also his Synopsis 5:33. See also The Bible Treasury 6:206; 9:188; 15:147; Words of Truth 3:178; 2:80,104,127 etc.; W. Kelly, Ephesians, pp. 77,78 (Race ed.).

hoping for a Saviour, and a salvation which they needed. Still none of them had the Spirit of adoption--the Spirit of His Son, whereby they could cry "Abba, Father," given them. Now, it is true (since the cross) that "Because ye are sons (already, by faith in Jesus Christ; Gal. 3:26), God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father" (Gal. 4:6). We stand thus consciously in relationship to God as our Father, which no saint of God ever did; although they were born of God, this relationship as sons never was known. **Confidence** in God characterizes the Old Testament and before the cross; **relationship** characterizes the New.

The people of God before the cross were under the "**forbearance**" of God. When the cross came and discharged all God's claims, and purged their sins, they are on another footing altogether. They now stand as those who have been righteously forgiven and justified. Romans 3:25, 26, brings this truth out very plainly; "Whom God hath set forth a propitiation (or mercy seat) through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the **passing over** (marg.), of sins that are **past**, through the **forbearance** of God; to declare **at this time**, his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

Suppose a man owed a debt which he could not discharge. Well, some kind person says he will be security for that debt. Then his creditor **forbears** with him; he does not press his claim. Still the creditor's claim has not been settled, nor is the debtor relieved; the debt hangs over him still.

But suppose the rich man has kindly discharged the debt himself, unknown to the other. How very kind! you exclaim. But still the debtor's mind is not relieved; he thinks he is still under the forbearance of his creditor. Then some one comes with the news that all has been discharged, and that the creditor wishes to assure the person that he wishes him to know it, and not be afraid to meet him any more.

Now this forbearance was the state of the saints before the cross -- they confided in God -- trusted

His promises. They knew that some day or other these promises would be fulfilled. They thus lived and died in confidence in God. God was looking on towards the cross, and the Son was in the heavens; the One who had presented Himself to come some day and do all God's will (Ps. 40:6-8) [3].

J. N. Darby wrote,

... I reply, Old Testament saints could not be described as not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. The Spirit is the seal of our new position in Christ, promised in the prophets and by the Lord, and received by Him for us after His ascension (Acts 2:33), and given as the Spirit of adoption, and uniting us to Him ascended. The distinction of flesh and Spirit is founded on the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, and the possession of the Spirit promised by Christ, and the present fruit of His redemption work. In His time on earth John could say, "The Holy Ghost was not yet, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." And lust was in the Old Testament saints, but now the flesh working lusts against the Spirit, and freedom by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death is known only to those who have the Spirit, given consequent on an accomplished redemption. It is clear they could not be in the Spirit if the Spirit was not given, and scripture is as clear on this as words can make it. The gift of the Spirit was such and so dependent on Christ's going away, that it was expedient for them He should do so [4].

It is important to understand that their is a revealed position before God that those indwelt now by the Spirit occupy. This was not the position of O.T. saints. J. A. Trench said,

Whither this reasoning leads may be seen: "the direct result [of denying that O.T. saints had life in the Son] to me would be this, that Old Testament saints were neither

3. The Lord's Host, pp. 44,45.

4. Letters 3:394.

children of God, nor could they be justified from sin, or in the last Adam" &c. (p. 8). Thus what scripture applies to a revealed position before God, that we are brought into on earth as the fruit of a gloriously accomplished redemption is here attempted to be applied to saints before Christ came, which if it were, would have taken them wholly off the revealed ground upon which God placed them. To have our place in Christ according to Romans 8:1, our old man must have been crucified with Christ; but having died with Him we have died out from under the law, and the bond of relationship with that first husband has been absolutely broken; how then could Old Testament saints, who were "kept under the law" have been in Christ? Of course they were children of God, as surely as they were born of God, though the mere possession of the nature carried with it then no more than now the consciousness of relationship, and were justified from sin **before God,*** and not under condemnation; though none of these things were the ground upon which they stood, as they are, and are characteristic of (in contrast with them) the ground upon which we stand. Read 1 Corinthians 15 and think of an Old Testament saint being "in the last Adam." Also Galatians 3:23 - 4:7 for the contrast of their place and ours, specially 3:28 as to how "in Christ" takes out of Jewish ground, as out of all other distinctions of the flesh. For "if any man be in Christ, there is a new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17; compare also ver. 16) [5].

* "Before God I say, in contrast to any revealed position; for note the difference in Romans 3:25, between "the passing over of sins that are passed through the forbearance of God," and justification now, the cross laying the righteous ground for both the one and the other. The paper here as everywhere, leaves out the full place the cross has before God."

" 'Before God' I say, in contrast to any revealed position" is most important to observe, because this has to do with the ground on which they stood before God and not with what was secret with God. It is most helpful and important to make this distinction.

O.T. SAINTS COULD NOT FORM A VISIBLE ONENESS

Since the coming of the Holy Spirit, the children of God as now indwelt by Him, are enabled to express family oneness. The O.T. saints could not form a visible, manifested community of children before the Father. The Father was not revealed yet. Furthermore, they could not because in the ages before the cross man was viewed in his Adam (fallen Adam) standing and responsibility and was under trial to see if good were in him (Rom. 3:9-10); not to inform God, of course, but to teach us. This trial terminated in the death of Christ.

There are only two men (1 Cor. 15:47). Oh, that by faith we would believe it, and then understand! The whole O.T. time was the trial of "the first man" to show under every possible condition that he was unalterably wicked,--a sinner. When this issue was fully demonstrated, the Lord Jesus accomplished redemption; and so blessing comes through "the second man."

The law, then, addressed itself to the first man, the man of responsibility, man in Adam, man in the person of the Jews placed under it. The law made no distinction concerning who was a child of God and who was not. The law did not, and could not, provide a basis for the children of God to form a visible, manifested community of children, in separation from those who were not children. What then was the position of the children of God in the O.T.? They were not gathered in ONENESS; they were "scattered abroad".

Now, John 11:52 expressly tells us that they were "scattered abroad" and that the death of Christ was required in order that the children of God might be gathered together in one. We can apprehend this because Christ's work ended the trial of "the first man" and provided the basis for the full revelation of the Trinity, the declaration of the Father's name to Christ's brethren, the exaltation of man in the Person of Christ in glory, and the consequent baptism in, and seal with the Spirit. Therefore, now the children of God could be gathered together in one, giving expression to the common life and nature communicated from God, in separation from unbelievers, empowered by the Spirit to do so.

And this brings us to a little-understood scripture: John 1:12. This scripture is not speaking about just starting out to

be a child of God. No. Rather, it concerns the subject we have been considering: the place and position of the children of God according to a revealed and acknowledged relationship before the Father, Whose name was declared by Christ (John 17:26), and who accomplished His will (John 17:4). John 1:12 indicates that the work of Christ has given the children of God the right (*exousia*) to take the place of acknowledged relationship to God and to one another, as we see in 1 John 1:3; i.e., the right to the true place and position of children in liberty before the Father. Let us be clear that this could not be so while the first man was under trial. The cross ended that trial. The first man was judged in that cross. Hence Paul could say, "I am crucified with Christ ..." (Gal. 2:20). What I am in my Adam standing was judged on the cross (cp. Rom. 8:3). With the first man so judged, the children of God now have the right to take the place of acknowledged children before the Father, as empowered by the Spirit. "Beloved, now are we the children of God" (1 John 3:2). Do you appreciate this and act like a child of God, also seeking to practice oneness in the midst of the shameful mixture and the scattering of the children of God in Christendom? Of course, in view of other Scriptures this must be done without compromise of the truth and in holiness in associations, for holiness becomes God's house forever!

Part 2 will also help us to understand why O.T. saints could not form a visible, manifested oneness. John 12:24 is a key scripture in helping us understand a great distinction between the character of the life possessed by them and the identification of life with Him as one plant with Him; for before resurrection He abode alone.

ed.

(To be continued, Lord willing).

Thy word have I hid in mine heart,
that I might not sin against Thee.
Psalm 119:11

MISUSED/MISUNDERSTOOD TEXTS

JAMES 3:18

**But [the] fruit of righteousness in peace
is sown for them that make peace.**

It is a mistake to read this text as if it said that the result of making peace is a general righteousness. It does not mean that the fruit of making peace is general righteousness. However, this text does speak of making peace. It is the peace which follows the purity of James 3:17: "The wisdom from above first is pure, then peaceful," etc. If we lack wisdom, we may ask for it (James 1:5), but James 3:17 tells us what characterizes that very wisdom that God gives. Our hearts would claim to be acting wisely while sneaking past the words "first is pure". But that is not the wisdom from above. It comes from somewhere else.

The peace of James 3:17,18 accords with the nature of God as light and as love, in that order! This purity and peace follows the order of the revelation of God in Christ and in the cross and its blessed results. God is ever true to Himself in all His works and ways.

God will have war with Amalek from generation to generation (Ex. 17:16). Amalek is a type of the flesh. Notice that Saul spared Agag the Amalekite, but Samuel hewed him in pieces. In God's governmental ways,¹ Saul was slain by an Egyptian, the servant of an Amalekite. It is solemn to weigh it that the kind of flesh we allow will ultimately destroy us. The flesh would reverse the divine order and we shall reap what we sow.

Scriptural peace must be founded on purity first. There is no escaping this. For those who make peace (v. 18) in

1. It is well to be aware of such things in Scripture. Notice how Abimelech (Judges 9) slew seventy persons on one stone and received a mortal wound in the head from a piece of a millstone.

accordance with v. 17, as someone said, "the fruit of righteousness is found in the peace which is thus maintained".

"But [the] fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for them that make peace." The words "for them" do not mean 'by them'. "For them" shows that "in peace" applies to the person who follows the order of v. 17. Those who will not make peace according to the order of v. 17 may well be left with God and the fruits of their own self-will in His governmental ways. Where God's Word, with its order, is followed, the soul has peace. The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace IN such a soul that makes peace in accordance with v. 17.

Wm. Kelly wrote,

In the practical walk of the believer the fruit of righteousness is the prime requisite, but "in peace"; as we have seen the wisdom from above is "first pure, the peaceable." In the natural man, as in the world, self-will reigns, the enemy of all righteousness, in an overbearing spirit, the seed of an ever-growing harvest of contention, as the beginning of the next chapter clearly indicates.

Even in the Lord Jesus we find the same order, as in Heb. 7:2, "first being by interpretation king of righteousness, and after that also king of Salem, which is king of peace." Such is the application of Melchizedek, king-priest of Salem. It is indeed a type more than fulfilled in the order of Christ's priesthood even now, about to be fulfilled by-and-by in its exercise, when the battle is won over the Beast and the kings of the earth and their armies at the end of the age.

When we look at redemption, if grace reigns as it does, it is through righteousness unto life eternal through Jesus Christ our Lord. Only then, through Him dead and risen, could we, justified by faith, have peace with God. Therefore are the saints everywhere called on, walking righteously, to be in peace (if possible, as much as hangs on them) with all men. Nor do the Epistles to the Corinthians differ from that to the Romans: God hath called us in peace, says the First; rejoice, be adjusted, be encouraged, be of one mind, be in peace; and the God of love and peace would be with them. Such is the exhortation and promise in the Second. So to the

Galatians the apostle writes to as many as walk according to the rule of the new creation, peace on them and mercy; as to the Ephesians, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, he would have their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. What a place peace has in the the Philippian Epistle every reader ought to see; nor is it less deep in that to the Colossians where he would have Christ's peace rule in their hearts; as he prays for the Thessalonians in the First that the God of peace would sanctify them wholly, and in the Second that the Lord of peace Himself would give them peace continually in every way. And the Epistle to the Hebrews exhorts to pursue peace with all, and holiness, giving this however the primary and peremptory place in accordance with the doctrine elsewhere.

But the fruit of righteousness in peace, though acceptable to God, a blessing in itself, and a comfort to fellow-believers, is far from welcome to men in general, who know not God and do not obey the gospel but unrighteousness, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating each other. It is sown, as we are here told, "for them that make peace." The will of man, any more than the wrath of man, works not God's righteousness. Discord and every evil issue are the sad effect. "Blessed," says the Lord, "are the peace makers; for they shall be called God's sons." But in that wondrous outpouring of blessing from His lips on the mount (Matt. 5), we may notice that the four descriptions of the blessed are of the righteous class (vers. 3-6), before the three of the gracious sort (vers. 7-9); with a blessing super-numerary on the persecuted for righteousness' sake, and another yet richer on those persecuted for His own sake. Righteousness necessarily precedes. For it is vain to think or speak of walking in grace, where we fail in consistency with our relationship. The fruit of righteousness in peace is being sown for those that make peace. Such are evidently walking in a spirit which grace produces; but the fruit of righteousness in peace is sown for them.

The Epistle of James

ed.

CHURCH RUINS

Extract from a Letter

Israel after their return from Babylon was Israel still. They had not the ark, the glory, nor the Urim, nor did they affect that to which such things were needed; but they fully recognized themselves as God's Israel. As far as they could they did the services of such, and behaved themselves as such; but they never did anything in any other character, or what was inconsistent with that character. This is much to be remembered. Did they, I ask, bring home with them the customs of the heathen? 'The latter house' was not what 'the former house' had been, and the old men wept; but as far as conditions allowed it, the ways of the two houses were alike. They never brought in the customs of the heathen; and as simply and surely as ever they took knowledge of themselves as the Israel of God. Their circumstances were changed; they were in ruins. Their fair things and their honourable things were spoiled. They were subject to the Gentile, but they were Israel still. This was their principle, and accordingly as soon as anything was discovered inconsistent with that it was judged. You remember the case of intermarriages, and the more pertinent one of Nehemiah revenging the act of Eliashib, who prepared a chamber for Tobiah the Ammonite in the house of the Lord. They owned their circumcision, their separation to God, as jealously as ever. They refused Samaritan brotherhood and communion with the Gentiles, while they were debtors to the patronage of the Gentiles and were partakers of their bounty. Horonites, Ammonites and Moabites were the same to them as they ever they had been. No glory had entered the latter house as it had the former. This may have tried their faith. The ark had not been preserved for them as in another land of Philistines, nor had it returned to them as in victory from another temple of Dagon; it was lost to them. This may have tried their faith also. Nor had they their priest with Urim and Thummim. Thus were they in ruins, shorn of beauty and strength, and some of their brethren were still in Babylon. But in the presence and midst of all this, they avow themselves to be God's Israel as surely and simply as ever. They allow of nothing inconsistent with the former

house, though they well knew, and were constrained to feel, that they had not all its glory in the latter house. This is for us, dear brother. We are in our way and measure to be 'stewards of the mysteries of God,' and that too under the holy sanction of being 'faithful'. And neither love sake or brotherhood sake, or any other impulse, is to prevail with us to forego the services which attach to so precious a stewardship. The peculiarities of the house of God are to be our peculiarities; and though we own Israelites in Babylon, we are not to own Samaritans or Chaldees in Zion; nor are we to own ways unworthy of Zion in a returned captive, though we see him the witness of ruins and weakness. This theme is worthy of our thoughts, and I confess I desire our dear brethren to take counsel upon it. ... I own saints (to be sure I do) where I cannot see Church ruins; as, for instance, in the Establishment. The Establishment is not a Church ruin; it is an important thing in the earth, which must scorn the idea of ruins. Nay, it denies the Church in her very first element; for it has not gone to Christ as a stone 'disallowed of men', but has linked His name with the government and men of the world, but God's dear people are there. But even when an assembly is not of that earthly and important character, and takes a lowlier bearing, yet it may not be a Church ruin, I must still inspect it whether or not it own the peculiarities of the house of God. Christendom is not to be mistaken for Church ruins. ... The few who call on the Lord out of a pure heart form the Church ruins (2 Tim. 3), where I must be found. And it is a holy question for us, beloved, Are we upholding merely Christian fellowship? or are we dwelling according to the holiness of God within the precincts of a Church ruin? ... It is needful to remember with increased care that the truth of God and the house of God have their blessed peculiarities; that not one of them is to be sacrificed to the morals, the politics, or the religion of man; and that we are not to mistake for them what man produces, be it as good as it may. Ruins are weak things, but still they tell of the original building. And so in our present weakness, we must still tell of the peculiarities of the Church. In the truth or mysteries witnessed by us, in the nature, subject, and purpose of our discipline, in the ways and ordinances of the assembly, in the whole process of our common edification, the peculiarities of the house of God must be seen. I avow ruins as simply as ever; but if it be necessary, I add that they are Church ruins, unlike either the old Roman temple or the buildings of the philanthropists and reformers of this our day.

J. G. B. December 18th, 1849.

"THE TESTIMONY"

(The Substance of a Conversation)

"If we had him, he is a devoted Christian, and would greatly help the testimony."

"What testimony?"

"Oh, the testimony of the Lord in -----: he would be such a help to us."

"Ah, I see where you are: you are thinking of **your** testimony, and not of the ruin of the Church, and of the Lord's coming as our only hope in the midst of it."

"I think, through grace, I do see the ruin of the Church, and am also waiting for the Lord's coming; but is it not right to raise a testimony in the meantime; and do you not think if we had such a man as that - a fine, earnest, active, devoted man, that he would greatly help us?"

"Well, you may depend upon it, if you bring any one to be a help to you, he will turn out but a prick and a thorn in your side."

"What! Do you mean to say that the Lord would not make such as he a help to us?"

"Yes, if you did not look for help from him in that way. But if your eye is on him, then it is off the Lord; and what you sought comfort from would be but dust in your eyes and grit between your teeth. If you were not where you are it would be another thing; but you are in the place of 'dependence upon God', and He is very jealous over you, and will keep you dependent on Himself. What is it to Him to save by many or by few? Others, not in the place of dependence, might look to man and get blessing from such as he, as you speak of; but, for one in the place of 'dependence upon God', it would be deeply dishonouring to Him, and He would not allow it."

"Oh, but I did not mean to turn away from the Lord, and look to man: I only meant that if he came in, what a help he would be!"

"Rather say how helped he would be. You are dependent on the Lord for help, and independent of man. When I see a bright soul outside, I court him for the Lord, and say, 'Oh, how I long to see so-and-so in; what blessing he would receive were he in the right place!' Not 'how he would help us,' though we might be helped by him at the same time."

"Oh! I see, God is seeking worshippers."

"Quite so. And what power and happiness there would be if all saw that. How dependent upon God, and how honouring to Him; while at the same time how ready to receive from Him any help, and in any way He chooses to give it!"

"But still, while owning all that, what about the testimony? Do you not think it would help the testimony?"

"My dear friend, do you not know what you are a testimony to?"

"What?"

"Utter and entire failure, from every point of view."

"Well, of course that is true, I know; but are we not the epistle of Christ?"

"The Church in her normal character is that, and she is always responsible for it. But what sort of an epistle is she now? What sort of an epistle are you at ----?"

"Oh, please do not name it. The thought of it fills me with shame."

"Well then, what have you to say?"

"I quite know and see the Church has failed corporately. And, alas! we at ---- too have failed. But for that very reason ought we not the rather seek to raise a testimony?"

"You have sought to do so, and have you succeeded? Are you proud of your attempt?"

"Well, surely not. But are we not to be witnesses?"

"Of course we ought: corporately and individually too we ought to be witnesses for Christ: that's not the question: but when I hear brethren talk of raising a testimony, I query if they know where they are, at the tail-end of a ruined dispensation. If you talk of a testimony - the sun in the heavens is a testimony; the moon and the stars are a

testimony; all 'declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handywork.' 'The law of the Lord is perfect' too - that is a testimony, and has never failed. The Church at Pentecost, freshly gathered by the Holy Spirit come down from heaven, was a testimony; but where is it now? When Paul preached the gospel of the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ, and established the church on the foundation of that truth and its consequences, that was a testimony; but where is it now? Ephesus had the candlestick taken away from it, and it never was nor ever will be restored here. Examine these chapters on the Churches, and what do you find? the testimony getting less and less - until you come to Laodicea, where there is no testimony at all, except a testimony to corruption, and Christ outside and seeking to get in. Sardis was a testimony to 'works left undone', to spiritual laziness and inertness that left 'incomplete' what it had in hand to do."

"Yes, but what about Philadelphia?"

"Well, what about it? Simply, that 'He that is holy, he that is true,' and He that has all power says, 'I know thy works.' Is that enough for you? or do you want other people to know them too? As it is, I should think they know enough of them to know that they are not much to your credit."

"Well, I own that, but does He not say, 'I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it?'"

"Yes, but that is His work, not yours: for simple as it is even to open a door, you have not strength for that, much less to 'raise a testimony'. But Philadelphia did work, and this is what He says she did, 'Thou hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.' And this is what she is told to do, 'Hold fast that thou hast, that no man take thy crown.' That is what she is told to do. There is nothing about 'raising a testimony'. As to the rest it is He who does it all. You will notice how often 'I' and 'I will' comes in.

'I know thy works . . .

I have set an open door before thee . . .

I will make them of the synagogue . . .

I will make them come . . . and know that.

I have loved thee.

I also will keep thee . . .

I come quickly . . .

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple
of my God . . .

I will write upon him the name of my God,
and the name of the city of my God, . . .
and my new name.'

"'He that hath an ear to hear let him hear.' Philadelphia was not called to raise a testimony (though she was a bright testimony) for she had not power adequate for it. What He says of her is, 'Thou hast kept the word of my patience:' nothing about raising a testimony."

"But then has God no testimony at all now?"

"God never left Himself without testimony, 'in that He did good (mark who it was that raised the testimony), and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with joy and gladness.' Thus it was God Himself who preserved the testimony to His own goodness among the nations (compare Rom. 1:18-32): and so at the end of the history of the church in Laodicea the testimony is in like manner preserved - 'These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness.' And this is the more remarkable as Laodicea is the church emphatically that sets up to 'raise a testimony'. Alas! it is but a testimony to unholy self-complacency. 'I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing.' He says of her, 'I will spue you out of my mouth;' and is no testimony to me.

"Now, Philadelphia is the place for you. If God says, 'I know thy works,' let that suffice you. Never you mind the testimony - time is too short to think of that. Mind yourself, and that will be a great deal more glory to God, and better for yourself - walk humbly, with your head down, and your eyes up."

"Well, I thought I understood the ruin of the Church, and the coming of Christ as our blessed and only hope, but I see there is vastly more to be learned and apprehended by faith. I am but scratching on the surface yet."

* * *

We can only be, in truth, a testimony to the complete failure of the Church of God. But, to be such, we must be as true in principle as the thing that has failed. And, as long as we are a testimony to failure, we shall never fail.

From Words of Truth, New Series, vol.2 (1875).

OUR CHILDREN FOR GOD

Are we training our children for God? or are we training them up for the world? This is the solemn question in the light of Prov. 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it." We have here a command and a promise; and, however strange it may seem to us, God will make good His word that the properly instructed child does not depart from the right way. Nevertheless, in the matter of training up children, it is to be feared that many Christian parents are sowing the seeds of a terrible harvest yet to come. Parents have in great measure the making, or the unmaking, of their children. We have heard Christian parents bemoan the worldliness of their offspring, and express the fear that they were going from bad to worse. But had these children been trained up "in the nurture, and admonition, and fear of the Lord"? It is to be feared that in too many cases the children had been influenced by parental example, and had simply **followed up** the training initiated by their parents. The hearts of the young are wonderfully susceptible to impressions, be the impressions good or bad -- spiritual or carnal. The training they receive becomes part of themselves -- woven, so to speak, into their very being. Everything a child sees, everything it hears, goes to make up its character, and influence its whole future destiny! This is solemn. Yet it cannot be denied; neither can it be explained away. And once the character of a child is formed on the lines of carnal policy, what guarantee have we to expect that the child will tread the paths of righteousness in after years? If we sow the fallow ground of our children's hearts with the seed of worldly

conformity, how can we expect a harvest of fruit unto God? We are aware of the standard arguments, that one must move with the times, and that those who live in Rome must do as the Romans do. But we have never found such principles in Holy Writ. We are in the world (if "Rome" represents the world); but we are not of it, and have no call whatever to move with "the times," or do what the Romans do.

But let us go to the root of the matter, and ask what is the real secret of worldly up-bringing of children. We believe it is simply a case of **like producing like**. If parents are not living for God, they cannot bring up their children for God. Children are powerfully influenced by the atmosphere in which they dwell. If they are surrounded by an atmosphere of heavenly-mindedness, the "law of assimilation" will have its due effect; and the character of the child will get a "heavenward inclination" that may prove a mighty bulwark against the fierce temptations of coming years. But if you deliberately surround your children with the atmosphere of worldliness, the "law of assimilation" will not fail to act. A worldly atmosphere will make worldly children; and once the young heart has received its "downward inclination, you have simply done your best, or your worst, to hinder that child from treading the paths of holiness and peace. If you train up a child in the way he should **not** go, be not surprised if, when he is old, he depart **not** from it. In the bringing up of children there is such a thing as sowing the wind and reaping the whirlwind (Hos. 8:7).

The Believer's Treasury, v. 5.

How many Christians rear their children in a worldly atmosphere in their homes and never wake up to the fact that they are indeed governed by worldly objects, motives and self-indulgence? Lacking **self-judgment** and **self-discipline**, they cannot rightly discern the Lord's will and thus cannot bring up their little ones up as they ought. Thus they do, in fact, train their children, but in their own easy-going ways -- and the children will logically carry this further. And then when the bitter fruits manifest themselves, the tendency is to say, "But I tried to bring them up for the Lord." And then the blame is put on the Lord, or the brethren, or whatever.

ed.

BATHSHEBA'S SIN

David's lust, which triggered his double crime of adultery and murder, was, as Nathan's parable intimates, a visitor rather than a constant companion, such, for example, as was Solomon's. And while down through the ages that crime has provided occasion for the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, it has on the plus side yielded for the comfort, restoration and edification of sinning saints the great penitential Psalm 51.

David's lust was provoked by Bathsheba's nudity. And she no less betrayed Uriah her husband by exposing her body to David's sight than she did when in consequence she cohabited with him. The adultery was first committed in their hearts while loyal Uriah the Hittite was battling the Ammonites in defense of Israel, for the honour of Israel's king, and the glory of Israel's God.

Although the child of this unholy alliance had to die, God so forgave David and Bathsheba that their second child, conceived and born in wedlock after Uriah's death, became David's successor on Israel's throne and the one through whom the Davidic line was perpetuated to climax in David's greater Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Samuel and 1 Kings are concerned with David's history and that of his successors rather than Bathsheba's, so what is given us of her subsequent history is only incidental. But from that we can assume that she was not as spiritually sensitive as was David. She had hardly more than her body to contribute. There is no evidence of spiritual growth along with David.

Can it be that today Christian young women, swept along by the dictates of fashion, are consciously or unconsciously arousing sexual desire outside of matrimony in Christian young men? If these men succumb to that natural drive, they are no less guilty before God than was David; they cannot escape guilt by blaming the girls. They cannot shift responsibility, as Adam tried to do. But the same God who has spoken plainly against immodesty will blame these women whether or not the men are seduced. And if the enticement is

(Continued on page 131)

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