

**Jan / Feb 1992**

**Vol. 7, # 1**

---

**CONTENTS**

---

The Son No Creature .....	1
Moral Evil and Assembly Discipline .....	8
Elements of Dispensational Truth .....	14
The Remnant Testimony .....	24
Supplement: Does the Breaking of Bread Lead into the Sanctuary?	



---



---

## THE TRUTH OF CHRIST'S PERSON

---



---

### *The Son No Creature Either Before or After Incarnation*

While all thought of the Son's subordination in Deity is contrary to Col. 1, so also is the blasphemous assertion that He is a creature, first and highest of all creatures. **Creator of "all things,"** using this comprehensive phrase four times in the two verses (16,17). The Creator is not a creature; He creates, but is not created. The Son created all, but He did not create Himself.

Yet some, who would not apply the unbecoming term, creature, to the Son in His eternal essence, do not hesitate to apply it to Him in His incarnation. They declare that the holy humanity of our Blessed Lord was a special creation, and on this unfounded assumption they claim that it is permissible to speak of Him as a "creature."

But there is not a word of scripture to justify this use of the ugly, unsavory expression. The Holy Spirit does not write of the Lord as a creature, nor as One created either before the worlds were made, or at His incarnation. We read of His **birth**, not of His creation. Why not let holy sobriety and godly prudence govern our language in matters like this, wherein the utmost scrupulousness is demanded? We should beware of adding any words of our own choosing to the scriptural vocabulary concerning the Son.

### *Woman-born, Not Created*

In the word of God, the **incarnation of the Son is recorded, not as a creation, but as a birth:** we read that "the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise. . ." (Matt. 1:18; 2:1). God created Adam the first man, but Eve gave birth to Cain and Abel (Gen. 1:27; 4:1,2). In the case of Adam, **life in maturity** was directly bestowed by Jehovah upon the inanimate dust of the ground, of which man was formed by his Creator; but in the case of Cain and Abel, their **infant life** was received by transmission from their living parents. And the whole of Adam's race to this day began their being in a similar manner.

Now the manner of our Lord's entrance into the world was by birth, not by

special creation as Adam's. His imminent birth with its miraculous character was specially announced to Mary by the angel, who said to her in her virginity, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). In these words, the personal agency of the Holy Spirit acting in unspeakable power upon Mary is plainly promised, and also the consequent birth of the "Holy Thing" to be called Son of God.

It is, however, an unwarrantable gloss upon this text to claim that according to its teaching the Lord's "holy humanity was created" -- that it was "brought into existence by the creative act of the Holy Spirit of God." Nothing is stated here or elsewhere in scripture which implies that the birth of Jesus Christ was "a creative act," that is, in the sense that the birth was a production of something from nothing. Such a theory rests upon the imagination of man, not upon revealed fact in scripture.

### ***Son of God Before and When Born***

The manner in which the overshadowing power of the Highest wrought upon Mary is not described. She herself declared, "He that is Mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is His name" (Luke 1:49). But, **whatever the secret and inscrutable operation of the Holy Spirit, divine power ensured that He Who was born of Mary was called the Son of God.** The fullness of time had come, and God "sent forth His Son, come of woman" (Gal. 4:4). It was His own Son Whom God so sent, "in likeness of flesh of sin" for the condemnation of sin in the flesh (Rom. 8:3).

Sonship is plainly predicted of Him Who was born of the virgin Mary. He was Son of God **before** His birth, for God sent His own Son; and He was Son of God **after** His birth, for this was His rightful name, according to Gabriel's instructions to the mother (Luke 1:35), while Isaiah's prophecy (7:14) was fulfilled also, according to which His name was Immanuel, that is, God with us (Matt. 1:22,23). As then He was God both before and after His birth, so He was Son of God both before and after His birth.

### ***The Seed of the Woman***

Here, in Bethlehem, was the Seed of the woman, as dimly foretold in Eden (Gen. 3:15); and therefore the birth is unparalleled in human history. But its marvel of marvels is that the **Holy One of God was born without taint of sin**



of a woman who herself was born in sin and of the whole race. The explanation of the unique miracle was given to Joseph by the angel of the Lord; "that which is conceived (or begotten) in her is of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 1:20). By His sacred and pervasive influence, every trace of evil was excluded and every risk of contamination was avoided. Speaking in typical language, the fine flour was kneaded with oil. And He Who was born of Mary was the thrice-holy Son of God.

With the profoundest gratitude and praise it is recognized that this event was "of God" in a manner that no like event has ever been or ever will be. The virgin birth of Jesus was unique, marvelous, miraculous, as a birth. At that point of time, "the Word became flesh." This is scriptural language but we do not read that this "flesh" was created, as is sometimes stated without adequate authority.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, it is inaccurate and misleading, seeing it is a plain departure from scripture, to assert that the human nature of Christ was created (that is, formed out of nothing) in the virgin's womb. Mary undoubtedly had her part in the sacred mystery, as the angel said to her, "Thou shalt conceive in thy

1. If it be said, by way of palliation, the "creating" is employed not in the absolute sense of calling out of nothingness into being, but, in the secondary sense of fashioning by divine power out of something already created, it may very properly be inquired why "creating" should be used at all in this solemn connection? If "creation" has this ambiguous sense, why not avoid the term altogether, as scripture does?

The attempt made to justify this unwholesome phrasing by a quotation from J. N. Darby (*Collected Writings*, vol. 10, p. 521) stultifies itself. It should have been seen from the passage itself that J.N.D. deliberately refrains from applying the word "creature," to the Lord. He is speaking of the "personal connection, in incarnation, between God and the creature -- God and man in one person."

Now, in these words, J.N.D. first refers to "God and the creature"; and by the latter term, he plainly alludes to Rom. 8:20-22 -- to the creature in bondage to corruption, whose deliverance will come about through the Incarnate Son. But J.N.D. does not write "God and creature in one person," but "God and man in one person." It was in becoming man, that the Son was the "personal connection" "between God and the creature." The two commas enclosing the words, "in incarnation," which appear in the *Collected Writings*, but which are omitted in two reprints of the words, make the meaning of the author clear and unmistakable. His reference is to the mediatorial, not the creatorial, connection between God and the creature.

W. Kelly's words have also been forced out of their contextual meaning with a like object, W.K. does not speak of the Lord becoming a creature, but of His being in the place or sphere where the creatures of His hand were. His words, which occur in a condensed report of his lectures, cannot be so construed without violence. He says, "He never took the creature place until He became a man, and then must needs be the first-born. Even if He had been the last-born literally, He must still be the first-born." And again, "He was firstborn, because He Who entered the sphere of human creaturehood was the Creator, and therefore must necessarily be the firstborn" (*Lectures on the Colossians*, pp. 19,20). The phrases, "the creature place," and "the sphere of human creaturehood," clearly refer to His environment, and not to His person, as some have assumed.

womb, and bring forth a son" (Luke 1:31). But to assert that the Lord's "holy humanity was created by a creative act of the Holy Spirit" is in effect to deny the fulfillment of the angel's words to Mary herself concerning her conception.

Scripture does not divide between the Deity and the humanity of the Incarnate Son, even in the womb of the virgin. Believing that the Person of the Eternal Son abode unchanged and unchangeable when He became the woman's Seed, we are content to be ignorant of the holy mystery because we are confident that the method of the Incarnation is inexplicable to the human mind, though scripture describes it so simply as "the birth of Jesus Christ" (Matt. 1:18).

### ***The Body Prepared***

In the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Holy Spirit applies to the coming of the Lord into the world a quotation from Psalm 40, in which the Son, the Messiah, describes His own incarnation: "a body hast Thou **prepared** (or, framed) Me" (Heb. 10:5). There is no hint of "creation" here, but in this important passage, where the mind of the Spirit is to teach us the unique nature of that body, so that "the body of Jesus Christ" was suited to become the sacrificial offering to God "once for all" (ver. 10), the word "**created**" is avoided, and "**prepared**" is used. On account of its peculiar origination this "body" had its own special feature, which was its intrinsic and unequalled holiness, secured by the agency of the Holy Spirit, in order that the Son's obedience "unto death, even the death of the cross" might be displayed therein.

The Son was pleased to assume this body in His incarnation. Becoming flesh was His mode of entrance into the place of a Servant that He might reveal the Father in a world of spiritual darkness and moral squalor. Consequently, by His incomparable life and ministry in that precious body, we are made privy to divine relations between the Father and the Son, which are recorded in John's writings and elsewhere.

Moreover, in the Son's disclosures on earth of these inscrutable heavenly intimacies, the Father's glory suffered no tarnish. Nay, such was the exquisite perfection and fullness of the Son's service that this glory was even enhanced in consequence. Hence, viewing His path from the point of its completion, the Son said to the Father, "I have glorified Thee on the earth." On the earth! In this wilderness world, shrouded, as it is, in uncomprehending darkness (John 1:5), God, Who is Light and Love, has been fully manifested by the Son in His humiliation and obedience; and His lowly labors were crowned with the Father's glory. What a body was needful for such high displays! "A body hast

**Thou prepared Me."** Precious body! Priceless, sinless, humanity was there! Yet in "likeness of sinful flesh" to become a sacrifice for sin (Rom. 8:3)! It was He Who "bare our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24).

"Lo, I come" was the joyous utterance of the Son in the eternal past, no less than in the due time when He assumed the prepared body at the moment and in the manner appointed for His coming into the world (Heb. 10:5). "He was to come by the woman, more fully man thus than Adam, but conceived of the Holy Spirit, as was neither Adam nor any other: **so truly did God fit a body** for the Son that even in human nature He alone should be the Holy One of God.

"Nor otherwise would it have suited the Son, either as the constant object of the Father's delight all through the days of His flesh as the adequate vessel of the Holy Spirit's power in service, or as the sin-offering at last. How different from us, who even when born of God are anointed only as under the efficacy of His blood! **His body was the temple of God without blood**" (W. K., *Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 181).

### ***The Created 'New Thing' of Jeremiah***

An attempt has been made by some to justify the application of the term, "creature," to our Lord by a reference to one of the prophecies of Jeremiah, as if it foretold the birth of Jesus Christ from a virgin, and spoke of the birth as a creation of Jehovah. The actual words of the prophet alluded to are, "The Lord (Jehovah) hath created a **new thing** in the earth; A woman shall compass a man" (Jer.31:22).

It is assumed by these expositors that, seeing the Lord's birth in time was absolutely unique in character, His birth was the "new thing" which Jehovah promised to create in the earth; and on this supposition the conclusion is based that is scriptural to speak of the Lord as a "creature."

But, on examination, their bold interpretation of Jeremiah's prophecy seems far-fetched, and to lack the support of the context. There is possibly some confusion, too, with Isaiah's prophecy (chap. 7), which clearly predicts that, through the conception of a virgin, God (Immanuel) will be with His people for their ultimate deliverance from their enemies, though the land of Judah will previously have been desolated by the overwhelming power of the king of Assyria.

But Jeremiah's theme is distinct from that of the earlier prophet. He does not set forth, like Isaiah, a coming Deliverer of the house and lineage of David, but the heartfelt repentance especially of Ephraim, the idolatrous house of

Israel, which will be the moral preparation for the restoration to blessing of the whole nation. It is not, as in Isaiah, the Savior God appearing among the people by a miraculous birth, but the cleansing of their inward parts to receive the new covenant that Jehovah will make with the house of Israel and the house of Judah (vers. 31-34). Jeremiah therefore foretells that the restored people themselves will be a "new thing" created in the earth.

Truly, the later prophet, like Isaiah, does speak of a "virgin" (ver. 21), but not in connection with the miraculous advent of their Messiah and Deliverer. Jeremiah's reference is definitely to "the virgin of Israel," whom he also addresses as "Thou backsliding daughter." In the "new thing" the prophet has in view those who will be blessed, not the One Who will bless them. He sees that in the day of restoration and freedom from all defilement with the idolatry of Babylon (see Rev. 14:3-5). Jeremiah's promise is that Israel shall in that day turn again to the cities of the land (ver. 21) from which she had been driven. It may be added that he uses this same figure, "virgin," in connection with the nation in other parts of his prophecies (Jer. 14:17; 18:13; 31:4).

In the next verse, the prophet refers to the end of Israel's scattering among the nations of their wandering on the earth for their sins as vagabonds, like branded Cain: "How long wilt thou wander about (or, hither and thither), thou backsliding daughter?" The answer to this question is, until the day of their national repentance. And then immediately the prophet goes on by a striking metaphor to show how this restoration will be caused: "For Jehovah hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman shall encompass a man."

The "new thing" is the real, Spirit-wrought, penitence of both Judah and Ephraim, and their joint establishment in their own land in the days of the new covenant. This repentance of both the houses of Israel will be an unprecedented event in the long history of the stiff-necked and obdurate generation. Then the people shall confess their guilt (Isa. 53), and lament for their sins; and there shall be the "great mourning in Jerusalem" (Zech. 12:10-14).

This unanimous repentance Jehovah Himself will "create," for He will pour out upon them the spirit of grace and supplications (Zech. 12:10). The change of the nation's heart by the removal of the veil upon it (2 Cor. 3:16) is the work of the God of their fathers, "Who raised up Jesus, and exalted Him "for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:30,31). Jehovah will "create" in them a clean heart, as David, a type of the remnant in his blood-guiltiness, prayed for himself (Ps. 51:10). He will make a new heart and a new spirit in His people, taking away their stony heart, as Ezekiel prophesied (11:19; 36:26).

## ***The Woman of Weakness and the Man of Strength***

Truly, a strikingly **"new thing"** on the earth will be seen in "the new heavens and the new earth" of the millennial day when the people of Israel who during so many, many centuries had disobeyed Jehovah both under law and under grace, and who had rejected their Messiah both in His humiliation and in His exaltation, turn at long last to the Lord, owning their presumptuous sins and proving His abundant mercy. The whole world's wonder in that day will be that the unclean nation has then become holy to the Lord, **that the little has become great, and the weak strong.**

For how few and feeble will the Jewish remnant be that shall be saved! Only the "third part" will be brought through the consuming fires of the great tribulation, but to that "little flock," Jehovah will say, "It is My people" (Zech. 13:9), and He will hear their prayers and give them the kingdom. But it will be when they are in their weak and broken state nationally, that they will look unto God, Who will be their strength; then, as the prophet expressively said, **"a woman shall encompass a man."**

We take it, then, that in this bold and vigorous metaphor, **"woman"** is used as a symbol of the nation of Israel in her state of confessed weakness and fear immediately before her restoration. The use of this particular metaphor by Jeremiah is not an isolated instance in prophetic language. Isaiah also employs the same figure to convey **a condition of weakness and apprehension** in the nation of Egypt; "In that day shall Egypt be like women; and it shall be afraid and fear because of the shaking of the hand of the Lord of hosts" (Isa. 19:16). **"Woman" as a figure of effeminacy** occurs also in Isa. 3:12; Jer. 51:30; Nahum 3:13.

As **"woman" figuratively signifies feebleness**, so **"man" is the symbol of strength**, stated in contrast. In this passage (Jer. 31:22), great power is the sense emphatically, because the word used in the original (*gever*) means a mighty man. It is not the more frequent word for man (*enosh*) which means man in his frailty.

When, therefore, **"a woman shall encompass a man,"** the weak nation shall become possessed of great strength. This forcible promise of Jehovah instills the hope that the utter weakness of the remnant of Israel will in a future day be the chosen occasion for the display, on their part in a way never before seen on the earth, of preternatural national strength, which He, the God of their strength, will supply.

---



---

## *The Holiness of Christian Fellowship*

---



---

### *Chapter 2*

---

#### *Moral Evil and Assembly Discipline*

##### *The Typical Use of Leaven in the Old Testament*

Leaven is used in both the Old Testament and the New Testament as a figure for evil. The following article discusses its typical use in the Old Testament.

In the law, that teaching-shadow of good things to come, leaven was forbidden. "Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven" (Ex. 34:25). Again, "No meat-offering, which ye shall bring unto the Lord shall be made with leaven: for ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the Lord made by fire." Both these are shadows, of which the substance and reality is Christ Himself. In the blood of His sacrifice there was only to be found His own singular perfectness; even the very rendering it was the perfection of obedience; and, while it was a sacrifice of bloodshedding, it was, at the same time, an offering of a sweet-smelling savor unto God. And so of the meat-offering, the expression of that perfection of character in which God Himself could take complacency; it was singular; nothing could be added to it; nothing taken from it; whilst, even in "His own" (John 13), as to character, how much is wanting, how many flaws need to be removed.

But there are two remarkable exceptions in the law, in favor of leaven. Thus, we read: "And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave-offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete; even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat-offering unto the Lord. Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals; they shall be of fine flour; *they shall be baked with leaven*; they are the first-fruits unto the Lord" (Lev. 23:15-17). The body of this shadow, the reality of this feast, was

manifested when the Day of Pentecost was fully come; and the Church was *formally* set up on earth by the coming down of the Holy Ghost from heaven. This is the real new meat-offering unto the Lord; even those who have the first-fruits of the Spirit", and are, thereby, "a kind of first-fruits of His creatures." Whilst our hearts rejoice in the knowledge of what the Church is as presented in Christ and through Christ "holy and unblamable, and unrebukable" before God in heaven; we know, also, full well what it actually is; but even as it is actually with the divine recognition of *leaven* in it; it is a new meat-offering unto the Lord. In the world, though it be sorely tempted and tried as it is, mourning over its own declension, ashamed and confounded and self-loathing, it is still the Church, the gift of the Father to the Son; the object of the Son's perfect love, and inhabited by the Holy Ghost. It is regarded here, whilst the leaven is in it, with the same love as that with which it is regarded in heaven, where it is only seen in virtue of Christ's sacrifice in the unleavened perfectness of Christ. Soul-cheering truth in such a day as this, "brethren beloved of God"! It is the one object on the earth of present divine complacency, because it is "accepted in the beloved"; and, regarded in this light, "rebuke, discipline, and chastening," are only proofs of divine love.

The law of the peace-offering is remarkable. "This is the law of the sacrifice of peace-offerings, which he shall offer unto the Lord. If he offer it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer with the sacrifice of thanksgiving *unleavened* cakes mingled with oil, and cakes mingled with oil, of fine flour, fried. Besides the cakes he shall offer for his offering *leavened* bread, with the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace-offerings" (Lev. 7:11,12). "Christ is our peace"; the joy of a believer is in Him, from Him, and through Him. In its highest aspect it is unaccompanied with leaven, "in whom, though now ye see Him not, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." But there are many occasions in which, although Christ be the source of our joy, natural susceptibilities may enter. Such might have been raised in the bosom of the Apostle, when he says to the Philippians, "But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again."

When the tear tickles down the cheek on witnessing any manifestation of the grace of God in converting a soul -- in answering prayer -- or sending an unexpected deliverance -- there is frequently found the leaven of the peace-offering. In many cases, too, when anguish of spirit has brought on bodily malady, and the soul is set at liberty through the reception of the truth, so that joy and thanksgiving take the place of mourning and depression, it can hardly be denied that the feelings of nature enter into the expression of gladness for deliverance. The source and cause of the joy is unleavened; it is Christ Himself; but there is that which accompanies the joy, partaking of the character of leaven, because natural feelings almost necessarily find their entrance. There is danger of only regarding natural emotion; and that danger has been so manifest in the downward road of the great professing body, that Christians, in avoiding that path, almost seem to forget that they have any peace-offerings. Even in the days of allowed shadows, the very shadow was perverted. The harlot can say (too faithful picture of the corrupt Church), "I have peace-offerings today; this day have I paid my vows. Therefore came I forth to meet thee" (Prov. 7:6-23). It is thus, too, in later days, that the prophet rebukes Israel: "Come to Bethel and transgress; at Gilgal multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning, and your tithes after three years; and offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving *with leaven*, and proclaim and publish the free offerings; *for this liketh you, O*

ye children of Israel, saith the Lord God" (Amos 4:4,5). There lacked the liking for such ordinances in which the worshipper took no part himself, but which was either wholly rendered to God or the portion of the priest. But where the chief part belonged to the worshipper, there they liked to seem religious. And so, in the history of the Church, the great realities centered in the precious work and offices of Christ. The food of the quickened soul, and the ground of its joy, have been passed over, to make way for a form of godliness into which nature can readily enter, such as in the christening and wedding. Here it liketh men well to be religious; the heaven so entirely predominates, that there is no remembrance of "the unleavened cakes with oil"; no spiritual thought whatever relative to Christ; so that persons who despise Christ's work, and hate the doctrines of grace, would be grievously scandalized if they were not married, or their children baptized, after a Christian fashion. The popular meaning of the word "holiday" most significantly proves that God's permission of leaven, in the peace-offerings, has been perverted by men into the denial of the doctrine of the cross of Christ.

But this abuse ought not to hinder real Christians from having their peace-offerings. The word still remains, "Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." There is and there ought to be, a holy jealousy in our souls lest we only like "sacrifices with leaven"; but we have to watch against a morbid feeling arising from this very jealousy. It is "the oil of gladness" with which Jesus anoints his fellows. There is joy in the Holy Ghost, joy from above brought into the sorrow here below; and whilst one who loves the Lord Jesus Christ cannot but be sorrowful at witnessing the joy of the world, so soon to be turned into sorrow, he is still to be "as always rejoicing," whether he look *back* to the cross, at present circumstances, or *onward* to the future, or *upward* to God. The Holy Ghost glorifies Jesus, and taking of his things and showing them unto us, turns everything to profit. And if "fearfully and wonderfully made," we find it hard to distinguish between the flesh and the spirit, Jesus above can separate the precious from the vile, and we must not deprive ourselves of the sober, holy joy of the Holy Ghost, because we cannot exactly analyze our feelings. There was leaven in the peace offerings. The characteristic of real Christian joy would be equable cheerfulness, so distinct from mere temporary excitement often followed by depression. Hence the word, "Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be ye filled with the Spirit."<sup>1</sup>

## ***The Need and Purpose of Discipline***

### **LEAVEN LEAVENING THE LUMP**

Do ye not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? (1 Cor. 5:6).

In the N. T., sin of such a character that calls for putting a person, or persons, away from among God's people (read 1 Cor. 5) is likened to leaven. The word



leaven brings to mind the thought of fermentation. There is the bubbling and puffing. It represents the unrestrained, unjudged working of the flesh. Paul said evil was present with him (Rom. 7:21), just as we see leaven was in the two wave loaves of Lev. 23:17, which represent believers. But fire (judgment) stops the action of leaven. However, if we do not judge ourselves, the flesh works and bursts out as we see it in 1 Cor. 5.

Holiness becomes God's house forever (Psa. 93:5). Holiness is separation from evil and in the people of God it is separation from evil to the Lord. God says, "Be ye holy for I am holy" (1 Pet. 1:16). Separation from evil to the Lord is what God looks for in His people in all ages. It is a first principle of walk with God.

We are concerned now with leaven manifesting itself amongst the people of God collectively, i.e., leaven showing itself in the assembly of God. If a professed christian engages himself in leaven (such as is named in 1 Cor. 5), other christians are responsible to treat him in a certain way. Christ's presence in the midst of His gathered saints (Matt. 18:15-20) demands the purging of the leaven (1 Cor. 5:4,13). God holds His people most responsible (1 Pet. 4:17).

That which must be purged out is called *leaven* in 1 Cor. 5. Not everything contrary to the mind of God may be classed as leaven. For example, a man may be a busybody (2 Thess. 3:6-16) and the saints are to conduct themselves towards the offender as described there, but he is not excommunicated, though his course may result in that eventually. A man may be overtaken in a fault (Gal. 6:1). Or, one may be in a course of sinning and warrant public rebuke (1 Tim. 5:20), which is not excommunication. It is not leaven, at least not yet. It is possible that such an one might yet manifest himself to be an idolater <sup>2</sup> (1 Cor. 5:11). THAT is leaven.

Judgment must be applied to leaven. In Scripture we find fire used as a symbol for judgment. The two wave loaves (Lev. 23:17) had leaven in them; but as baked in the fire the action of leaven is stopped. Thus they could be brought before the Lord. This signifies self-judgment. "But if we judged ourselves, so were we not judged. But being judged, we are disciplined of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world" (1 Cor. 11:31,32). So, if we judge ourselves the action of the leaven, evil, is stopped. If we do not judge ourselves, the Lord will judge us, perhaps through the assembly. If the assembly refuses to judge leaven, Christ will judge the assembly (Rev. 1,2 and 3).

---

2. "For rebellion is [as] the sin of divination. And selfwill is [as] iniquity and idolatry (1 Sam. 15:23) helps explain what form the "idolatry" mentioned in 1 Cor. 5 may take.

When sin comes out in the forms noted in 1 Cor. 5:10,11 (which is not a list, as murder and theft, for example, are left out), it is called leaven, and so it must be purged out (1 Cor. 5:7). "Remove the wicked person from among yourselves" (1 Cor. 5:13).

As to their standing in Christ, the saints of God are unleavened. There is no leaven "in Christ." If any man be "in Christ" it is new creation where all things are of God (2 Cor. 5:14-18). We are thus helped to understand 1 Cor. 5:7: "Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, according as ye are unleavened." "According as ye are unleavened" refers to standing in Christ. Be in practice what you are in Christ, says the Spirit through Paul. Thus, in order for the assembly to remain in practice in a new lump condition (i.e., a lump without leaven), they must purge out the leaven. The continuance in the new lump condition is conditional. The refusal to judge the known leaven as such, and then purge it out, would constitute them (not a new lump but) a leavened lump. Leaven leavening the lump in 1 Cor. 5 means that the character of the lump is changed in practice by the ALLOWANCE of leaven, even if the leaven is in only one person. Let us consider this in more detail.

Scripture presents two ways in which leaven works, or produces results.

1. The first way is given in Matt. 13 in the parable of the woman, the meal, and the leaven. Here, the leaven is seen working to *permeate* all of the meal. The leavening continues until the leaven has worked through the entire meal. It is the progressive corruption of the doctrine of Christ in Christendom.

2. The second way that leaven produces results is seen in 1 Cor. 5. We have already seen that the presence of evil is not necessarily 'working leaven' because the action of leaven is stopped by fire, by judgment. The evil assumes the character of active leaven when it is allowed to act unjudged. Thus the fornicator of 1 Cor. 5 was likened to leaven; not because evil was present with him and all of us (Rom. 7:21), but because it worked unjudged and produced something like we read about in 1 Cor. 5:10,11. Just as in the case of a person, so the presence of sin in the assembly does not necessarily transform the assembly into a leavened lump. But if the assembly refuses to judge the evil and refuses to purge out the leaven, that is another matter. THEN the assembly becomes leavened. It does not become leavened when everyone *finally* become, say, incestuous persons. The assembly becomes leavened by knowingly allowing even one such person among themselves and taking the position of refusing to purge the leaven out. The assembly thus changes its character to that of a leavened lump. In 1 Cor. 5 leaven leavening the lump means that the allowed presence of leaven changes the character of the lump. It is not a question of how many are doing the evil. It is not necessary that 100% of the

persons must do it before the assembly is leavened. There is something dreadfully wrong at the bottom of such an idea! The idea that everyone in a meeting of Christians must become incestuous, or thieves, or murderers, before the assembly is leavened is an attempt to escape responsibility. Its direct tendency is to allow fellowship with leaven. Since *Scripture characterizes an act by its tendency*<sup>3</sup> (1 Cor. 8:9-12), we see that this false principle is leaven. 1 Cor. 5 does not raise the question of how far leaven had spread in the assembly, but it condemns the very presence of known leaven. But God would not look upon an assembly as leavened until the evil was tolerated. The apostle instructed them concerning their duty to God. But they could at least have mourned (1 Cor. 5:2). Rather, they were puffed up.

Leaven leavening the lump, then, does not indicate that the Spirit is warning that everyone might become incestuous or a murderer, etc. He is warning them that refusal to judge and purge leaven involves them in complicity with the evil. They *all* become leavened by fellowship with the leavened person.<sup>4</sup> The second epistle also shows that they would be implicated directly if they had refused to judge; that is, they would have been leavened. Paul says, "In every way ye have proved yourselves to be pure in the matter" (2 Cor. 7:11). Had they acted otherwise than purging out the leaven, they would have proved themselves to be impure, i.e., defiled, by allowing that one person to continue in fellowship! Evil associations defile! 2 Cor. 7:10,11 shows that the Corinthians needed to repent. They had already been affected in that their puffed up state prohibited them from mourning. It exhibited a state of indifference to leaven, a state now quite common among the professed people of God.

Up to this point we have considered somewhat the need of holiness and what the character of leaven is. Later we will examine the sins mentioned in 1 Cor. 5, noting again at this point that 1 Cor. 5 is not a complete listing, but examples of leaven.

Ed.

---

3. Do not pass over this principle without learning what it means.

4. Of course, this has implications for others receiving persons from a leavened lump, hence the effort to define leavening the lump as meaning that all in the assembly would have to commit wicked acts before the assembly could be leavened. It is just an attempt to evacuate the passage of its true force, for an easier path.

---



---

## ELEMENTS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

---



---

### CHAPTER 4:3

## GAL. 3:1-9: THE PRINCIPLE OF FAITH AS SEEN IN ABRAHAM IS THE WAY OF BLESSING

### THE ISSUE IN GAL. 3

Troublesome "law-teachers, not understanding either what they say or concerning what they [so] strenuously affirm" (1 Tim. 1:7) had been influencing the Galatian saints (Gal. 1:7-9; 3:1; 4:9,17-21; 5:7-10; 6:12-13). Thus, Galatians deals with the fact that being under the law profits the Christian *nothing*. One of the issues is whether or not the inheritance is ours by law or by promise. In Gal. 3 we see the effect of the law upon one who is under it (Gal. 3:10). The other thing we see is the absolute contrast between law and promise, it being established that the inheritance is by promise and cannot be by law, and so in his paper, "Not Law, but Promise, Galatians 3," J. N. Darby wrote:

The law and promise in grace are brought before us as two systems, both of God, but contrasted in their nature and opposite in their effects, and absolutely exclusive one of the other; existing at separate times, though the second could not disannul the first, and whose co-existence, as the ground of man's standing with God, is in their very nature impossible. Both are positive dealings and revealed ways of God with man, each of its own kind. . . .

The Galatians were not rejecting the promise or Christ; but they were adding the law to Christ as completing God's will. This it is that the apostle resists, and declares the incompatibility of the two. Not that the law was against the promises (for if a law had been given which could have given life, righteousness would have been by it); but that the one system was in fact opposite in its principle to the other. They were two distinct ways proposed for having life, righteousness, and the inheritance. One brings a curse and nothing else; the other a blessing after God's own heart, and nothing else. One is founded on

man's responsibility, the other on God's gift, when man had failed altogether under that responsibility.<sup>1</sup>

Christ in glory and the Spirit sent down consequently (Acts 2:32,33) characterize Christianity, while law characterizes O. T. Judaism.

## COMMON BLESSINGS AND SPECIAL PRIVILEGES.

In view of the confounding and confusing all blessings as is characteristic in antidispenational views we should observe the fact that there are common blessings for all saints and special privileges for those saints who are members of the body of Christ. W. Kelly observed:

There are certain privileges that we share in common with every saint. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. We too believe and are justified. Substantially, faith has so far the same blessings at all times. We are children of promise, entering into the portion of faith as past saints have done before us; and this is what we find in Galatians, though with a certain advance of blessing for us. But if you look at Ephesians, the great point there is that God is bringing out wholly new and heavenly privileges. This is in no respect what is taken up in Galatians. There we are on the common ground of promises. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." But in Ephesians there are certain distinct and superadded privileges that Abraham never thought nor heard of: I mean the formation of the Church of God, Christ's body, the truth that Jews and Gentiles were to be taken out of earthly places, and made one with Christ in heaven. This was the mystery concerning Christ and the Church, hidden from ages and generations, but now revealed through the Holy Ghost. So that, in order to have a right view of the full blessing of the Christian, we must take the Ephesian blessing along with the Galatian. The special time is while Christ is on the right hand of God. Even as to the millennial saints, do you think they will enjoy all that we have now? Far from it. They will possess much that we do not, such as the manifested glory of Christ, exemption from sorrow and suffering, &c. But our calling is totally different and contrasted. It is to love Him whom we have *not* seen; to rejoice in the midst of tribulation and shame. If a man were to form his thoughts of Christianity from Galatians only, he might confound the saints now with those of the Old Testament, always remembering the difference that we find here, that the heir as long as he is under age differs nothing from a servant; whereas we are brought into the full possession of our privileges. But there are other and higher things in Ephesians, called, or at least flowing from, the eternal purpose of God. So that it is well to distinguish this double truth -- the community of blessing through all dispensations, and the specialty of privilege that attaches to those who are being called now by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.<sup>2</sup>

---

1. *Collected Writings* 21:299,300.

2. *Lectures on the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*, London: Morrish, n.d., pp. 116,117.

In the above quotation it was pointed out that "Galatians never takes up <sup>3</sup> the standing of the church properly" (though referred to in Gal. 3:28) and that this epistle does not go "beyond the inheritance of promise." In connection with the fact that the inheritance of the promise is a subject of Galatians, W. Kelly also remarked:

Another writer, . . . referred to Rom. 11 and Gal. 3 in proof that the Church actually existed as such in Old Testament times. But this is evidently to confound things that differ, because the inheritance of the Abrahamic promises, of which their chapters treat, is not identical with the enjoyment of the Church's privileges; whereas their identity is assumed in the argument. It is allowed that the New Testament saints do inherit those promises, but that is an essentially different thing from the blessings revealed, *e.g.* in Ephesians. The olive [Rom. 11] is not the heavenly Church, but the earthly tree of promise and testimony, of which the Jews were the natural branches. Instead of the broken-off unfaithful branches, Gentiles are now grafted in; but, on their unfaithfulness, excision is the sure threat of God, and the Jews will again be brought into their own olive-tree, *i.e.* for the millennial inheritance. This is the plain teaching of Rom. 11; and, though as Gentiles we may be grafted in, and as individuals we may be Abraham's seed, the special position of Christ's body, as made known in 1 Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, &c. is too distinct to require argumentation. When "the body" is spoken of, there is no cutting off nor grafting in. <sup>4</sup> There is in it neither Jew nor Gentile. All is above nature there.

What is the inheritance? Rom. 4:13,16 gives us the answer. The reader should also see *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:241-243.

3. What is meant by "never takes up" is that the subject of the standing of the church is not developed in Galatians. The new creation is, of course, mentioned.

4. The Calvinist and amillennialist, O. T. Allis wrote:

There is, Paul tells us, one good olive tree. Some of the branches are broken off. Branches from a wild olive are grafted in among the branches which remain, that they "may partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree." The new branches represent Gentile Christians. It would be difficult to state more clearly that the Gentiles in entering the Christian Church become members of a body, a church or theocracy, which has its roots in the Abrahamic covenant and to which all true descendants of Abraham belong. The tree represents the true Israel. Faith is the bond of union. Some of the *natural* branches have been broken off because of unbelief. Branches of a *wild* olive are grafted in among them (*i.e.*, among the good branches that are left) on the basis of faith. From this Paul draws two important and weighty inferences. The first is that, since unbelief caused the breaking off of some of the natural branches, the branches of the new graft owe their present status, their participation in the root and fatness of the olive tree, solely to faith. If they become unbelieving, they will be cut off. (*Prophecy and the Church*, Presbyterian and Reformed, 1947, pp. 108,109).

It follows that the whole nation of Israel was in the olive tree and were "the true Israel" which is obviously false. Present participation, he claims, is "solely to faith." But "if they become unbelievers" sounds quite Arminian to me. A member of Christ's body does not "become" an unbeliever. Notice also that he equates "members of a body" with a "theocracy." The truth is that he does not understand what the olive tree is on account of his system that finds the church in O. T. prophecy.

## DOES THE BREAKING OF BREAD LEAD INTO THE SANCTUARY?

In two recent issues of a publication that I shall not name there appeared an article entitled:

### The Breaking of Bread Leading into the Sanctuary

The first installment of this article stated:

But the breaking of bread occasion is in its essence of a corporate kind, and we must move forward to the sanctuary experience, where, as with Israel, what one does is representative of all.

This says that the breaking of bread is a corporate act while the sanctuary experience is not. It also says that the sanctuary experience follows after the breaking of bread. This statement implies that you pass into the sanctuary after, or through, the breaking of bread. Let us now look at a quotation from the concluding part of this article:

Perhaps I may be allowed a personal comment here. Whilst anxious always to avoid any semblance of rule-making,<sup>1</sup> it is my own deep conviction that we come together for the primary purpose of breaking bread,<sup>2</sup> and that the spiritual experiences we have been considering *flow out of it* and not *into it*. What do I mean?<sup>3</sup> I have sometimes felt that when the act of breaking bread is left to a point unduly late in the meeting, there may be neither time nor opportunity for our remembrance of the suffering love of Jesus to expand into that further experience envisioned in the Lord's words, "The Father seeketh such to worship Him."

In view of such statements, I desire for the reader to consider the following taken from *Readings and Addresses in the U. S. A. and Canada with F. E. R.* [Raven], 1898.

F. E. R. You pass into the assembly through the supper (p. 67).

R. S. S. Does not the more blessed part of the meeting come properly after the breaking of bread?

F. E. R. The supper is introductory to the assembly; and that is the first reason for finishing all that is formal at the first. Passing round the bread and the cup and the box are so far formal; you cannot help this, but it is a great thing to be free of it, so you may be prepared for the assembly in its proper character (p. 260).<sup>4</sup>

---

1. [This insinuates the teaching gently].

2. [This couples what he is going to say with a known, accepted truth].

3. [Notice that the writer says that he will explain his meaning].

4. [Notice that it is good to be free of the breaking of bread and giving of our substance -- cp. Heb. 13:15,16. That is not the assembly in its proper character. He tells us that the proper, i.e., the spiritual part, commences after the breaking of bread.]

R. S. S. . . . I think we feel more free after the breaking of bread.

F. E. R. It is so if things are right. There is quite a change after the breaking of bread in the whole tone of the meeting.

R. S. S. After that it is what the Lord does. That is the second part. "In the midst of the assembly will I sing praises unto thee" <sup>5</sup> (pp. 264, 265).

P. H. Is the sanctuary and the holiest the same?

F. E. R. Yes, the holiest is to us the sanctuary.

W. B. Going back to the Lord's supper, is it not rather the way in which the Lord conducts us consciously into the realization of what He is in the midst?

F. E. R. It is the way in which He makes His presence good to and felt by us. He was about to leave His own after the flesh, and shows them how He would make good His presence to them after He left them.

W. B. And then do we get on to the assembly?

F. E. R. I think so. . . .

G. W. You say we go from the breaking of bread to the assembly.

F. E. R. It is clear enough that the Lord's supper is the beginning. <sup>6</sup>

G. W. Then you go from the assembly into the sanctuary.

F. E. R. The sanctuary is largely a question of individual apprehension; so long as we are down here (it will not be in heaven) this must be the case.

G. W. I am surprised at that; you mean when we are gathered together on the Lord's day morning -- and that you say introduces us into the assembly?

F. E. R. The saints are together in assembly, that is right enough, but the question of entering into the sanctuary is a question of individual apprehension.

G. W. On Lord's day morning? (pp. 270, 271).

"It is a great thing to be free" of the breaking of bread, and "you pass into the assembly through the supper"; "the whole tone of the meeting changes" and you are now in the sanctuary -- "but the question of entering into the sanctuary is a matter of individual apprehension," says F. E. R. Then comes the question of G. W.

G. W. On Lord's day Morning?

Obviously, G. W. needed more indoctrination in the school of mysticism.<sup>7</sup>

5. [ Notice this in connection with the statement made in the second quotation from the article being reviewed: that after the breaking of bread there is an expansion into that further experience of worshipping the Father].

6. [Have you noticed the lack of Scripture evidence for what in reality is mystical corruption?].

7. How did F. E. Raven regard Scripture? Consider the following:

W. M. Then a Bible student is not much after all.

F. E. R. I have said that if I had to live over again I would study scripture less and pray more. The great thing for a Christian is to get in his closet and pray. Prayer and meditation (*Ibid.*, p. 126).

The evidence shows that this mystic was not in communion with God in his closet. He denied that the Son was eternally the Word, and that He was eternally the Son. This mystic was also an Apollinarian; he held that a divine Person was the spirit of the body in



I do not believe that such teaching comes from Scripture. Concerning F. E. Raven, I concur with William Kelly's judgment that F. E. Raven had a mission from a lying spirit.

Let us now review some points of similarity in the two sources quoted.

1. "The breaking of bread occasion is in its essence a corporate act"; and the other says, "... so far formal; you cannot help this, but it is a great thing to be free of it . . ." But this is followed by a higher spiritual experience.
2. In both sources: the breaking of bread leads into the sanctuary.
3. In both sources: the breaking of bread does not take place in the sanctuary.
4. In both sources: there is a new tone after the breaking of bread.
5. In both sources: you are in the sanctuary but may not have entered the sanctuary in apprehension.

Returning now to the article on the breaking of bread leading into the sanctuary, and the further experience of worshipping the Father, let us look for similarity of these teachings and the Scriptures. Hebrews 13:15 tells us: "By him [Christ] let us offer [the] sacrifice of praise continually to God . . ." It is appropriate at all times, not merely in the assembly.

It has been my privilege to be in assembly to remember the Lord Jesus in His death, and the initial part of the meeting was a burst of praise and adoration to the Father, and also to the Father and the Son. According to this mysticism being noticed, that must have been disorder, a mere pretension to be in the sanctuary before arriving there through, or after, the breaking of bread when the "more blessed" spiritual experiences are supposed to come!

When gathered together unto the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 18:20), saints of God are "come together in assembly" (*en ecclesia*, 1 Cor. 11:18). *There* is the Lord in the midst (Matt. 18:20). There He praises (Heb. 2:12).<sup>8</sup> Scripture does not suggest or state that He does not do so until after the breaking of bread. Mystics say so. I suggest that they say so because the *experience* is the object and center of their spiritual exercises.

---

Christ; i.e., the divine Person took the place of the human spirit. And thus he would deceive by saying that Christ had a human soul and spirit. As usual with fundamental heresy, he used the familiar terms with new meanings attached to them. This enables dupes to show you orthodox sounding sentences in his writings. James Taylor, Sr. and C. A. Coates were thorough-going Ravenites.

8. You can see that FER was more consistent in his mysticism by saying that "You pass into the assembly through the Supper" -- because, the Lord praises in the assembly and that has to take place in the sanctuary (the holy places). Therefore, for consistency, you must enter the assembly and sanctuary after the breaking of bread.

Now, observe that FER said, "Yes, the holiest is to us the sanctuary." Christ is the "minister of the holy places and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord has pitched, [and] not man" (Heb. 8:2). In the tabernacle there were two compartments separated by the veil. Now the veil is rent and Christ's blood gives boldness for entry into that which man has not pitched (Heb. 10:19-22). The holy places have become *one* by the rending of the veil. The saints as gathered *en ecclesia*, Christ being in the midst, are in the holy places (in the sanctuary), in "the [holy of] holies" (Heb. 10:19). Observe, the minister of the holy places (the sanctuary, if you will) is in the midst. We have boldness by His blood to enter *there*. Where in these Scriptures, or any other, is entrance into the sanctuary linked to progressive spiritual experience during a meeting of believers?

It follows from these perversions that the breaking of bread takes place outside the sanctuary (the holy places, as JND translates). JND called the breaking of bread "the center of true worship."<sup>9</sup> He wrote:

Worship is the free adoration, and for us in the holiest, of those who have been brought nigh by sacrifice . . . who know Him as a Father who has sought us in grace, worshippers in spirit and truth, and brought them in cleansed to do so."<sup>10</sup>

The priesthood of Christ is in heaven. It has to be exercised as a continual thing in the place where we worship. We worship in spirit in heaven . . .<sup>11</sup>

Ed.

***F. E. Raven's Evil Doctrines  
on  
the Person of Christ  
and Their Present Bearing***

R. A. Huebner

150 pages, perfect bound, \$6.75 postage paid,  
available from the publisher.

---

9. *Collected Writings*, vol. 15: "Worship is that for which Christians should meet, and, I add, the Lord's supper is the center of worship" (p. 301). "I admit the Lord's supper to be the center of true worship" (p. 356).

10. *Ibid.*, p. 371.

11. *Collected Writings* 27:357.

## SENSELESSNESS (V. 1)

O senseless Galatians, who has bewitched you; to whom, as before your very eyes, Jesus Christ has been portrayed, crucified [among you]? (Gal. 3:1).

Someone wrote:

We learn here the particular form the apostle's ministry had taken in those parts. Considerable variety in style is to be remarked in Paul's labors. Among the Thessalonians the Lord's coming was a very prominent theme; among the Athenians, stress was laid upon man's original relation to God as His creature; in Galatia and in Corinth the cross was to the front. It will be noticed that sometimes we read in the New Testament of the blood of Christ, sometimes of the death, and in other places of the cross. This is not in vain. The Spirit has a different line of truth for our souls in each of these varied expressions. The blood is particularly found (though not exclusively) in Hebrews, where the main theme is the atonement and its mighty results; the death of Christ is dwelt upon in Romans as the end of His life below, in which faith finds the end of the old man and all that pertains to him; the cross is before us in Galatians as an emblem of shame. The cross pours contempt on man and all his efforts, and is thus to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness (1 Cor. 1:23).<sup>5</sup>

"Paul, apostle, not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ . . ." (Gal. 1:1) did not come to them preaching Adam, the first man (1 Cor. 15:47). He set before them One Who had been cast out from the earth by the first man under law.

He censured any who proclaimed glad tidings other than what had been announced to them by saying: "let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:9). Evil in doctrine rather than in behavior is before the apostle. Such evil teachers may be ever so nice personally and appear godly in conduct, but they fall under this censure. And, "a little leaven leavens the whole lump" (Gal. 5:6).

In 1 Cor. 1 Paul did not commend anything in the walk of the Corinthians. Rather, 1 Cor 1:4-9 commends *the grace of God given to them*. In Gal. 1 there is not even this.<sup>6</sup> Such is the mind of the Spirit concerning fundamental doctrinal evil compared to moral evil, which also is leaven, of course (1 Cor. 5:6).

In v. 1, Paul says "O senseless Galatians." In v. 3 he says, "so senseless." The senselessness consisted not in lack of native intelligence but in dullness of heart and mind in spiritual matters. Law-works seem to bind many professed Christians in a spell as appeared to be the case of the Galatians under the

5. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 1:201.

6. The oft repeated notion that Paul always began his epistles by commending what he could in the walk of the saints is false. [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

influence of Judaizers; hence the word bewitched, used figuratively.

The law addressed the old "I." Under the law the old "I" had a standing (in Adamic responsibility) before God. Here is what Paul had written about "I" :

For *I*, through law, have died to law, that I may live to God. I am crucified with Christ, and no longer live, *I*, but Christ lives in me; but [in] that I now live in flesh, I live by faith, the [faith] of the Son of God, who has loved me and given himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness [is] by law, then Christ has died for nothing (Galatians 2:19-21).

In whatever degree law is taken up by a Christian, to that degree he sets aside the grace of God. "Who has bewitched you?" asked the apostle. He had graphically portrayed Christ crucified before their eyes and now they had diverted their eyes from that as insufficient and were looking at the law. No doubt the hand of the Enemy was in this (cf. 2 Cor. 11:13-15).

## RECEIVING THE SPIRIT (V. 2)

This only I wish to learn of you, Have ye received the Spirit on the principle of works of law, or of [the] report of faith? (Gal. 3:2).

Observe that Paul begins with the effect of an accomplished redemption. The Spirit was never received on the principle of works of law; *never*. The Spirit is received as power for a Christ honoring walk, which is the fruit of Christ's death, resurrection and glorification above to be head of the body formed at Pentecost (1 Cor. 12:13, Acts 2:32,33, etc.), which we will consider in some detail when we come to v. 14. Faith, as the basis of a standing before God, has replaced the law (Gal. 3:23-25). The law addressed the first man, man in his Adamic standing and responsibility. God has established the second man (Christ) and the trial of the first man ended in the cross. Hence the change denoted in Gal. 3:23-25) where Christ displaces the law. The Spirit, as indweller, could not be received while the first man, in the persons of the Jews, were under testing, under law. The reception of the Spirit, then, is evidence of the fruitlessness of the principle of works of law.

Paul had not gone into Galatia preaching Christ and law, faith and law. Those who believed the gospel received the Spirit. Subsequently, Judaizers were preaching law to them. But:

The law applied to life in the flesh and its obligations. The cross declares its condemnation and end in death, and death to it. They had not received the Spirit by law but by faith. They had the Spirit, and begun in it when they had not the law at all, and they were now looking to be made perfect through the latter, but

this was by the flesh; for the law supposed flesh to be alive and applied to it. <sup>7</sup>

They were sealed with the Spirit apart from works of law. Was that seal defective and insufficient that they must add works of law? Observe also that the Spirit is not now received by "tarrying" or "rushing" or any other way but by faith in the Person and work of Christ.

The reader should note that the word "the" does not appear before the word "law" in this verse. The words "on the principle of works of *the* law" does not carry quite the same sense as "on the principle of works of law." "*The* law" would indicate *the law* of Moses; whereas without the word "the," what is presented to the mind is law as a principle. Thus, the Spirit is not received on such a principle as law. This, of course, includes *the* law, but is a wider statement dealing with the whole idea, or principle, of law. On such a basis as law, the Spirit cannot be received. What goes with law is *flesh*; and that brings us to v. 3.

### MADE PERFECT IN FLESH (V. 3)?

Are ye so senseless? having begun in Spirit, are ye going to be made perfect in flesh? (Gal. 3:3).

Were they *so* senseless, so devoid of spiritual discernment?

The Spirit and Christ's glorification above (Acts 2:32,33) go together while law and flesh go together. The law addressed man in his Adamic standing and responsibility, man before God, *in flesh*. To bring in the principle of law is to fail to recognize that God has set aside, judged and displaced the first man in the work of Christ on the cross. Taking up law is, in effect, setting up again the flesh. Adding law to the Spirit is seeking perfection *in flesh*, seeking perfection on that principle, and doing so via the ministry of condemnation (2 Cor. 3:9). They thought to bring to perfection that which began in Spirit. In practice that, in effect, is a denial of the possession of the Spirit for power in walk. How senseless for a Gentile Christian who had never been under law to seek perfection from what had not profited the Jews under it for over 1400 years, whose great father Abraham profited nothing by law. Paul wrote to the Colossians:

For in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and ye are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and authority, in whom also ye have been circumcised with circumcision not done by hand, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of the Christ . . . (Col. 2:9-11).

*In Christ*, the flesh is gone from before God, that very flesh addressed by the law. "But if the ministry of death, in letters, graven in stones . . ." (2 Cor. 3:7) kills (2 Cor. 3:6) and is a ministry of condemnation (2 Cor. 3:9) also, how is it the rule of life for one complete in Him? Kill, death and condemnation are words that denote what that graven in the two tables of stone does. It cannot produce practical sanctification.

### **SUFFERING IN VAIN (V. 4)?**

Have ye suffered so many things in vain, if indeed also in vain? (Gal.3:4).

It was not their intention to set Christ aside but rather to add to Christ. God will not have that. He looks at it as setting Christ aside. In view of that, the apostle asks if they had suffered "in vain" (to no effectual result). The indication is that they had suffered for what they had believed (*cf.* Acts 14:22) but would now set aside that for which they had suffered.

### **WHICH BASIS, LAW OR FAITH (VV. 5,6)?**

He therefore who ministers to you the Spirit, and works miracles among you, [is it] on the principle of works of law, or of [the] report of faith? Even as Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness (Gal. 3:5,6).

In v. 2, Paul directed their thoughts to the start of their pathway as Christians. In v. 6, he directed their thoughts to their experience in that pathway. At the start, they received the Spirit. In the Christian path, the Spirit (not the law) was ministered to them. That would be a ministry embracing, for example, what is brought before them in Gal. 5:13-26. He who brings before God's saints such things ministers to them the Spirit. Teaching that Christians are under "the moral law" is not ministering the Spirit.

There were miracles wrought in Galatia by Paul (Acts 14) but v. 6 indicates that miracles continued to be wrought in Galatia, thus by others. I suggest that those who were able to work miracles did so because the Apostle conferred the power to do so upon them, as implied by the characterization of miracles in 2 Cor. 12:12.<sup>8</sup> All of this is founded on faith, not on the principle of works of law.

The Judaizers directed the eyes of the Galatians to Moses. Paul said they must look at Abraham, not Moses. Abraham's belief of what God said to him

---

8. The miracles are "signs indeed of the Apostle," a characterization that indicates the Spirit gave this gift to others mediately through the Apostle. The Apostle imparted both the Spirit (Acts 19) and gifts (*cf.* 2 Tim. 1:6). [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

was reckoned, or accounted, to Abraham as righteousness.

Abraham was not only justified before God before the law was given, but also before he was circumcised (Gen. 17:24), which, in the ways of God anticipated the blessing of Gentiles, apart from law or circumcision, on the principle of faith.

## **ABRAHAM'S SONS BY FAITH (V. 7)**

Know then that they that are on the principle of faith, these are Abraham's sons  
... (Gal. 3:7).

Paul is speaking here imperatively: know then! Know what? Why, those on the principle of faith (not law) are Abraham's sons.

## **THE GLAD TIDINGS ANNOUNCED BEFOREHAND (V. 8)**

Gal. 3:8 is explicit about what "the glad tidings" "announced beforehand" was:

In thee all the nations shall be blessed.

This will be fulfilled in the millennium. And here it is important to see the force of Eph. 1:12:

... that we should be to [the] praise of his glory who have pre-trusted in the Christ.

During the time of the heavenly parenthesis, Jews are trusting in the Christ -- before the millennium. They are trusting ahead of that time -- pre-trusting.

"In thee" means in Abraham as characterized by faith in God's promise.

Note also that Scripture can see ("the scripture, foreseeing"), because Scripture is God's Word and God sees all. What Scripture says, God says; and as someone said, He does not stutter. Scripture sees right through all arguments against inerrancy and right through all hankering after the law in whatever form.

In connection with the gospel being preached to Abraham, A. Cole wrote:

In one sense, no Christian could speak of the gospel being preached before Calvary. In another, here is an anticipation of it. Indeed, it is more than an anticipation in that God's ways of dealing with men are eternally the same. For the turn of speech, we may compare John 8:56, where Christ speaks of Abraham having seen His day.<sup>9</sup>

To this misunderstanding I add Donald Guthrie's:

With this thought may be connected the words of Jesus, 'Your father Abraham rejoiced that he was to see my day; he saw it and was glad' (Jn. 8:56). Both our Lord and his apostle recognize that there is continuity between Abraham's faith and the Christian era.<sup>10</sup>

Concerning Abraham's seeing Christ's day, I understand the two writers quoted above to mean "my day" designates the Christian era. Not so; it refers to the millennium, when the promises will be fulfilled. Phil. 1:6 speaks of that day as still future as 1 Cor. 1:8 and 5:5 and 2 Cor. 1:14.

W. E. Cox, an amillennialist, wrote:

Paul says that the gospel which he preached also had been the means of Abraham's salvation (see Gal. 3:8).<sup>11</sup>

Such erroneous notions are the result of the attempt to find the special and distinctive blessings of the church in the O. T. Paul not only preached what the 12 apostles did, regarding the gospel (1 Cor. 15:11), but went far beyond that. He had special revelations. The starting point for his ministry was seeing the Lord in the glory (Acts 9) along with being *caught up* to the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2). He preached "the gospel of the glory of Christ (2 Cor. 4:4) and what he called "my gospel" (Rom. 16:25; Gal. 2:2). And when he associated others with himself, he called it "our gospel" (1 Thess. 1:5; 1 Thess. 2:14).

"Gospel" means "good news." The "good news" to Abraham was "In thee all the nations shall be blessed" (Gal. 3:8). Was Paul's gospel the object of Abraham's faith? The faith of O. T. saints rested in what God *then* said, before redemption was accomplished and the saint rested in the heavenlies.

It is tedious to deal with these assertions. Consider this by two reconstructionist, postmillennialist leaders:

James designates Christians as "the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad" (James 1:1). Peter calls the Christians to whom he writes, the "*diaspora*" (Gk., 1 Peter 1:1).<sup>12</sup>

Put the word *Jewish* in front of the word Christians and you will have the sense. Why pretend that Christians, as such, are twelve tribes, or are a diaspora, unless you have a troublesome theory you are pushing?

10. *Galatians*, London: Oliphants, 1977, p. 96.

11. *An Examination of Dispensationalism*, Presbyterian and Reformed, p. 58.

12. Greg L. Bahnsen and Kenneth L. Gentry Jr., *House Divided*. . . , Tyler: Institute for Christian Economics, p. 169. [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)



## BLESSED WITH BELIEVING ABRAHAM (V. 9)

So they who are on the principle of faith are blessed with believing Abraham (Gal. 3:9).

The principle on which Abraham was blessed is faith. The principle on which believers are blessed now is faith. Abraham and we are blessed on the same basis: faith. That is what this text says. "*Blessed with*" does not mean we have the identical blessing, but that the blessing we have is via the same principle: faith.

The Galatians had received the Holy Spirit through believing the report (Gal. 3:2). Abraham had believed God (Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6; James 2:23) and it was counted to him as righteousness (Gal. 3:6). This belief by Abraham was apart from law or circumcision (Gen. 15:6).

In connection with the establishment of the *principle of calling*, God made Abraham the root of blessing. In him all the nations would be blessed (Gal. 3:8; Gen. 12:3; Acts 3:25) for from him would come the Seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:19), the Seed of the woman (Gen 3:15), the mighty Blessor in Whom the purpose of God is carried out.

Grace and faith worked in God's saints before the call of Abraham. We see this noted in Heb. 11. But Abraham was called to separation in a way no other had been. True it is that Enoch walked with God. But Abraham was called to leave country, relatives, and father's house. He was called to display pilgrimage -- being sustained by the promises of God.

Abraham represents *calling* as well as election and promise. W. Kelly wrote:

Abraham is the first sample of God's call as a public principle. Whatever the secret working of grace in all the saints heretofore, as in Abel, Enoch, Noah, no one had ever been called by God to quit his country, kindred, and even father's house, as Abraham was. It was the great and new fact of separation to God, and in a land which he would show, sustained by His promise of blessing to himself, yea, of blessing in him to all the families of the earth. It was the more remarkable, because after the deluge God had instituted government to repress evil; and in the days of Peleg the earth was divided by the sons of Japheth, Ham, and Shem, after their families and tongues, in their lands and nations. In Abraham's time even Shem's progeny served other gods -- an evil most portentous, and unknown before the deluge. Out of this was Abraham called of God. The rest of the world was left to itself. God called the man of His choice, not to attack or reform the evil, but to Himself and a land He would show him with blessing assured. Separation to God on the call of His grace we see in the man, the family, the nation in which He will be magnified for ever.

This, if believed, involved obedience at once; and so it is here written. The old relationships remained for all but Abraham, in the sphere of divine providence, as of judgment at the end of the age. But the separated man was to follow as God in

grace led. He is the depository of promise, and thus his faith was tested, not at the start only but continuously. The land to be shown in due time was as yet unknown, so as to cast him on simple-hearted confidence in God. He went out in subjection to God's promise, not knowing whither he went. God would show the next step when Abraham took the first. He did not ask, Whither? He trusted God implicitly. Thus his faith was unmixed with calculations of self, resting solely but fully on His word who loves and never deceives.

It was the wise and wonderful working by ways suited to His glory in a world departed from God into idolatry, where present ease, wealth, honor, power, are the bribes of the enemy for all misled by him. Faith gives up all at God's word with not one thing gained for the moment, but the certainty of His guidance and ultimate blessing in the richest manner.<sup>13</sup>

Ed.

## THE REMNANT TESTIMONY

Who hath despised the day of small things? (Zech. 4:10).

The testimony which the Lord's people are called to maintain in these last days has a twofold character.

First: The unity of the Church -- the body of Christ -- constituted by the personal presence of the Holy Ghost, sent down from heaven at Pentecost; and,

Second: The character of a Remnant who have emerged<sup>1</sup> from the ruin and devastation into which the Church has lapsed, who are maintaining this testimony with uncompromising purpose and devotedness of heart.

To this Remnant character I desire to draw the attention of my readers, and to trace from Scripture some of the characteristics which distinguished the faithful from time to time, in periods of declension from the first calling of God; or marked the paths of individuals who typify or personate a remnant in days of failure and ruin. They afford much instruction and example, as well as warning, to those who now through mercy occupy this grave and yet deeply blessed place.

We shall find another feature, too, of marked and painful interest; *i.e.*, how soon failure came in and energy flagged, after the first fine efforts of faith, which had extricated itself from corruption, and returned to a divine position. Alas, man fails -- the saints fail in the things of God in every way. Still there is no

---

13. Wm. Kelly, *Hebrews*, pp. 207,208.

1. [All saints remain a part of the remnant] [www.thetruthpublishers.com](http://www.thetruthpublishers.com)

failure which can break the link of faith with the power of God; and the brightest exhibitions of faith are ever found where all around is darkest. It is not to serve or love the saints of God, to sink to their level, and be submerged in the confusion. We never can cope with the evil that has flowed in by letting go first principles. In no place do we find such strong injunctions to hold them fast as when all was darkest, and the failure most apparent. Witness Paul's instructions in 2 Timothy: "Hold fast the form of sound words." "Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." "Continue in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them," &c. He serves the Lord's people best who, while he follows them as long as there is an ear to hear, never himself loses his liberty, or enfeebles the truth by identity with that which is not according to God. A Gideon must first throw down the altar of Baal before "Abiezer" is gathered after him. A Lot may preach true things to his circle, but it was truth without the power of God, because he had not first extricated himself from Sodom: "He seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law" (Gen. 19).

It is clear that there must first have been the calling of God announced and accepted; something set up of God from which the general mass had departed, in order that there should be a holding fast of the fundamental calling, by a remnant; or a return to original principles, when all had lost the divine place of testimony.

I think that the first remnant having this character is Caleb and Joshua.

When God came down to deliver Israel out of Egypt He announced His purpose to Moses in Exodus 3:8, "I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey." Here was the purpose distinctly enunciated. Not one word about "the great and terrible wilderness" which lay between. I pass over their deliverance and subsequent history till we come to the moment when Israel, about two years after, were to go up to the mount of the Amorites and take possession of the land of Canaan. Their faith was not up to the call of the Lord, and they begged that some should be sent to spy out the land. To this the Lord assented, commanding that twelve men -- out of every tribe a man -- (see Numbers 13; Deut. 1) should go up. Amongst them were "Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun." The spies returned with a good report of the land; but ten of them caused the unbelief of the heart of Israel to manifest itself by their own fears. At this critical moment we find Israel slipping away from the call of Jehovah, and the solemn words were then spoken, "Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt." They "despised" the pleasant land! Here one of these two faithful men -- men of "another spirit" -- who had "wholly followed the Lord God of Israel," stilled the people with his words, *"If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this*

*land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey."* He "held fast" the calling and purpose of Jehovah at this critical moment. Israel had to go back and wander for the rest of the forty years in the desert, till all the men of war died that came out of Egypt. They, too, had to accompany them in their sorrow and toil, yet not in their sin. But there was not one in that great company who with more firm unfaltering tread and cheerful heart wandered for that forty years. True to the purpose and call of God they hoped for what they saw not, and in patience waited for it. They got their portion in the land they looked for when the time came; and the testimony of Moses was that "he wholly followed the Lord" (Joshua 14:8-14).

In Ruth we get a touching picture of what a remnant should be. Her history lay in the dark day of Israel's ruin in the time when the judges ruled; Israel had proved totally faithless to their calling; and the Philistines devastated the land of Jehovah; and every man did what seemed right in his own eyes (Judges 21:25). The first associations of the poor Moabitess with Naomi were in the day of her prosperity and gladness of heart. But Naomi's dark day came; the widow of Israel -- a widow in heart and fact -- Naomi (now become "Mara" -- "Bitterness,") set out to return to the land of Israel. Joys and relationships which once she knew had gone by for ever. Ruth, a widow in heart too, as in circumstances, clave to Naomi. She had known her in her prosperous day, and in the day of her sorrow she made the widow of Israel the object of all her care. She could not restore the past to her -- it was gone for ever. But she devotes herself in the present to this widowed heart, and follows her, thoughtless of self, to the land of Israel. "Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried!" But the day of reward and recognition came. To her question to Boaz, "Why have I found grace in thine eyes that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?" The answer was, "It hath fully been shewed me *all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law.*" This was the ground of her reward. If we have glimpsed what the church was in the day of her Pentecostal blessedness, and discovered that the divine principles then enunciated have never changed, shall not our language be in the dark day of her shame and ruin, "Whither thou goest, I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people," &c. If the poverty of our services are not worthy of recognition when the day of reward shall come, we shall have the satisfaction and joy to know that we bestowed all (shall we say?) our attention and care on that for which Christ gave Himself, that He might sanctify and cleanse her, and present to Himself a glorious church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing (Eph. 5:25-27).

I turn to a darker day of Israel's history. The ten tribes had long since gone away captive to Assyria. Judah had filled up the measure of the long-suffering

of Jehovah, and had gone captive to Babylon. Jerusalem was solitary, devastated, and in ruins, and the land was wasted and without an inhabitant. Hardly a trace that it was Jehovah's now remained; but that it was keeping its Sabbaths -- not from the faith of the people, but because upon the people had been written "Lo-ammi" (Hos. 1). Far away in the land of the Chaldean a faithful heart might sigh and open his window and pray -- straining his eyes towards the long-loved city; and confess as his own the sins of his people (Dan. 6 & 9). By the rivers of Babylon, too, those who could sigh and cry for the abominations which were wrought in the house of God at Jerusalem could hang up their harps on the willows, and refuse to sing the songs of Zion in a strange land. How could He be worshipped unless in that spot which He had chosen? There was but one spot where they could strike their harps to His praise! "By the rivers of Babylon there we sat down; yea we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song: and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" (Psalm 137) In the book of Ezra we find a remnant of the people extricating themselves from Babylon, and returning to a divine position before the Lord. Care lest any but those whose title was distinctly of Israel, should be mixed up with the work of the Lord marked these faithful men. They did not disown them as of Israel, but they could not recognize their claim. *God* might discern them as His; *they* could not pretend to divine discernment when they had not the Urim and the Thummim (see Ezra 2:59-63). In this we have an instructive lesson for our own day.

When the church was in divine order each took his place, like the priesthood of Israel, without question as to title to be there. But meanwhile Israel had become mixed up in the corruptions of Babylon, and disorder reigned supreme. When Paul contemplates the total disorder of things in the church which never could be remedied (2 Tim.), he instructs the remnant who had departed from iniquity, and purged themselves from the vessels to dishonor in the Babylon of the professing Church (ch. 2:19-22), to "follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that *call on the Lord, out of a pure heart.*" They did not deny that those who were still in the corruption were children of God, but they had not extricated themselves from the evils there; and, if knowing the corruption, they had not departed from it, the conscience was defiled and the heart impure. The remnant are careful then only to walk with those who call on the Lord "*out of a pure heart.*"

But the seventh month came (Ezra 3), the moment for the *gathering* of the people (the Feast of Trumpets). The remnant gathered themselves "as one man" in the only divine city in the world -- the only platform where they could take down, so to say, those long silent, unstrung harps from the willows, and worship

Israel's God! They might *pray* with the window open toward Jerusalem, and *confess* their sins in Babylon, but they could not *worship* Him there. It was impossible to re-construct the order of things as they had been in Solomon's day -- that day had passed away for ever! The ark was gone -- *where*, none could tell. The glory had departed from Israel -- and the sword was in the Gentile hand. The Urim and Thummim was amongst the things of the past. Yet outside all these things which belonged to a day of order, the Lord had not forgotten those faithful men, and His word and Spirit remained. "They built an altar to the *God of Israel*" -- though all Israel was not there. They did not pretend to be "Israel" -- yet they could contemplate all Israel, and in Israel's city worship Israel's God, in the way that Israel's God had written. As a remnant who had escaped they occupied this divine platform, and sang the praise of Jehovah: "O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever." That chorus had been sung in the bright day of David's success: when he brought up the Ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 16:41). It had again resounded when the house of the Lord at Jerusalem was filled with the cloud and glory of His manifested presence in the days of Solomon (2 Chron. 5:13). When the glory and brightness and successes of those days had passed away, and the failure and ruin of Israel was complete, the returned remnant could raise the very same old note of praise, "O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever!" (Ezra 3:11) They had been faithless, but He was faithful. The fathers of Israel who had seen the house of the Lord before the captivity, could weep when they thought of the unfaithfulness of the people. The younger ones could sing with joy when they celebrated the faithfulness of the Lord. The weeping and the rejoicing were both good -- to weep was right, when they thought of the failure of the people to Jehovah; but to rejoice was right, when they thought of the faithfulness of God.

Others, too, who called upon the same Lord, as they said, claimed the right of being with them in the work (ch. 4). But this could not be. They who were careful that even a priest of Israel who could not show his genealogy should not eat of the holy things in the day of extrication from Babylon, were careful too that those who had mixed up the fear of Jehovah with the service of idols should have nothing to do with them in His work. It was not a question with them of having people together; but, with widowed hearts as to the past, their fixed purpose remained to strengthen the things that remained, but to strengthen them according to God -- refusing all co-operation with those who could not have the same end in view in the Lord's testimony. Thus it was pure and unmingled; 1st, To Israel as it had been -- God's separated people on the earth; and, 2nd, This testimony maintained by a remnant whose sole trust was in God and whose guide was His word.

All this has its instructive lesson for us. The unity of the church remains. It

is maintained by the Spirit of God. Tongues have gone -- apostolic power has gone -- signs have passed away; and healings and gifts of adornment to call the attention of the world. Still the word of God abides. To it God has directed us in the last days. Were the tongues, &c., here now, the word would apply, for "the word of the Lord abideth for ever." But they have all gone. Still the faithful can take that word and walk in obedience to it, when all those things of the former glory of the church have passed away for ever. The remnant extricated from Babylon, as it were, and gathered together to the name of the Lord (Matt. 18:20), on the divine basis and never-failing principle of the church's existence -- "one body and one Spirit" (Eph. 4:4) -- do not by this pretend to be "the church of God"; that would be to forget that there are children of God still scattered in the Babylon around. They can set up nothing -- reconstruct nothing. But they can remember that "He that is holy, He that is true; He that shutteth and no man openeth, and openeth and no man shutteth," is with them. He is ever to be trusted and counted upon. If He sends a prophet or a help amongst them, they can thank God, and accept it as a token of His favor and grace -- they can appoint none. To do so would be to forget the total ruin which never can be restored, and to presume to do that for which they had no warrant in the Word of God.

If a fresh action of the Spirit of God causes a Nehemiah-like company to follow from Babylon, they are glad to welcome them to the divine ground they occupy themselves. If the Nehemiah-like company comes, they find *before them* a remnant who had previously through grace occupied the divine position. They must gladly and cheerfully fall in with what God had wrought -- there was no neutral ground -- no second place. They dare not set up another, it would be but schism. It was the same Spirit who had wrought, and who, if followed, could not but guide them to the same divine position to which He had guided others. How completely this sets aside the will of man; and the independency of the movements of the present day which stop short of that position to which God has called His people together to "endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"; for "there is one body and one Spirit," and only one! I pass on to another interesting scene when a faithful one is standing fast alone, afar from all fellowship with his brethren, where his testimony is rather the refusal to act so as to deny fundamental truth, than actively to engage himself with others in extricating themselves from iniquity. I allude to the case of Mordecai the Jew (Esther).

Far away from the land of Israel, the people were subject to the powers of the world. An Amalekite, named Haman, wielded the power next to that of the king. A poor Jew, "an exile in the strange land," refused to bow his head to the Agagite. To be faithful, when all were unfaithful, is a great thing in God's eye. "Thou hast not denied my name," is great commendation when all were doing so. To keep one's Nazariteship in secret with God, when no eye sees but His, is

never forgotten. To stand firmly for Him in an evil day of temptation, is to do great things! "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal," shows that God's eye saw and valued their faith, where even Elijah had not discerned them. They had refused to do that which all others had done, in that dark day. Mordecai was ready to give a reason of the hope that was in him; and his simple answer was, *I am a Jew!* God had not forgotten His oath of old (Exod. 17), even if Israel were reaping the fruit of their sins under the Eastern Kings. He had said, "Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt; how he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, when thou wast faint and weary, and he feared not God. . .Thou shalt not forget it" (Deut. 25). Therefore the Lord had sworn that He would have war with Amalek from generation to generation. Mordecai refuses to surrender this fundamental truth in the calling of Israel. You may say, he is a stiff-necked man, and is imperilling the lives of his nation. I admit it: but his trust is in God! Firmly did this man trusting in God, and refusing to surrender fundamental truth, stand single-handed against all the malice of the enemy. Post after post was despatched with the orders to smite all the Jews. Still no faltering in his faith -- his head bowed not as the son of Amalek passed by! He had counted upon God, whose word never alters; and God had tried his faith, but it stood the test; and, when the day comes for having faithfulness owned, it will be found, through grace, that Mordecai had had an opportunity for faithfulness to the Lord -- that he had stood firm, and God has not forgotten it.

What cheer of heart his story must afford to those whose path is isolated; when they have not even one faithful companion, yet are enabled in an evil day to be firm and faithful in their solitary pathway, sustained and owned by God.

In Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, we find another striking example. Faithfulness and standing fast in trial and temptation shows the power of the Spirit, quite as much as energy in action. They were at this time captives in Babylon; the necessity of faithfulness seemed to have passed away. Where was the profit of standing fast when all their hopes were gone? But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's meat, or his wine. He would drink water, and eat pulse, and nothing more. He kept his Nazariteship in the land of captivity; and he kept it according to the thoughts of God (compare Ezekiel 4:9-13); and the time came when God stood by him, and made him the vessel of His mind and will, revealing to him the history of the times and end of the Gentile in whose grasp he was for his nation's sin.

I might go on with many other examples; such as Jeremiah, the Five wise Virgins, &c., &c.; but I pass on to notice another solemn lesson. How soon the thing failed, and the energy flagged which supported the emerging remnant in



extricating themselves from the evil, and regaining a divine position. Failure and weakness thus ensued once more -- it is a sad but common case. You will often see the lovely efforts of faith struggling to win a divine position through difficulties and dangers and trials without end. Yet when the goal is won, the zeal grows cool, self is remembered, God forgotten, and the blessing is gone. Alas! one trembles, when one sees these first lovely efforts of faith, lest the day should come when they are seen no more. It is much harder to *keep* what we have won in divine things than to *win*, because it must be by the winner abiding in the energy by which he won. The fear of man comes. Self-interest, self-sparing, and self-indulgence enter. God in mercy interposes at times, and stirs up the sleeping energy, and is ever ready to bless; still it is painful and humbling to think of it. We see a sad example of this in Israel when gaining the land under Joshua, and then sinking into premature decay.

It comes out strikingly in the after history of this returned remnant in Ezra, &c., to which I have referred. The fear of man stopped the work of the Lord (Ezra 4:4,5,24). The energy and beauty of their first efforts of faith were gone. God sends the prophets Haggai and Zechariah to stir up the people to the work of the Lord. They had begun to settle in their hearts that the time had not come to build the Lord's house (Hag. 1:2); yet they had ceiled their own. Thus stirred up, we find that they obeyed the voice of the Lord, and did the work of the Lord. The fear of man gave place to the fear of the Lord; and God was there to own and bless the renewed efforts of faith.

If we follow their history, we find their faith again grew dim. In Malachi the state of things is painful and depressing. The blind ones of the flock, and the sick, and the lame, were offered in sacrifice to Jehovah. What man refused -- what was worthless to him, was good enough for God! Even Saul, in his worst day, reserved the *best* of the sheep and oxen to do sacrifice to the Lord. No one would open the doors of the Lord's house for nothing, nor light a fire on His altar for nought (ch. 1:7-10). They robbed God in tithes and offerings (ch. 3:8); called the proud happy; and said, "It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?" This, too, sad to tell it, when *in* a divine position. It was not when far away in the land of the Chaldean, but in the city of the great King! Still we find *a remnant within a remnant*, if I may so say, faithful to the Lord. "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." The faithfulness of the few was the channel of sustainment to the others from a faithful God. We trace them further, till we find them in Luke 2 represented by old Simeon and Anna, who knew "all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem." The same faith that could keep them waiting for the Lord's Christ, could keep them alive till He came. The old

prophetess, too, who could fast and pray, and live for, and in that spot which still was owned of God, found her fastings and prayers ended in praise, when the Lord she had looked for came. The last link in the history of this returned remnant we find in the solitary widow of Luke 21. A few verses further on in this chapter the Lord pronounces the final judgment on that temple at Jerusalem. It was still, however, in a certain sense, owned of God. This widowed heart had but one object now on earth -- she could do but little, for all she possessed was a farthing! "Two mites," as the Spirit of God lets us know. Devotedness, in the estimate of man, would have been great indeed if she had appropriated half of what she possessed to the interests of God which engrossed her. But self was forgotten with this widowed heart, and she cast into the offerings of the Lord her two mites. The Lord's eye saw the motive from which this offering sprang, read the action as He alone could read it: "Of a truth," said He, "I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all. For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had." He judged aright -- but He did not judge by what she gave, but by *what she kept*; and that was nothing! It is humbling to trace this decay of the mass, yet touching to contemplate the increased and increasing devotedness and purpose of those true hearts; but it is useful to face the dangers from which we are never free. Worldliness amongst us; self-seeking, and forgetfulness of the things of the Lord, all are amongst us, and are signs and sources of weakness. The Lord grant us to be warned, and to distrust ourselves the more. The Lord encourage the hearts of those who love His name and testimony to be increasingly faithful. To keep the eye filled with Christ, and thus to be still more the channel of the Lord's sustaining grace to the rest, till that bright and longed-for day arrives when He will come and gladden our hearts for ever!

It is easy to remark how in all those times of failure and ruin, the hearts of others were stirred up by some faithful one, in self-sacrificing energy, who would pray and work -- and sigh and cry -- who could spend and be spent on the Lord's interests at the time. Through such the Lord wrought and delivered, and led and blessed His people. It might be by some lone widow who could agonize in prayers and fastings night and day. The answer came, and the blessing was poured out, and none knew what the occasion was through which the blessing came. But in the day when "every man shall have praise of God" it will be known; for His eye marked it and answered it, and that heart was, perhaps, unwittingly, in communion with His -- the vessel for the intercession of the Spirit for the saints according to the will of God!

F. G. P., *Words of Truth* 4:25-35.

## "WHAT CHRISTMAS MEANS TO ME"

Such is the title to a short article that appeared in a recent periodical. The writer is H. A. Ironside who is with the Lord now for some years. The article was full of human sentimentality instead of the facts. Indeed, he went so far as to suggest that Christmas was not really of pagan origin. F. C. J., who, I suppose, was well acquainted with H. A. Ironside, wrote an open letter in which he said:

When in 1877 I first came into fellowship with those called Brethren, they were practically a unit in abstaining from all complicity with the observance of Christmas and similar abominations . . . tracts were written against it . . . But now with all those witnesses to divine truth gone, other generations have come upon the scene, and there are now few who regard with the same abhorrence these heathen, aye Satanic, for who but Satan, the one great foe of our Lord, would dare to commit this climax of heinous wickedness of attaching His Name to a lie? But beloved brethren, have you not been "keeping Christmas"? Have you not been wishing each other to be "merry," even while thus bringing Christ into full accord with Belial? That seems to me unspeakably terrible, am I wrong my brethren?

Have you read:

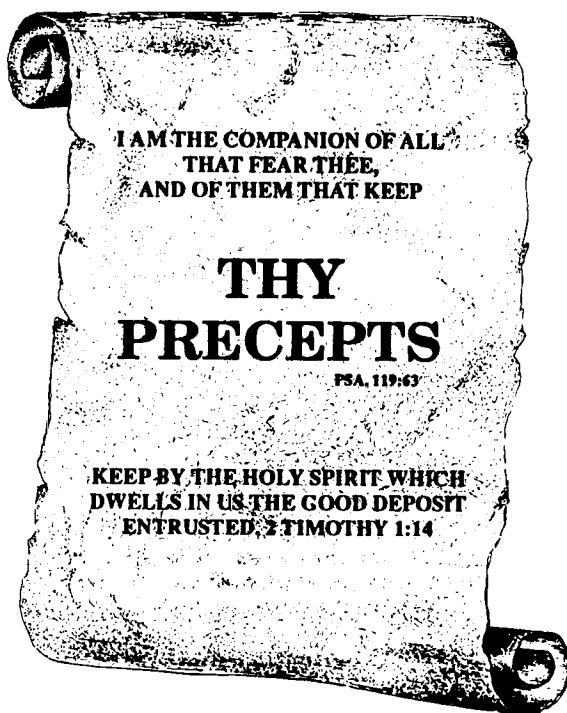
### ***Christmas: or Linking Christ with Belial***

obtainable from Present Truth Publishers, \$1.00 + \$1.75 post. & handling.

Ed.

**PRESENT TRUTH PUBLISHERS**  
**411 Route 79 • Morganville, NJ 07751**

[www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)



**MAR / APRIL 1992**

**Vol. 7, # 2**

---

## **CONTENTS**

---

<b>The Humiliation of Christ .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Politics? .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Submission, Love and a Fur Coat .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Truthfulness and Doctrine .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Moral Evil and Assembly Discipline .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Extracts .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Elements of Dispensational Truth:</b>	
<b>Chapter 4.4: The Law or Faith .....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>"Love is not Sufficient ..." .....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>A Holy Church? .....</b>	<b>64</b>



---



---

## THE TRUTH OF CHRIST'S PERSON

---



---

### THE HUMILIATION OF CHRIST

(Phil. 2:5-8)

The mind that is to be in Christians "[was] also in Christ Jesus." This does not mean that this mind was only present in manhood. It was present in the eternal Son, in glory, before the incarnation.

There are two major steps of humiliation in what has been called a seven-fold descent. The first was the exercise of the humble mind in His pre-incarnation state; the second was when here in holy manhood.

Concerning the first step in this humiliation of the eternal Son, we read:

... I came out from God. I came out from the Father, and have come into the world ... (John 16:27,28).<sup>1</sup>

For I came down from heaven, not that I should do *my* will, but the will of him that has sent me (John 6:37).

The doctrine of the Trinity in such divine relationship is essential truth. Love ever existed in the Godhead. That is where love comes from and here we see a humility of mind in the eternal Son. Humility in the Godhead! Think of that! So in the first immense step He humbled Himself in taking manhood into union with His Person. Thus J. N. Darby wrote:

The thing I find in Christ exactly opposed to the first Adam and to our flesh is that He humbled Himself -- emptied Himself. First, He made Himself of no reputation, and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death.<sup>2</sup>

There has been many a detractor of the glory of Christ, concerning this humbling, who, reasoning upon the Son's emptying Himself, have given expression to the infidelity in their hearts by claiming that this emptying involved, as Robert Anderson exposes it:

---

1. Observe that here we have the Father also, as such, *before* the Son came into the world. The relation of Father and Son was, and is, eternal.

2. *Collected Writings* 27:217.

But the *Kenosis* [emptying] of this new theology betokens not Divine grace but human misfortune. It is not the humiliation of Christ, but His degradation. It is not that He became man, but that He sank to the level of a Jew of that age. Not that while "knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands and that He was come from God and was going to God," [John 13:3] He humbled Himself; but that knowing nothing more than His contemporaries, His mind was warped by prejudice and ignorance.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, opposed to His statements, as recorded by inspiration in the gospels, their wicked hearts of unbelief seek to get rid of them, while still laying claim to being Christians. Very evidently, such have not the humble mind which was in Himself. Instead of honestly labeling Him a fraud, they wish to maintain a credibility as Christians, modern and enlightened, and to maintain their supposed ability to scrutinize Him Who no man knows (Luke 10:22), keeping their 'Christian positions and posts.' Instead, then, of having the humble mind found in Him, they *exalt* themselves into a position of superiority to the Son when here in manhood, to correct Him.

We assert, then, that the emptying involves not one loss of anything essential to Godhead. Now, one of the divine attributes was having a humble mind. At the same time there was the divine prerogative of exercising His holy will.<sup>4</sup> In expressing and displaying the humble mind, the Son said, "Lo, I come to do thy will" (Psa. 40:7; Heb. 10:7,9). J. N. Darby wrote:

The essential being of Godhead cannot change, as is evident -- the Absolute, as men speak -- and whatever His humiliation, all the fullness of the Godhead (*theotetos*) dwelt in Him bodily. His emptying Himself (*ekenose*) applied to the *morphe* (form). He was in the *status*, condition of Godhead, of which, not to speak of outward glory, will and acting from His own will (though one with the Father, see John 5) was proper and essential. But the full purpose of His will in free devotedness, and always so, was to give up His own will, and this according to eternal counsels; Psalm 40.

It was not a lowly being, to whom it is evil to have a will of its own, who had none -- that would have been nothing; nothingness was the place of nothingness. But He who in His essence could will, gives up His place, or condition as such, and says "Lo, I come to do thy will." It was a divine act, always so, but a divine act of *kenosis* (making empty). He was thus relative to the Father, not only as Son but as Servant -- an immense truth! He gave up, not Godhead -- that could not be -- but the *status* and position of it, and came not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him.

Man answered to this place according to the counsels and glory of God, as the angels, the obedient administrators of power, witnesses of a sustained creation, but he who had been made in God's image, and now fallen, was in the

---

3. *The Bible and Modern Criticism*, London: Hodder and Stroughton, p. 265 (1905).

4. We will keep in mind that the Persons of the Godhead are one in will and purpose while distinct in Person.



condition to be the sphere of the display of all God's moral glory, mercy, grace, righteousness, above all, love, for God is Love; in a word -- redemption. Christ was a Man. And now, in the same perfectness, He takes no will, not even of man, not even to eat when He was hungry -- He lives by every word out of the mouth of God. He humbles Himself and is obedient even unto death, and that of the Cross -- no resistance -- no escape, though legions of angels would be ready at His call. He perseveres in submitting to all -- a tested obedience, even to death. Not merely obedience in peace, as Adam innocent might, or an Angel (though doubtless they must feel the ruin) but tested by unvarying giving up of self and where evil was.<sup>5</sup>

The Son, subsisting in the form of God "did not esteem it an object of rapine to be on an equality with God." He *was* God and so that equality *was* His; not something to be stolen. It stands in profound contrast to the first Adam:

As to Philippians 2:6, I believe it to be a contrast with the first Adam, and a magnificent one. I do not desire to rest the argument on "thinking it no robbery." The word is a very difficult one indeed -- never used, I believe, elsewhere; its form may be active, and not the object or thing done. The force I believe to be, He did not do as Adam (who, when in the form of man, sought as a robbery, a booty to be acquired, to be equal with God), but, being in the form of God, emptied Himself of the glory He had. It does suppose Christ to be in the state of Godhead, as Adam in the state of man; but the special force of the proof does not rest in the word "robbery," as contrasted with "booty," or object of robbery - for that is the only question in the passage, because it is *αρπαγμα*, not *αρπια*.<sup>6</sup>

The last Adam is presented in contrast with the first. Adam set up by robbery to be as God. He who was in the form of God humbled Himself down to death below the creature. Adam exalted himself and is abased. Christ humbled Himself and is exalted. Satan's temptation was, "If thou be the Son of God *command*." "No," he says, "I will not keep out of the place of service, I came to *obey*." He left the glory as to state not as to nature.<sup>7</sup>

No creature could take the place of a servant because of the fact that he already is a servant by his creation.<sup>8</sup>

We were considering, above, that "His emptying Himself (*enkenose*) applied to the *morphe* (form). "He was in the *status*, condition of God." As such, having a will and acting from His own will, "(though one with the Father, see John 5) was proper and essential." Again, "He left the glory as to state not as to nature." It was His will to take the form of man, take the place of servant, of the carrying out the Father's will, as Son in manhood. This is the essence of the

5. *Notes and Comments* 2:166. Also *Collected Writings* 32:420.

6. J. N. Darby, *Collected Writings* 9:278.

7. J. N. Darby, *Miscellaneous Writings* 4:215, Oak Park. Bible Truth Publishers, n.d.

8. Our Lord is not a creature; He is the creator.

emptying Himself. This does not, and cannot, change His omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence. Though Son in manhood, subject to the Father's will, He was God over all, blessed forever (Rom. 9:5). Yea, though a babe in the manger, the universe subsisted by the continuous upholding by Himself (Col. 1:17). When they spit in His face, that spit maintained its course by Himself, the sustainer of the universe. When He lay on the cross, oh my soul, and those hammers described their arc in the air, the mighty God was there sustaining centripetal and centrifugal forces, sustaining the hammers in the arc, sustaining the very breath in the nostrils of His creatures doing this. The great *God*, the kinsman Redeemer, had come, emptying Himself, subservient to the Father's will; Him in Whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:11).

J. N. Darby wrote:

But the gospel of John gives us large communications on this humiliation of Christ. His Godhead shines in every page of all gospels, but John, as everyone knows, in a peculiar way gives us the Person of Christ -- the Word made flesh. Now I have remarked elsewhere the fact of the way in which He is everywhere One with the Father, yet receives all. But it is the direct expression of the truth we are studying -- He is God, He is one with the Father, He is I Am. Everywhere He speaks to His Father on a divine footing of unity; "I have glorified thee, now glorify me." But He has taken the form of a Servant, never "now I will glorify Myself." "My Father is greater than I"; "Father, glorify thou me" -- yet it was a glory He had -- "along with thee (the Father) before the world was," "Thou hast given him power over all flesh" -- "I receive whoever comes, for I came not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me." He finishes the work the Father gave Him to do -- it is the Father that sent Him; so chapter 8:26. But it is in this chapter the Lord says: "Before Abraham was, I am," which the Jews well understood.

In a word His path was "that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given me commandment, so I do." His divine nature and Godhead shine throughout, but He receives everything -- is sent -- and has taken the relative place of reciprocity and subjection. John 5 has a peculiar character in this respect, and presented at first some difficulty to my mind. "As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, so the Son quickeneth whom he will"; "My Father worketh hitherto and I work," as the apostle notes, from the Jewish consciousness, making Himself equal with God. But in verse 19 He at once takes the place He is come into. "The Son can do nothing *of himself*, but what he seeth the Father do." "Whatsoever he doeth, these doeth the Son likewise," and quickening comes as part of this -- "The Father loves the Son and shews him all." But He, though He acts with the same divine power as the Father, yet is shown all -- does nothing of Himself; and in verse 26 He hath given to the Son to have life in Himself, i.e. the Son in the form of a Servant down here, and given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is Son of man. So that we know that it is in this humbled state that this applies.

Thus it becomes the clearest exposition of this unspeakable truth, the result of that, when in the form of God, He emptied Himself -- His own act -- divine all through, at every moment. How true it remains, "No man knows the Son but

the Father"; but we adore Him. He is not ashamed to call us brethren, for now we are all *of one*.

But the point my mind rests on is the *emptying* of Himself; the rest is consequence, however blessed; Psalm 45:6,7, and Hebrews 1:8,9. Christ emptied Himself, taking upon Him the form of a Servant. Our best delight will be to be hidden behind Him and see Him have all the glory. It is interesting to see that whatever depth the Person of the Lord may give to this, the blessing itself, which has its very character from its adaptation to our state, is enjoyed by the simplest faith, and the more simple the more it is enjoyed. Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith is enjoyed by him in whom He dwells, not by him who can explain it, though it be true it must be enjoyed in order to be able to explain it.

But this humbling of Christ by Himself is divine love, and in exercise -- we know God by it. It is Himself in activity, yet in giving Himself up in this unspeakable way. In the Father God remains in essential Godhead; in the Son, one with Him in the exercise of it: coming down to serve, the Object in which we know God and see the Father. God is objectively before us in the Spirit power, operative power in us to be able to apprehend, and have the love shed abroad in our hearts so that we dwell in God and God in us.<sup>9</sup>

The Lord Jesus humbled Himself unto death, even the death of the cross -- where God was triumphantly glorified.

No man knows the Son, yet He lets us see that He is that which no man knows. Who could say but there "God is known in death?" Is it not there love, God's love is known, never known really till known there? Yet it is weakness, and, as to His place as man, the very end of man. But in Himself God is known in love by His being down here with sinful men -- by that love reaching even to us. He made Himself of no reputation, emptied Himself -- not that He could be other than God -- there is the mystery -- but as to the form of God He did. Hence having taken the form of a servant, He is always such -- receives all. Even when He takes the kingdom, He goes a long journey to receive a kingdom, and, when by His perfection in power He has subdued all, He gives it up to God even the Father. He gives up His own spirit when the time comes, but recommends it to His Father -- raises up the temple of His body, but is raised by the glory of the Father -- grows in wisdom, speaks what He knows, but He *is* the wisdom of God; He can do nothing of Himself -- is obedient, but He *is* the power of God, and quickens too whom He will; created all things and upholds them by the word of His power. And this was His perfection, with the whole power of evil against Him, never to go out of the path of dependence and obedience -- never to use power by His will. Thus He bound the strong man as in the wilderness -- in death how much more even -- He could have had, even in dependence, more than twelve legions of angels, but it would not have been obedience fulfilling the Scriptures.

But what an emptying that was when He who was God could come into death, though suffering, though obeying, bring all that God was in His moral perfection into death, and then when it was needed, in man's extremity through sin, in man's weakness, in the place of Satan's power, there glorify it -- love, righteousness, majesty, truth, all found glorified there. God is glorified in Him,

---

9. *Collected Writings* 32:423-425.

yet it was in death, and because it was death in all it meant for God; but it was all the power of love, i.e., God, in the emptying.<sup>10</sup>

The emptying involved being made sin (2 Cor. 5:21), God dealing with the issue root (sin) and branch ("bore our sins in His own body on the tree," 1 Pet. 2:24). God must be glorified in His nature regarding the outrage of sin against His majesty and nature. The emptying involved glorifying the Father. Anticipating the accomplishment of that God-glorifying work on the cross, He prayed:

I have glorified *thee* on the earth, I have completed the work which thou gavest me that I should do it (John 16:17).

In that work, God in the essence of His divine being was proclaimed: God is light and God is love. What He *is* was told out. "It was death in all it meant for God." It required that the Son empty Himself. This emptying of Himself has exhibited the glory of God before His created intelligences. And that manhood our Lord will maintain forever. We shall see Him as He is. We shall see the marks in His hands, feet and side, those memorials of the unspeakable depth to which that emptying took Him. We shall see Him Who is God and man in one Person, yea, a lamb as it had been slain, *standing*; Who prevailed so as to open the book, and loose the seven seals thereof, for the Father has committed all judgment into the hands of the Son.

We close with an extract regarding Mark 13:32: "But of that day or of that hour no one knows, neither the angels who are in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father." This Scripture, as all, is perfect in its place; but a false textual criticism has placed it also into Matthew in modern translations, where it does not belong.

And as Son of man Christ is to receive the kingdom and reign. All the emphasis is upon his manhood. And, as [J. G.] Bellett would say, morally this is perfect too, for in that consideration there cannot but be remembrance of the humbled empty condition He assumed in becoming man, the servant-form and the servant-place He took for God's glory. Now Mark it is especially whose province it is to present the Son of God in His service, Christ as the true servant. And in his gospel alone, as has often been noticed, that last element in our verse, "neither the Son but the Father," is to be found. Are we then not to see in it just such an added moral touch as is suited to the presentation of Him which that gospel was divinely designed to give, and find assistance in understanding it from that very fact? How strong and beautiful an expression of the true servant character there is here then in this abnegation of concern as to what properly lies with the father to make good. "The servant knoweth not what his lord doeth." It was more than the *form* of a servant Christ assumed in becoming man. The spirit and qualities proper to that position He showed forth to perfection in the

---

10. *Notes and Comments* 2:78.

humble path of dependence and obedience He trod. Fittingly from such a servant in such a path comes this disclaimer of knowledge of a matter not belonging to His sphere as such. The kingdom he is to receive in the capacity of a servant . . . What wonder then, if of the day and hour of its advent, the One who chooses to consider Himself less Heir-apparent than Heir-appointed disavows the knowledge. "Not mine to give" in one case said the Lord. "Not mine to know" in effect He says here. Entire moral perfection. <sup>11</sup>

Ed.

## POLITICS?

I could not be a magistrate while Satan is the God of this world, for I cannot serve two masters; and if I cannot say on the bench that what Christ says is true, I must be dishonoring Him and serving the world. In the millennium it will not be so. Then we shall rule; but I cannot now, because the principle on which power is exercised is not the honor of God. The magistrate is the resister of evil, but his word is, "If you do well and suffer for it, this is acceptable with God." I would rather have what is acceptable to God than all the civil rights in the world.

The duty then of the saints is submission. I know no other, or I must act on the principles which the flesh recognizes. I cannot seek a good object in a bad way. The object must be God's, and the way God's.

J. N. Darby in *The Bible Treasury* 11:24.

## WHO TEACHES?

The church does not teach; the teacher teaches. The church abides in and professes the truth she has learned. She is, or ought to be, the pillar and ground of the truth; but she does not teach it. The mystery of iniquity began in the apostle's days: the last days were already come. *The truth* was there; but men, like Satan, abode not in it. But abiding in it, walking in it, in the truth perfectly revealed in Christ, this was the duty of the saint, even if the professing church would not, and the time should come when they would turn away from the truth: Paul declared they would (*Collected Writings* 18:247).

---

11. *The Bible Treasury, New Series* 8:160.

## SUBMISSION, LOVE AND A FUR COAT

In late November, 1525, George Wickenhauer and his wife Christina lived in the town of Hanau, Germany. He was a preacher of the gospel and held to the teachings of Luther and the Protestant Reformation. Luther had been saved only about nine years previously and his famous "theses" had been issued in 1517. In this year of 1525 the Peasant's Revolt had been crushed and Catholic control over religion was reinstituted in many places. For difficult times like those (and for the relatively easier day in which we now live), the Bible has instructions for Christian husbands and wives:

**Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.**

**Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it (Eph. 5:22, 25).**

On the other hand, there is no direct instructions in such Scriptures that tell us just exactly what to do in each circumstance. For example, if we owned a fur coat, there might arise circumstances in which we would have to seek the Lord's mind as to what to do with the fur coat, applying to the specific circumstances the general principles of God's word. Perhaps, even the verses quoted above could have guidance for us in such a homely and simple question as what should be done about a fur coat.

Well, the Wickenhauer's and their infant son were expelled from the town of Hanau, Germany, by governmental officials who acted under the directions of a Roman Catholic bishop. Local Christians were forbidden to receive them into their houses, the winter was cold, and they had no place to go. This, surely, was an occasion for their practical Christianity to shine in his love for her and in her submission to him. Perhaps, these two dear believers had seen examples of these graces in others; perhaps, they had read or heard sermons on the doctrine of Eph. 5. Do you think that the knowledge that God was doing a great work in Europe in their lifetimes was a help to them as they worried about what to do?

Most probably they had not read many accounts about how the practical truths of Eph. 5 can enter into the lives of believers. The experiences of some Christian couples are not edifying to others; and modesty or obscurity prevents us all from profiting from good examples in some other cases. We, however have the example of the Wickenhauer's because George Wickenhauer later wrote about the events of that winter. Originally, in German, no doubt, his writings were translated into Spanish by Margaret Sporlin and thence into

English by C. Knapp. What follows is a condensation that emphasizes domestic details. Longer sections that have been so drastically shortened as to be no longer essentially in his own words have been placed in square brackets. Here, then, is a portion of Wickenhauer's record:

As we were consulting together, a messenger from Lampertheim presented himself, sent by a fellow preacher of the gospel, John Seitz, to inform me that the bishop had ordered him to be expelled also, and that his intention was to take his wife and child to Brumath, to the house of his father-in-law, who also was a good Christian. Knowing that my Christina was an orphan, he offered to take her and my child to Brumath, where she would find an asylum for the winter in the house of his wife's father. I need not say that this message was to me like a ray of light from God amidst the darkness.

But the most sorrowful blow was to come from a quarter I least expected -- from my beloved Christina herself. To make myself better understood, it is necessary I should go back a little in the story.

The father of Christina had been an able hunter. On one occasion he killed a large bear. Herr Fabian of Eschenau had ordered a magnificent fur cloak to be made of it as a reward for such prowess. That cloak had been carefully kept by the family as a valuable souvenir, as if it had been a title of nobility. Not only had it been my Christina's only legacy, but she was as proud of it as Nebuchadnezzar of his Babylon. But for me, poor, and in precarious circumstances, such a garment was too luxurious. Christina had taken great care of this cloak in the first months of our married life, but after our little Sergius was born the cloak was quite forgotten.

On a very cold day, while snowing heavily, my old friend Schuch, arrived at our house. He had preached the word of God at St. Hippolitus with much blessing, and the fruit of his labor was the establishment there of Protestant worship. Having been informed of this, the Duke of Lorraine threatened the heretical city with fire and sword. To avoid such a calamity Schuch departed for Nancy; but seeing what awaited him he came to see me for the last time, before delivering himself up, to strengthen me in the faith of Christ. This faithful servant of God looked very thin and weak; he was but thinly clothed, and the day was raw and cold. Christina had gone down with her baby, and I did not think it advisable to consult with her then; so I took the responsibility upon myself to lend the cloak to my friend to shield him from the cold, with this condition, that he return me the cloak from Nancy. But when he arrived there, the dear man was cast into prison, put upon the rack, and on the 20th of June, 1525, was led out to the stake, to which he went in perfect calmness, repeating the 51st Psalm until the flames choked his voice and the angels carried his soul

to heaven.

As for the fur cloak I heard nothing more of it, nor could I discover its whereabouts. To me it was a gain rather than a loss, for when I learned that in Nancy my dear friend had been tortured to make him deny the faith, and that by the grace of God he had remained faithful, nobly confessing our Lord Jesus Christ, I had the sweet satisfaction in my soul that his poor martyred body had been protected by so good a cloak. But Christina fully believed that her idol was safely kept in the wardrobe. I undoubtedly did well to lend it to that servant of God, but I had not the courage to tell Christina. My fear of her tears or her anger was an unpardonable weakness in me, a Christian, for which I dearly paid.

Having to depart, we began to pack. When Christina discovered the fur cloak was missing, and learned from me what had become of it, my poor wife was so angry, and so little open to reason, that all my words and patient pleading had no effect whatever. She called me a waster, a senseless father without care for my only child, depriving him of that precious garment which could have protected him from the rigors of such a winter. All my words and tender appeals were despised; she refused to listen. Thus the last three days of our stay in Hanau were days of torment for me. I would then have given anything to recover it, so as to restore the domestic peace so greatly disturbed.

On Monday, Dec. 3, a rude cart with straw for Christina and little Sergius to ride upon, drawn by two oxen was at our door. The snow was falling heavily. My heart was bleeding, but Christina was mute as a statue and pale as marble. When I put our beloved child in her arms, she began to cry bitterly. In a whirlwind of snow we started off. At the banks of the Rhine, the wind was piercingly cold, the snow fell heavily, and the child cried loudly. I myself trembled with the cold, and Christina unceasingly complained of the lost fur cloak. After crossing the Rhine, I jumped from the cart and walked in the snow beside the ox-driver.

"Excuse my frankness," said he. "You have great talent to preach the gospel, but I see you do not know how to manage your wife."

"How so?"

"When women are so ungrateful, gentleness and caresses are useless. I myself treat my Barbara very differently; when she takes it into her head to trouble me with bad temper, I make the dust fly from her back; then she does very well indeed."

So spake the ox-driver, but I knew that a Christian should never lift his hand



against the companion God had given him. We stopped in the forest of Brumath to warm ourselves at an open fire. Night came on and we heard the howling of the wolves. Suddenly I saw a light. It was Seitz with two horses and men with torches. Christina herself jumped down from the cart into my arms and said, "O George, I already saw myself and babe a sure prey of the terrible wolves."

Knowing that we would soon be at Brumath, I cried with deepest gratitude, "The Lord be praised!"

We were conducted to a cordial welcome, but a cold attic room; a straw mat and two chairs were the only furniture. Christina wept again for the loss of her fur cloak. So we passed the unhappy night with the constant noise of rats.

There lived in Brumath, a rich widowed aunt of Christina, who had no children. She called to see us the next morning and soothed Christina with caresses, offering her house to her. My wife gave me to understand that she was going to live with her aunt, and to remain there till I should find better lodgings. Alas, the aunt with the help of her confessor, a Catholic priest, made the most of my poor wife's resentment towards me. They so instilled in her mind the fear of perdition for having married a "renegade", that she sent this priest to inform me that she had resolved to return to the bosom of "the Holy Mother Church, out of which there was no salvation," and that she could no longer live with me in a union cursed by Heaven, and that her aunt had offered to adopt our child and make him her heir.

It would be impossible to describe what I passed through at that time.

[In brief, he went to speak to his wife but the aunt refused to allow him in the house. Seitz was more successful when he went on his friend's behalf, but Christina told him the same things that the priest had related to Wickenhauer. He told the sad news to Wickenhauer and shared with him the thought that now he would be more free to serve the Lord. These two then determined to leave Brumath to seek elsewhere for places to dwell where they might be free to preach the gospel as they knew it. Before their departure, he wrote the account from which the above was taken and concluded with the following words:]

This is the Lord's day, and I have tried to improve it by writing these pages. I will give them into the hands of my friend Seitz, in order that he may keep them for my son Sergius when he becomes of age, that he may know why he has lost his father. They are written also for thee, Christina, should I not see thee again in this life -- for thee who doest me evil, but whom I cannot cease to love. I say Good-by without animosity: may God bless us both! Tomorrow Seitz and I will take our pilgrim staff and go whither God may lead us.

Written in Brumath, December 9th, in the year of our Lord 1525, by my hand -- George Wickenhauer, minister of the gospel, of Hanau, Germany.

[The next day, Seitz and Wickenhauer left Brumath on foot. Let us read what happened next in Wickenhauer's words:]

When we reached that part of the forest where Seitz had first encountered us, I asked my friend to allow me to rest a while there. I wished to pray there once more; but, oppressed with anguish, I could only hide my face between my hands and give myself to tears.

Suddenly, I seemed to hear the cry of an infant, and with it the sound of hurried footsteps over the frozen snow. Was I in my senses? I seemed to recognize my beloved Christina! In drawing near she exclaimed, "My George, my beloved George! Oh, can you forgive me?" and, breathless, she fell at my feet.

It was one of those moments in life that no pen can rightly describe. When we were somewhat calmed, the beloved fugitive told how the wife of Seitz had spoken to her heart and conscience the night before. "I remembered," she said, "how I had tormented you because of that miserable cloak; how I added to your sorrow, disobeying God's command that the woman be subject to her husband as unto the Lord. Will you forgive me? Alas, all that I had brought with me from Hanau I had to leave in the house of my aunt when, at daybreak, I climbed over the garden wall with our child wrapped in my mantle. O George, I am a great sinner!"

"Enough! enough, my poor Christina!" I exclaimed; "I have never been richer in my life; for, by the grace of God, I have recovered the two persons I love most in the world -- you and my child; I receive both to my bosom."

[Travel from then on went more slowly for Wickenhauer now was burdened with the care of his wife and child, but we can well imagine how much lighter his heart was! He wrote later of how she took the difficulties of that cold journey:]

"Truly, my beloved George, I have not merited anything else, and I bless God with all my heart because I can be once more at your side."

[It may be of some significance that *these words* were among those that were retained in his memory as he looked back on this period of his life. In any case, they arrived at last at Strassburg where there was a large Protestant community. Here they were received and housed for about a year until they could find some permanent home.]

One day there arrived in Strassburg the godfather of Christina, Herr Fabian of Eschenau, the same who had ordered that troublesome fur cloak to be made. He had heard of the persecution at Hanau and came to ask if I had the courage to preach for a time in the village of Rumolsweiler, to which I readily replied in the affirmative. Though this implied a life of poverty, Christina took my hand, drew it lovingly to her lips, and said to me with a sweet voice, "By God's help, my dear George, do not fear that we shall lack anything. You read to me this morning in the Gospel, 'Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.'"

Herr Fabian was affected to hear these words. He then added, with a smile, "By the by, dear lady, I hope you will always keep that fur cloak of your worthy father, and give it the care it deserves."

On hearing this, Christina's face flushed like a flame, and I felt myself turning pale. Herr Fabian looked at us with a searching eye, and continued in a serious tone, "It would displease me much to know it had passed into strange hands or was sold." With an effort I then told him with some embarrassment how I had given the cloak to the martyr Schuch, and was ignorant as to what had since become of it.

The noble lord passed his hands over his eyes; then, leaning on my shoulder, said in a voice full of emotion, "You are a man according to the word of the Gospel, Master George."

When he had gone out Christina gave herself to tears, saying, "Oh, with what willingness I would have told the gentleman that it is my fault that you are so poor, for I had to leave all we possessed at my aunt's. But when I attempted to speak, the words seemed to choke in my throat, and I could say nothing. You, George, should have told him how I sinned against you and added to the weight of the cross you have had to bear."

"All is forgotten now, my dear Christina," I gladly answered, "All is forgiven." -- and I pressed her to my heart.

[Shortly before leaving Strassburg, Wickenhauer was invited to a banquet given by and for some well-to-do Protestants. Having only rags to wear, he was reluctant to go. On the day of the dinner, however, a box arrived by messenger from Herr Fabian of Eschenau.]

Christina opened it, and what was our surprise! In it was THE FUR CLOAK! My wife cast herself upon my neck, weeping like a child, and murmured, "O my good George, you have forgiven me, have you not? And God has forgiven me too since He has returned the cloak I wept so much

about."

[Still the cloak was not worn to the banquet, for the gray lining of the cloak was found to be stained with the blood of the martyr Schuch. Arriving at the banquet in his poor clothes, George was asked by the host about the cloak (he had been told that it was to have been returned to the Wickenhauer's in time to be worn to the banquet). Thus, the fact of the martyr's stains came out and the whole account of the cloak's history, except of course that none knew or were told of Christina's behavior.

Starting early the next day, Wickenhauer set out on his initial visit to Rumolsweiler to arrange for a place for his family. As the day was again very cold, he wore the cloak (the stains had been removed by his wife the previous evening). When he returned to Strassburg for his family a short time later, he found that the story of the cloak had provoked some of the people of that city to provide him and his family with gifts of provisions and funds to enable him to move to the village where he was to preach the gospel in the days to come with a measure of ease and comfort. And so the account of the Wickenhauer's and their fur coat comes to an abrupt end.

No doubt, this is an entertaining tale. Also, there are lessons that may be gathered up. Most will, perhaps, see easily how Christina's imperfect submission to her husband was a source of sorrow. Will we all also see how Christina's submission to her husband was a foundation for their happiness in the end? And was not the love that he had for her the right complement to her submission? Attentive readers will have noticed how these things were demonstrated in this account of submission, love and a fur coat. Then, too, failure in a husband's love ( Eph. 5) will also prove a source of sorrow.]

Dennis Ryan, 1991

## TRUTHFULNESS AND DOCTRINE

... and truth of doctrine has more to say to truthfulness than we are aware, for we are sanctified by the truth (*Collected Writings* 18:244).

---

---

## *The Holiness of Christian Fellowship*

---

---

### *Chapter 2*

---

## *Moral Evil and Assembly Discipline*

I have written to you in the epistle not to mix with . . . . But now I have written to you, if any one called brother be fornicator, or avaricious, or idolater, or abusive, or a drunkard, or rapacious, not to mix with [him]: with such a one not even to eat. . . . Remove the wicked person from amongst yourselves (1 Cor. 5:9,11,13).

### *The Necessity for Discipline*

It is a deeply grievous thing -- at least it ought to be -- when a case arises to which these scriptures apply. It ought to cause much heart searching and self-judgment by those compelled to act on them. It must also be remembered that the One in our midst (Matt. 18:20) looks for the love proved by obedience, from us. "If ye love me, keep my commandments;" "If a man love me, he will keep my words" (John 14:15,23).

In putting away a wicked person from amongst the people of God, three important considerations need to be remembered. Not only are the considerations themselves important, but the *order* of their importance is also to be observed carefully.

1. THE LORD'S HONOR MUST BE MAINTAINED! His presence, as noted in Matt. 18:20, and tolerated leaven cannot go on together since His holy

presence is incompatible with tolerated evil. If a company of Christians is indifferent <sup>1</sup> to leaven, they actually meet together on the ground of indifference to evil. Christ cannot endorse this by His presence (according to Matt. 18:20) because such indifferent Christians are gathered on the principle of indifference to evil. By this they deny "His Name" which is "Holy and True" (no matter what they profess).

**2. THE PURITY OF THE ASSEMBLY MUST BE MAINTAINED!** "Purge out the old leaven that ye may be a new lump . . ." (1 Cor. 5:7). The leaven must be purged out in order for the assembly to continue in the practical character of the "new lump." Had the saints at Corinth refused the apostle's word, thereby showing that they tolerated leaven, they would have been a leavened lump and regarded as no longer gathered together unto the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**3. THE GOOD OF THE WICKED PERSON IS IN VIEW!** Being put away from among the saints has in view the wicked person's unreserved breakdown and restoration of soul as evidenced by genuine repentance (2 Cor. 2:6,7; Psalm 51). Then in due time the "loosing" of the discipline by the assembly clears up the whole matter (Matt. 18:18-20), unless governmental consequences remain.

## ***What is the Extent of the Discipline?***

The command of God is: "Remove the wicked person from amongst yourselves." Much of our difficulty concerning our practical conduct in such cases arises from not bowing in heart to the sentence of God. Some lightly would think to be more gracious than God! In this connection W. Kelly remarked,

"Put away from" -- not the table of the Lord merely, this he does not say, but -- "put away from among yourselves." This is much stronger than expelling from the table. Of course, it implies exclusion from the Lord's table, but from their table too -- "with such a one, no, not to eat." An ordinary meal, or any such act expressive even in natural things, of fellowship with the person thus dishonoring

---

1. *Indifference* is displayed by refusal to ACT regardless of how great the claim of being "concerned" about the matter. Indeed, indifference is regarded by God as complicity in the thing. Indifference is neutrality, a thing never accepted by God. In cases of evil, "he that is not with me is against me" (Matt. 12:30).

# RAVEN-TAYLORITE LITURGY

or,

## "THE SERVICE OF GOD"

The supplement in *Thy Precepts*, vol. 7, # 1, the article, "Does the Breaking of Bread Lead into the Sanctuary," exposes F. E. Raven's perversion of the remembrance of the Lord in His death, as well as this tendency elsewhere. We will now notice the Taylorite development of FER's perversion into what is called "the service of God," its order being controlled by *the* leader's "ministry." Since "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" it is not surprising that it continued in its assimilating work (as well as its defiling effect).

There is an indication of this in G. R. Cowell's "ministry." Mr. Cowell was a leader amongst the Raven-Taylorites until "withdrawn from" in 1960. In 1959 he said:

The Lord has helped us as to the order of service, so that things have completely changed in the last fifty years.<sup>1</sup>

By "the service" he means their remembrance meeting. How did things completely change? We have this description from sociologist Bryan R. Wilson:

The very heart of Brethrenism [he is referring to Taylorism] is in the 9 o'clock Sunday morning meeting for the breaking of bread. It is in this particular situation that the saints have the sense of themselves as being heavenly, and even the minute and detailed liturgical practices of this meeting are most heavily invested with symbolic meaning. The Brethren sit in concentric semi-circles, the front for the males, the second row for females, around a table laid with loaf, cup and wine(uncoverd) and a basket for collection. The exact position for all these items is prescribed. The meeting opens with a hymn to the Lord. One of the men rises soon after to give thanks for the bread . . . After the bread is broken and passed round, the same brother gives thanks for the cup.

The meeting proceeds by hymns and by 'spontaneous' thanksgiving in roughly alternate order. Every male in fellowship should take part, though boys under twelve years old or so, are not 'in trouble' if they fail to do so. Worship occurs in distinct stages:

- (a) The deity of the Lord is worshipped;
- (b) There is association with Him as Brethren of the Ascended Man;
- (c) Union with Him as Bride to Bridegroom, sharing His headship of the Universe;

---

1. *Unity as Presented in Paul's Epistles: Notes of Meetings in London 14-16 July 1959*, p. 57.

(d) The Holy Spirit is worshipped as God, and thanked for His service to the Saints;

(e) The Father is praised and worshipped by sons;

(f) God, the Three Persons, is worshipped by sons as in the Assembly.

These stages are passed through in the course of between one and one-half hours. The tendency is for the occasion to become shortened to an hour.<sup>2</sup>

This description is from the 1960s. We have been told things have changed, but not for the better.

So perhaps our readers are full of shock and amazement when considering these developments. You may ask, "how could this be?" In the same reading of Mr. Cowell's we find the following comment:

R. M. Y. . . . Has not the service been *regulated*<sup>3</sup> in ministry for many years now . . . ?<sup>4</sup>

This statement met with approval by Mr. Cowell. Note the term "regulated in ministry." Ministry is viewed as a regulative force. Let us observe this notion in James Taylor, Sr.'s "ministry":

A. E. M. Well, I would like you to say something more as to the application to the present day. Is not the path of wisdom for those of us who have a small measure of gift to follow the distinctive lead which the Spirit may give at any time?

J. T. And certain one have a certain place in that, indicating what the ministry should be at the moment. And I would go further than that, and I think it is very important. Since the time of the "revival", extending back to 150 years ago, there have been distinct lines of truth, and certain men have been used in those lines. Mr. Darby himself at first, and then there was Mr. Wigram, and there was Mr. Bellett;<sup>5</sup> Later on there was Mr. Stoney. Mr. Stoney had a great place in the ministry, giving character to it. And then there were later men, such as Mr. Raven, and then later still others who were taking a lead in the ministry. Then the next thing would be whether there are any at the present time who do that, and can be followed with any confidence.

A. E. M. Well, I think that is most important for us. I believe the brethren are understanding the position better than formerly, that there is a distinctive

---

2. *Patterns of Sectarianism*, pp. 338, 339.

3. [My emphasis.]

4. *Op. Cit.*, p. 56.

5. [This is a falsification of history. These three brethren's ministry was complementary. Moreover, with regard to this pretended sequence, observe that J. G. Bellett died in 1864, JND in 1882, and G. V. Wigram on Jan. 1, 1879. These three stood together in truth. Mr. Stoney began subjectivizing objective truth and particularly so after the death of JND. F. E. Raven launched himself into subjectivization and mysticism and taught various fundamentally evil doctrines concerning the Person of Christ.]



character of ministry under a distinctive lead which should be followed.

J. T. Very good.<sup>6</sup>

The principle advocated here is that God raises up a man for the moment who can be followed with confidence. This man's "ministry" is a regulative force. It ought not to be questioned. But this concept of authoritative ministry virtually takes a place of inspired prophecy and sets aside the moral authority of the Word of God over the soul. At the time of this reading (1951) James Taylor, Sr. was the "distinctive lead." So when he said "very good," in approval of what A. E. M. said, he was speaking of himself.

Thus we conclude that the Raven-Taylorite liturgy was formed by the regulative "ministry" of James Taylor, Sr., founded on F. E. Raven's perversion. Does it really surprise us then that when men blindly follow men that a system of liturgy, so contrary to the Word of God, so contrary to the leading of the Spirit, could develop? No, it does not.

F. Marotta

***F. E. Raven's Evil Doctrines  
on  
the Person of Christ  
and Their Present Bearing***

R. A. Huebner

150 pages, perfect bound, \$6.75 postage paid,  
available from the publisher.

---

6. *Ministry of J. Taylor (Sr.)*, vol 100, Supplement, pp. 60, 61.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

It is planned, if the Lord will, to put an advertisement into the next issue of *Thy Precepts* for an easy to use computer program named *3NT*, developed by Steven Ryan. This program provides the ability to view three New Testament translations on a monitor at the same time. They may be viewed in three vertical columns or in three horizontal 'windows.' The three N. T. translations are: the KJV, J. N. Darby, and Wm. Kelly. Wm. Kelly's is complete from John through Revelation. There are some translations by him for the first three gospels and they are included.

*3NT* will work on IBM compatible computers with any microprocessor from an 8088 to the 80486; i. e., for XT and AT type computers. Diskettes will be made available in 5 1/2" and 3 1/2" sizes.

If the Lord will, there will be further development of *3NT*, to add some features.

\* \* \* \* \*

A longer term project is underway for some time now which would provide the JND and WK New Testament translations in a printed form, in parallel columns. Next to WK's column would be a narrow third column with note numbers referring to the text. These Notes will be provided at the end. Dennis Ryan has compiled these notes of WK's from all known sources, over a course of many years. These notes concern text critical information as well as notes on difficulties with translating. This would be a source of sound information for students of Scripture.

the Lord, is forbidden.<sup>2</sup>

To "remove from among yourselves" A WICKED PERSON means among other things that we not outwardly sympathize with him. Socializing with such a one is one form of extending sympathy. It gives expression to sympathy by treating the one put away as if nothing had happened, whereas God's way is that he should be made to feel his guilt by the uniform attitude of the saints not socializing with him. Eating with such a one on any occasion, whether it be in a private home (his house, our house, or another person's house) at a wedding, at a funeral, at gatherings of the saints when refreshments are served, etc. is expressly forbidden in 1 Cor. 5:11 -- "With such a one not even to eat."

There is no scriptural warrant -- no excuse -- no reason -- for one who professes to be a child of God to merely visit with, to socialize with, A WICKED PERSON called a brother. It is really disobedience and unfaithfulness to our Lord and His word. It is personally defiling and brings that defilement among God's people. It is unloving and unkind to the guilty one under discipline to think that "graciousness" and "kindness" in the form of such socializing is necessary to win back the one put away. Such actions only defeat God's perfect way of finally restoring in accordance with His mind. If we really believed God about this, bowing to it in our hearts as the very judgment of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 5:4), our eye would be single, and "if thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light" (Matt. 6:22). All so enlightened will have the same judgment and can thus unitedly beseech the Lord to work repentance in the heart of the wicked person so that he might be restored. There is no basis to ask this of the Lord if we disobey Him by socializing and/or eating with the wicked person, thereby identifying ourselves with him.

### ***Are Family Ties an Exception to 1 Cor. 5:11?***

Let us consider the case of the near of kin, such as the husband, wife, or dependent children. J. N. Darby wrote about the case of the wife whose husband had been put away as follows:

Here it says, "no, not to eat." I would not dine with such a one; I would give him to eat if he were hungry, but not eat with him. Take a wife whose husband is put out. It may be awkward, but her action is not keeping company with him

---

2. *Lectures Introductory to . . . the Epistles of Paul the Apostle*, Broom: Paternoster Row, 1869, p. 61.

as a case of will; it is one of subjection to authority.<sup>3</sup>

It is clear that J. N. Darby recognized that the wife had a scriptural duty to perform as being in subjection; and, as being obedient to Christ because she loves Him, she does His will. The subjection of a wife to her husband is based on divinely instituted authority, and does not cease<sup>4</sup> if the husband is "put away" from amongst the saints by discipline of the assembly. By doing the will of Christ in fulfilling those duties of a wife, she does not willfully "keep company" with her husband who has been put away, though she eats at the same table as he does.

J. N. Darby has also written about the case of a dependent son who was under assembly discipline. The entire letter is reproduced here for its valuable comments on the subject:

My dear Brother, -- I hold it of all importance to maintain intact the discipline of God's house, as to not eating with those under discipline. I got a dreadful scolding from one for acting on it. Nor do I in the least blame --. . . It is very well that the son should feel that the father did not feel lightly his son's getting put out. I should not eat with him, and if he ate at the same table, I should not enter into conversation with him, and if -- did, I should not like to be at the table. If the lad's spirit be at all subdued, and there was fear of alienating him by harshness, I might have him eat at the table, telling him that I could not have free intercourse with him. But as he was necessarily in the house I should not refuse letting him eat at the same table. But I could not keep company with him till he was humbled. This would not hinder anxious love as regards him, and the assurance of it; but familiarity and company at table, as if nothing happened, I should not accept. I give my son his dinner if needed, I shew him my heart yearns over him, but I could not be familiar and at ease with him. I should not eat with him, if even I ate at the same time. Something would depend on the age of the son, and how far he was under the father's authority. If young and under it, I must let him eat, and treat him as I would treat one under rebuke. If grown up and independent, I should be less disposed to do so.<sup>5</sup>

## ***Do Any O. T. Scriptures Establish a Basis for Relatives to Act Otherwise?***

Some, in an attempt to justify a course contrary to 1 Cor. 5:11, enlist the support of certain Old Testament scriptures. The tendency of doing so is to make God

3. *Collected Writings* 26:330 (Morrish ed.).

4. This subject is more fully treated in *The Deportment of a Christian Woman*, obtainable from the publisher, and now in a second edition, enlarged.

5. [Date uncertain.] *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:63 (Stow Hill ed.).

the author of their course (by claiming that they are following God's Word in doing so), while in fact it is fleshly activity and lack of courage to be faithful. An Old Testament scripture enlisted in support of such a course is Lev. 21:1-4. In this portion of scripture the priest was allowed to defile himself by the dead in the case of a near relation, and therefore it is claimed by analogy that one may visit with, eat with, and socialize with, a relative put away as a wicked person. There are two considerations concerning this to which I would call attention:

1. As to typical teaching, I believe that it is leprosy in the Old Testament (as typifying the worst energy of active evil) that corresponds to leaven. Leprosy in the head or beard suggests doctrinal evil held (Rev. 2:14) or taught (Gal. 5:9) respectively, while leprosy in the body suggests moral evil (1 Cor. 5).<sup>6</sup>
2. "Defilement by the dead" suggests moral contact with that in man which has no life toward God. The energy of active evil is not the prominent thought as is the case with leaven (or leprosy) working, but of moral contact with moral death.

These two considerations should be sufficient to show that the use of Lev. 21:1-4 to justify the practice of relatives eating with, or socializing with, one who has been "put away" as a wicked person, is a misapplication of Scripture. (See also Lev. 13:46).

In addition to the above considerations we must ask, "Does the New Testament allow the Christian to have deliberate moral contact with that which is spiritually dead?" No, our Lord said, "Suffer the dead to bury their own dead" (Luke 9:60). Of course, a Christian may bury his relatives, or anyone else, but let nothing interfere with the call or rights of God. The law allowed divorce for many reasons; our Lord allowed but one. The law *allowed* many things; it made nothing perfect. Bow to the word of the Lord in 1 Cor. 5 and do not force Lev. 21 against the clear instruction of the Lord. This is the obedient, and therefore the holy, loving, happy path.

There is still another matter which those who would force Lev. 21 against 1 Cor. 5 have failed to consider, or have ignored. Num. 19:11-14 provides instruction concerning a person that touched a dead body. It specifies *cleansing*! Read the entire chapter. Num. 9 shows the effect of such defilement concerning the eating of the passover. Ezek. 44:25,26 (a millennial passage) shows that the priest had to be cleansed from the defilement contracted. And

---

6. This subject is treated in greater detail in *Leprosy and God's Presence Among His People*, to be had from the publisher.

Num. 5:2 states that whoever is defiled by a dead person was put out of the camp. The cleansing could, of course, soon take place following the instructions of Num. 19, a case altogether different from leprosy. If one pleads Lev. 21:1-4 to set aside 1 Cor. 5:11, at least the meaning of Num. 5:2-9 and Num. 19, and Ezek. 44:25 should be consistently practiced therewith! The obvious truth is that it is a false use of Lev. 21:1-4, and such a misuse of the Word of God tends to make Him the author of unholiness!

### ***It is a Serious Matter***

To treat with indifference the judgment of the Lord Jesus Christ <sup>7</sup> concerning a wicked person, a judgment expressed in the assembly action of putting away a wicked person, is a very serious thing. J. N. Darby regarded this so serious a matter that he wrote:

Thus, supposing evident sin, as at Corinth, and one supported him in it and refused the clear common consent of all, so that it was a rejection of the assembly's authority when the case and the word were clear, they might hold him guilty with the offender.<sup>8</sup>

The Lord knows, I have no desire to offend anyone; but we are dealing with a foundation matter of holiness in God's house, and in our walk, and so we must be most plain. We are assured, however, that none who really trembles at God's Word will be offended, but rather will rejoice with the truth, as love does (1 Cor. 13:6), glad of help or correction afforded on a subject of profound importance. Is not the *alleged* "love" shown to a wicked person in reality making provision for the flesh and sparing self? If we would judge ourselves, and keep Christ before us, and keep before us the fact that it is *His* sentence that declares the person to be a wicked person (1 Cor. 5:13), -- leavened (1 Cor. 5:7) -- and that LEAVEN LEAVENS THE LUMP -- we would see and judge the seriousness of this false 'love and grace.'

The instruction in 1 Cor. 5:11, "with such a one not even to eat," is so plain; and it is such a fundamental instruction; and it is so consonant with the first principles of holiness; and is so elementary, that if anyone who professes to love Christ is resentful or angered (rather than rejoicing with the truth -- 1 Cor. 13:6) by what has been said, it shows a seriously defective condition of soul.

---

7. If the assembly did a wicked thing, other considerations would apply to such an act, for Christ does not sanction wickedness.

8. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:46.

In connection with our attitude towards manifestation of unholiness, the people's response to Ezra's identifying himself with the sin of God's people, and his confession, is very instructive. We find four responses:

1. Those that trembled at God's Word (Ezra 9:4).
2. The people who bowed to the Word (Ezra 10:1).
3. Those who opposed (Ezra 10:15).
4. Those who helped the opposers (Ezra 10:15 in J. N. D. transl.)

Let us cry out to God for grace to be found in the first and second groups whenever the Word of God instructs us concerning our path here.

## ***Discipline is not Meant for Getting Rid of Someone***

In one case our flesh would spare the leavenous outbreak, perhaps especially in the case of relatives.

And behold, Miriam was leprous as snow. . . . And Moses cried to Jehovah, saying, O God, heal her, I beseech thee! And Jehovah said to Moses, But had her father anyways spat in her face, should she not be shamed seven days? She shall be shut outside the camp seven days, and afterwards she shall be received in again (Num. 12:13-14).

On the other hand we may think so much of scandal that we merely want to get rid of the offender. This is another form of the flesh that is thinking of itself and its reputation. If the thing were seen rightly as offence against Christ, and as leaven in the assembly, THEN we would think also of the ultimate good of the soul. JND remarked:

On the other hand the discipline of putting away is always done with the view of restoring the person who has been subjected to it, and never to get rid of him. So it is in God's ways with us. God has always in view the good of the soul, its restoration in fullness of joy and communion, and He never draws back His hand so long as this result remains unattained. Discipline, as God would have it, carried out in His fear, has the same thing in view, otherwise it is not of God.<sup>9</sup>

But we have not learnt the first rudiments of Christianity if our sympathies do not go out after the outcast and afflicted, to pray and desire that their way might be through darkness to light, through sorrow to joy, through misery to God.<sup>10</sup>

Someone said:

---

9. *Letters of J. N. Darby*, vol. 2, p. 199.

10. *The Bible Treasury*, vol. 19, p. 45. See also p. 31.

Paul -- the right one -- is the first to enter into the sorrow, with a breaking heart, that he might draw the Corinthians where he was, and that they might, in their turn, draw the guilty into the same. Paul had chiefly to do with and to say to them; they, I submit, to the culprit himself, their grief being, more than anything else, calculated to touch his conscience, and win his heart back to the Lord. It can never be only an act of putting away, although there must be that, as due to the holiness of the Lord; but in that act is involved a question of eating the sin-offering in the holy place, a confessing the sin in self-judgment, and ever keeping in view the ultimate restoration of the soul. Sever 2 Cor. 2 and 7 from 1 Cor. 5 and a deal of mischief will arise.<sup>11</sup>

The lovely prayers and confessions in Ezra 10 and Daniel 9 are most wholesome for our consideration.

J. B. Stoney commented:

If they do not feel that they are guilty of the evil for which they excommunicate, they are merely a criminal jury, giving a verdict against the guilty person, and there is really no clearing at all.<sup>12</sup>

It is no wonder that where we do not judge ourselves, God has a controversy with us. In such a case, an assembly may not even be conscious that many of its problems may be the result of such a cause.

The spirit in which discipline should be carried out is examined at length in *The Bible Treasury*, vol. 19, pp. 28-30, 43, 45, and the paper "On Discipline" in the *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby*, vol. 1. See also the notes in Part 2 on Judges 17-21.

Elsewhere we shall consider discipline which does not require putting away. I mention this here to call attention to the fact that in some cases of putting away, 2 Thess. 3:11-16 should have been applied before LEAVEN manifested itself. And possibly before it was necessary to apply 2 Thess. 3:11-16, pastoral and priestly care might have checked the development. Alas, how we fail in these things and thus consequently are humbled before our Lord! Perhaps if the love and grace of Christ had been more in power in our souls, we would have engaged in feet-washing (John 14) that might have arrested the development of evil. Personal considerations (how subtle they are!) keep us from doing these things.

---

11. *The Bible Treasury* 12:287.

12. *The Bible Treasury* 11:47.



## ***What are the Results of Refusing to Purge Leaven?***

The first thing we should note is that those who have practically the character of a leavened lump are not gathered together to Christ's name. *They meet together on the basis of indifference to Christ's honor.* But you may say that they even profess to be gathered together according to Matt. 18:20. But not all profession is real. Such a profession only makes the guilt more heinous! It is an outrage against every CHRISTIAN thought to say that Christ and tolerated leaven can go on together. The presence of Christ sanctions the ground, or basis, of gathering. A leavened lump cannot be the assembly of God as gathered together by the *Holy Spirit* unto the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy and the True. It is rather a haven of evil! -- an association founded upon indifference to Christ. Another said,

But it may be said, Yes, but the apostle did not excommunicate the Corinthians because of that evil. I say, No; if the Corinthians were awakened by his summons to clear themselves from the evil, surely that was the thing desired (2 Cor. 13:7); his authority was given for edification, not for destruction. It is the *Lord's* way, -- "If we would judge *ourselves*, we should not be judged of the Lord;" consequently, it should be His servant's way, for "we are fellow-workers with Him" (1 Cor. 3:9). "I gave her *space* to repent" (Rev. 2:21). We do find (whether resulting from that First Epistle, as is most probable, I have not time strictly to examine now), that the Corinthians were brought to a blessed state of repentance, and dealing with evil (2 Cor. 2:6). They received Titus with fear, trembling, and obedience (7:7,8). In all things they approved themselves clear in this matter. "For to this end," says he, "did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things" (2:9). He was in readiness to revenge all disobedience, when their obedience was fulfilled (10:6). So in Galatians 5:10. "He had confidence in them in the Lord, that they would be none otherwise minded." But if they had refused to deliver up those who had done the evil" (Judges 20:13), would the apostle then have recognized them as a Church of God, as in the *fellowship* of the truth? Assuredly not.<sup>13</sup>

Do you pretend that breaking bread with a known fornicator does not involve you with any complicity in the evil, the leaven? (Some persons may wonder that anyone should think such a thing, much less say, or write it. See for but one example one from an open communion, W. Hoste, "Rejudging the Question", p. 21, ". . . We totally reject the collateral theory of defilement.") Then neither does your "breaking bread" with the saints involve your recognizing that you are one with them. You have really lost, if you ever had, the sense of the divinely constituted bond between the members of Christ's

---

13. *The Present Testimony* 2:88,89.

body. You "break bread" in a strictly individual way without any sense of what 1 Cor. 10:16-22 teaches, though you may talk about the one body and profess to understand what that is.

It is quite possible to have fellowship with evil. Another has remarked:

Nor is the fact that such a one is a *Christian*, any reason for allowing leaven in him? It is not the *persons* that are to be looked at, but the *fellowship* of the Paschal Lamb: that determines all. Is it worthy of *that*? Compare 1 Cor. 10:18 (Greek), "Are not they that eat the sacrifices *in communion with the altar*" ? It is just because he is outwardly in fellowship there, that we are called upon to judge him (1 Cor. 5:13).<sup>14</sup>

The principle expressly, **EXPLICITLY**, enunciated in 1 Cor. 10:18 is this: a man is in communion with an altar because he eats what is sacrificed on it. The eating identifies him with the altar and what it represents. Leaven (tolerated evil) and the table of the Lord do not go together. It is not the table of the Lord where leaven is tolerated. It is a false table, a table, *i.e.*, a fellowship, of man's devising and not the expression of the corporate Christian fellowship. That assemblage of Christians does not give expression in practice to the Christian fellowship where known leaven is tolerated. They are a leavened lump and have a leavened table, *i.e.*, a leavened fellowship. All who eat, *i.e.* "break bread", at such a table, *i.e.*, in such a fellowship, are identified with that table (1 Cor. 10:18). They show identification with the leaven. Association with evil defiles according to 1 Cor. 5 and 10. Persons coming from a leavened fellowship must not be received unless they break from it. Another has said:

It is not a question merely of wrong persons coming in unawares; for the fatal thing is not that evil should enter, but that it is known and allowed. What evil things did not effect an entrance into the assembly even in apostolic days? But God owns the unity of the Spirit so long as there is the truehearted purpose, in dependence on the Lord and according to His word, to keep or purge out evil. It is not the entrance or amount of or even character of evil that destroys the assembly, but the continued acceptance of it under the Lord's name, even when it is known.<sup>15</sup>

Note the following remarks:

Carelessness there may be -- it should be corrected; but he who, as a principle, owns the existence of sin leaven in the assembly, and denies it is defiled denies its unity and the Lord's presence; that is, it is not an assembly met in His name at all.<sup>16</sup>

---

14. *The Present Testimony* 2:87.

15. *The Bible Treasury* 14:157.

16. *The Present Testimony* 13:172.

Here is another helpful extract:

A. You do not surely mean that *any* practical evil which may exist in a body of Christians, destroys their title as a part of the Church of God?

B. Only where it is known and sanctioned, for then *the fundamental principles and essential nature* of the Church of God are denied. God cannot and will not sanction sin where He dwells. When the evil committed by Achan was pointed out, and thus became known to the children of Israel, then it was that God said He would not be among them *any more* except they destroyed the accursed thing from among them. Previous to this, its existence produced weakness and defeat, "they could not stand before their enemies," for God could not put forth His strength among them on account of it. Has God changed His own eternal nature and become tolerant of evil? Or is it the society of Christians that has become all-important, so that we are to sacrifice His presence to theirs? Impossible that He can abide what denies His very being and glory, and is the cause in those who know Him not, of everlasting exclusion from His presence. He declares He "will be sanctified in those that come nigh Him." "He is greatly to be feared in the assembly of His saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are *round about Him*" (Ps. 89:7). The moment sin in principle is admitted, or the truth denied, or false <sup>17</sup> doctrine acquiesced in, it is no longer the "house of God, the pillar and ground of the truth." Even leaving their first love, the Lord calls on the Church at Ephesus to repent of, or He would take away the candlestick, which would be to disown them as His light or witness -- the sole end of the Church's existence as a body on earth -- and it would then cease to have any claim as such. Let me read you a passage from a tract of great value, entitled, "Separation from Evil, God's Principle of Unity:" -- "If the body refuse to answer to the very nature and character of God, and the incompatibility of that nature with evil, so that it becomes really a false witness for God, then the first and immutable principle recurs -- the evil must be separated from. Further, the unity which is maintained after such separation, becomes a testimony to the compatibility of the Holy Ghost and evil, that is, it is in its nature apostasy; it maintains the name and authority of God in His Church and associates it with evil." <sup>18</sup>

Ed.

## EXTRACTS

A middle course in faith is infidelity in the heart (*Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 4:180).

No! A man does not always receive the truth even when he is reduced to confess that he is in error (*Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 4:184).

---

17. It would be better to say "evil doctrine" here.

18. *Is There Not a Cause?* pp. 19,20.

---

## ELEMENTS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

---

### CHAPTER 4.4: THE LAW OR FAITH

#### GAL. 3:10-12: THE LAW CURSES AND CANNOT JUSTIFY

For as many as are on the principle of works of law are under curse. for it is written, Cursed is every one who does not continue in all things which [are] written in the book of the law to do them; but that by law no one is justified with God [is] evident, because The just shall live on the principle of faith; but the law is not on the principle of faith; but, He that shall have done these things shall live by them (Gal. 3:10-12).

You cannot add law to Abraham's faith; no, not even "the moral law." "The just shall live on the principle of faith; but the law is not on the principle of faith." Is Paul saying that "the *ceremonial* law" is not on the principle of faith - so as to leave the Christian under "the *moral* law," i.e., the ten<sup>1</sup> commandments? Why not bow to what the text says, namely, "the law" and "all things which [are] written in the book of the law."

Moreover, it is not said that one who breaks the law is cursed; but he who is on that principle before God. J. N. Darby wrote:

And remark more than this: not only is the blessing by faith, not by law, not on this principle, and the accomplishment by oneself or another of the law, but as many as are on this principle -- as many as stand on the ground of their obligation to keep the law -- are under the curse. "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." The works of the law are not bad works; they are right works, loving God and our neighbor, and not breaking the commandments which forbid sin. But they that are of the works of the law (that is, that are placed or place themselves under the obligation of the law, of doing these works) are under the curse. He does not say he who has broken the law, he who sins, he who has done evil, but he who is of the works of the law, who goes upon the principle of being under its obligation, and bound to accomplish it, is under the curse.

Nor is there a hint of any one's keeping it for us, so that we should not be under the curse when we are under the law. All that are of the works of the law ARE under the curse; because, according to its declaration, everyone is so that

---

1. And then pervert the Saturday sabbath into a Sunday sabbath as advocates of putting Christians under "the moral law" do, so as to have 10 -- for only 9 would spoil their system.

has not kept it. And no man under it has kept it, for he is in flesh; and this is not subject to it nor can be. He must get off this ground to escape its curse. But this can be only by death. The Jew was under it, and all else would have been condemned as lawless had they not come under it then; but, for every one who believed of those who were, Christ took the curse on the cross. It is not pretended that He kept it for them, so that the curse was not needed for their breaking it, because another had kept it for them, for then He had not needed to bear its curse. No: the curse of its head remained there and was borne on the cross; and thus they were redeemed from it, and then, the whole system of God under law being closed and the middle wall of partition broken down, the blessing of Abraham (which was of faith) could flow forth on the Gentiles who had faith. It could not till then. While God maintained the obligation of the law as a dispensed system among men, the Gentile must have submitted to its obligation, while God maintained it. But the dispensation of law had now closed by the death of Christ, and the blessing of the promise by faith could flow forth to them who believed.<sup>2</sup>

The reader should read J. N. Darby's answer to his adversaries in *Collected Writings* 10:61-65 regarding the notion that Christ "kept the law for us, so that it should be imputed to us, I defy all my adversaries to shew from Scripture" (p. 60).

Another wrote:

The quotation here is from Deut. 27 and is very striking. There Moses instructs the people that they were to set up and plaster great stones when they had gone over Jordan, and write upon them all the words of the law, setting them up in mount Ebal. There we get that six tribes, Simeon, etc., were to stand upon mount Gerizim to bless the people, and six tribes upon mount Ebal to curse. The Levites were then to say with a loud voice unto all the men of Israel, "Cursed," etc. But where are the blessings? Not to be found in the chapter at all. Many have sought to get over the difficulty by blending chapter 28 with 27; but this is confusion. The following chapter proceeds on a different ground altogether, and speaks merely of governmental blessings and curses of a temporal character. The two portions are entirely distinct. Why then are the blessings from mount Gerizim not named? Because God well knew they would never be wanted. Persons under the law are necessarily under the curse, so complete is the ruin and depravity of flesh. . . .

Moreover, law and faith cannot be blended, being entirely different principles. "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for the just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but the man that doeth them shall live in them" (vers. 11,12). Here we are carried back to Habakkuk (chap. 2:4). The prophet in his sorrow over the ruin of His people, and the (to him) mysterious dealings of Jehovah in not hastening deliverance, was told that "the just shall live by his faith." The word is used three times in the New Testament, and each time for a different purpose. If Rom. 1 be consulted, it will be seen that the emphasis is on "just"; in Heb. 10 on the word "live"; in Gal. 3 on "faith." The law does not speak thus, but in a precisely opposite way -- the

---

2. *Collected Writings* 21:300,301.

man that doeth shall live. How vain then to try and mix the two principles! and yet this is done from one end of Christendom to the other. It is the exception to find souls that are not under law in one way or another. So little has the Epistle to the Galatians been heeded! <sup>3</sup>

So, not only did the law pronounce the curse, on the one hand, but on the other hand the prophet brings before them that the just shall live by faith.

## **GAL. 3:13,14: RECEIVING BLESSING THROUGH FAITH**

Christ has redeemed us out of the curse of the law, having become a curse for us, (for it is written, Cursed [is] every one hanged upon a tree,) that the blessing of Abraham might come to the nations in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith (Gal. 3:14,15).

**Redeemed Us.** Of whom is Paul speaking when he wrote "redeemed us"?

Notice carefully the "us." This is important in many of his Epistles. He and his Jewish fellow-believers had been under law, but had been brought out from hence by the Lord Jesus. The Galatians had never had to do with it, being Gentiles. Consequently they were not included in the "us." The same thing may be observed in chap. 4. "Even as we, when we were children, were in bondage." This means Jewish believers. As to Gentiles, "when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods." This would not be true of Jews. Thus are both distinguished as to their former state. Look also at Col. 2:9, "blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." He does not include the Colossians in this statement, but shows the former condition of Jewish saints, and the deliverance through the work of Christ. <sup>4</sup>

The covenant of the law was made with Israel, not with Gentiles (cf. Rom. 2:12-16). Those under the law were under the curse of the law but in grace Christ bore the curse of the law that those under that curse might be redeemed out of the curse. The result is that the way is open, consequently, for the blessing of Abraham to come on all who believe.

We noted in the quotation above that "us" means the Jewish believers. The distinction between Jewish and Gentile believers is often made in this epistle. It is a plain fact. "Christ has redeemed us out of the curse of the law" was a necessary step in the ways of God in connection with grace going out to the nations. God is a God of order. But there are other aspects to the work of Christ such as in 2 Cor. 5:21, which speaks of sin as a root principle within us from which spring the acts, sins, of which 1 Peter 2:24 speaks. Christ was made

---

3. *The Bible Treasury, New Series* 2:216,217.

4. *The Bible Treasury, New Series* 2:217

sin for Gentile as well as Jew.

**The Blessing of Abraham.** The blessing of Abraham is "the blessing of sovereign grace through faith." It is through our Lord Jesus Christ that the blessing of sovereign grace, through faith, came to the nations and this is the basis upon which we receive the promise of the Spirit. Both for Abraham and ourselves, blessing is apart from law. What Paul is demonstrating is the law -- not in O. T. times, nor for the Galatians.

**The Nations.** A result of the work of Christ is that "the blessing of Abraham might come to the nations in Christ Jesus." In the millennium all the nations will be blessed in Abraham. Meanwhile, during the time of the heavenly parenthesis, there are those who trust in Christ ahead of the millennial time. We are pre-trusting in Him, i.e., ahead of that time:

... that we should be to the praise of his glory who have pre-trusted in the Christ (Eph. 1:12).

Those who have pre-trusted in Christ have "received the promise of the Spirit through faith."

**The Promise of the Spirit.** Christ has died in order that we might receive the promise of the Spirit. Is it not obvious that the promise of the Spirit is received only after Christ's death? Is that not what the text plainly indicates? But the spiritual alchemy that turns the church into the spiritual Israel can also circumvent the thrust of this.

The book, *Dispensationalism Today, Yesterday, and Tomorrow*, Memphis: Footstool Publications, by Curtis I. Crenshaw and Grover E. Gunn III, 1989, is touted by the *Banner of Truth* magazine as: "... the best discussion of the theology of dispensationalism so far written." Listen to the character of this book and the proof that the O. T. saints were in the church:

In fact there is an argument that the dispensationalists use to prove that the church was not formed until the future. It was originally formulated by S. Lewis Johnson and runs like this: the church is formed by the baptism of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13); this Spirit baptism began at Pentecost (Acts 1:8; 2:1-4; 11:15-17), therefore the church began at pentecost. The argument, as it stands, seems sound to me. The assumptions, though, are that the baptism was not retroactive and that Old Testament saints were saved apart from union with Christ, for Spirit baptism places one in union with Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). Mr. Gunn has adequately analyzed the union with Christ issue (A masterful job!). The other assumption is a false one. The baptism of the Spirit, like the death of Jesus, was retroactive. How do I know? Two reasons: Theologically, from the analogy of faith, we know there is no salvation apart from union with Christ. Therefore, all those who would be saved must have been in union with Him so that His death was effectual for them. And if they were in union with Him, by definition they were in the church (p. 42).

Let pass the erroneous statement that S. Lewis Johnson "originally formulated" that and come to their thesis:

1. "Spirit baptism places one in union with Christ (1 Cor. 12:13)";
2. "there is no salvation apart from union with Christ";
3. "Therefore, all those who would be saved must have been in union with Him so that His death was effectual for them";
4. "And if they were in union with Him, by definition they were in the church".

And that is a wonderful example of how theology works. #2 is bald-faced assertion, and nothing more.

I do not know what he means by the idea that the "Spirit baptism" was "retroactive." The meaning of his line of reasoning, however, leads to the result that all O. T. saints actually experienced "Spirit baptism":

1. O. T. saints, he says, "were in union with Him."
2. "Spirit baptism places one in union with Christ."

It follows from their assertions that O. T. saints received "Spirit baptism."

Well, these are among the methods how anti-dispensationalists place O. T. saints in the church. In truth, however, it exposes much ignorance of what Christianity really is, lowers its character, and Judaizes the church.

In Gal. 3, one of Paul's points is that the Spirit was not imparted, as Indweller of the saints, in connection with the law. It could not be for those under the law. We receive the promise of the Spirit through faith (Gal. 3:14). "But faith having come, we are no longer under a tutor" (Gal. 3:25). Faith, *as the ground of blessing, publicly declared*, came as a result of the finished work of Christ. The promise of the Spirit could not be received until after that work was completed. Now, this is clear from Gal. 3 alone. But Scripture makes this grand fact abundantly clear.

The Lord Jesus had promised His own that when He was gone He would send the Holy Spirit (John 16:7). Not only would He send the Spirit but He would ask the Father to give His own the Spirit (John 14:16) and the Father would send the Spirit in Christ's name (John 14:26). (Cf. Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,5). Thus the Spirit was promised both by Himself and the Father. The fulfillment of the promise of the Spirit awaited the glorification of Christ at the Father's right hand, as triumphant Man. It is as glorified Man that He became the Head of the body.

But this he said concerning the Spirit, which they that believed on him were about to receive; for [the] Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been



glorified (John 7:39).

. . . being assembled with [them], commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to await the promise of the Father, which [said he] ye have heard of me. For John indeed baptised with water, but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Spirit after now not many days (Acts 1:4,5).

Having therefore been exalted by the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this which ye behold and hear (Acts 2:33).

The glorified Man received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit and then that glorified Man poured out the Spirit upon those who had believed (John 7:39) on Him. Thus the Spirit came from both of Them. Christ Himself is thus the Baptizer (Matt. 3:11) and the Holy Spirit thus poured out by Him united the saints in one body (1 Cor. 12:13) and joined them to the Man in the glory (1 Cor. 6:17). This is how and when "the assembly, which is His body" (Eph. 1:22,23) was formed.

Of course, before Pentecost, those who had believed on Him did not have the Spirit, as Scripture states (John 7:39). It is by the indwelling of the Spirit that we are in union with Christ, the Head. Those who had believed on Him were born of God but that is not the same as union with Christ, theology notwithstanding.

Moreover, the formation of the body is as a once-for-all act. The body is not begun again over and over. We today are joined to a body formed at Pentecost and existent ever since. The baptism in the power of the Spirit into one body (1 Cor. 12:13) took place once. We today are joined to a body already formed and existent. How?

. . . that we should be to [the] praise of his glory who have pre-trusted in the Christ: in whom ye also [have trusted], having heard the word of the truth, the glad tidings of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, ye have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise (Eph. 1:12,13).

We are sealed with that same "Holy Spirit of promise." We receive the Spirit as seal and are thus identified with what was wrought at Pentecost. The baptism in the power of the Spirit into one body was a corporate action, never to be repeated, as the body is never formed over again. Individual "Spirit baptisms" is a false notion. No one is baptized *into* the Spirit. Christ was the baptizer of His own and He baptized them into one body by the mighty power of the Spirit sent down to join those who had believed on Him into one body and to Himself as Head in heaven. There could be no body until the Man was in glory. All of this is entirely apart from law.

Ed.

## "LOVE IS NOT SUFFICIENT . . ."

Love is not sufficient to enable us to walk so as to glorify God. A true heart and right desires are not enough. A true heart is of vital importance; but an instructed mind as to what the will of God is, is needed to regulate and guide the warmest heart: the want of this often leaves the Lord's people open to much sorrow, when really seeking to serve Him.

Mary's heart was true and warm enough -- but she passed through much sorrow, because she "knew not the Scripture, that he must rise again from the dead" (John 10:9).

We are not only called into fellowship with the Father and the Son, in the joy and peace of the Holy Ghost, but also to "be filled with the knowledge of His will, in *all wisdom* and *spiritual understanding*; that we might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing" (Col. 1:9); and that "love may abound more and more in *knowledge*, and in *all judgment*" (Phil. 1:9).

Knowledge without charity, we are taught, "puffeth up"; but knowledge and love must be combined and work together, or we shall fail in rendering real service unto God.

It may be said, that God often leads His children far beyond their spiritual intelligence. This is true (and happy for us that He does so) but are we to make this an excuse for our foolishness and ignorance, because His grace and goodness abound? It is not what we have any right to expect or reckon upon; for this reason, that He has given a full revelation of His mind and will, and His Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth, that we might *know* His will.

The word is the instrument by which He accomplishes His gracious purposes in us.

*The Present Testimony 1:1,2.*

## A HOLY CHURCH?

Dr. Pusey tells us, in defending himself against Romanizers, that it is by faith the church is recognized as holy. What a confession! And note --holiness is one mark by which we are to recognize the true church (a doctrine I do not except to); but when we come to see it as a mark, then we must believe it to be holy by means of faith. What a satire! What are we to believe to be holy? the unholy church. And how is it then a proof? I am to know the true church by its holiness, and when I find it an awfully wicked body, believe it is holy because it is the church! I must say this is a mockery in holy things; a trifling with the claims of God (*Collected Writings* 18:198, note).

## "WHAT CHRISTMAS MEANS TO ME"

Such is the title to a short article that appeared in a recent periodical. The writer is H. A. Ironside who is with the Lord now for some years. The article was full of human sentimentality instead of the facts. Indeed, he went so far as to suggest that Christmas was not really of pagan origin. F. C. J., who, I suppose, was well acquainted with H. A. Ironside, wrote an open letter in which he said:

When in 1877 I first came into fellowship with those called Brethren, they were practically a unit in abstaining from all complicity with the observance of Christmas and similar abominations . . . tracts were written against it . . . But now with all those witnesses to divine truth gone, other generations have come upon the scene, and there are now few who regard with the same abhorrence these heathen, aye Satanic, for who but Satan, the one great foe of our Lord, would dare to commit this climax of heinous wickedness of attaching His Name to a lie? But beloved brethren, have you not been "keeping Christmas"? Have you not been wishing each other to be "merry," even while thus bringing Christ into full accord with Belial? That seems to me unspeakably terrible, am I wrong my brethren?

Have you read:

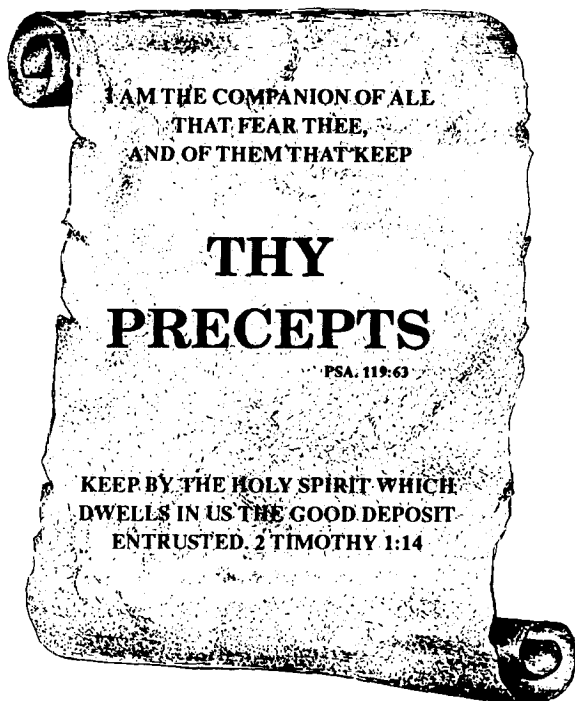
### ***Christmas: or Linking Christ with Belial***

obtainable from Present Truth Publishers, \$1.00 + \$1.75 post. & handling.

Ed.

**PRESENT TRUTH PUBLISHERS**  
**411 Route 79 • Morganville, NJ 07751**

[www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)



MAY / JUNE 1992

Vol. 7, # 3

---

## CONTENTS

---

Could Christ Sin? .....	65
The Holiness of Christian Fellowship .....	71
How is Discipline to be Carried Out? .....	71
Extracts .....	76, 87, 89, 95
Elements of Dispensational Truth .....	77
Chapter 4.5: Gal. 3:15-18:	
The Law Cannot Set Aside or Supplement Promise. ....	77
The Leaven of Annihilationism and of Errancy of Scripture ...	82
Judaising .....	86
Extract from "The Rapture of the Saints" .....	88
A Man of God .....	90
Stewardship: "Will a Man Rob God?" .....	91
God's Call Out of the Earth .....	93
Scripture Notes: John 20:22-23; Acts 2:1-4 .....	96



---



---

## THE TRUTH OF CHRIST'S PERSON

---



---

### "THE SON CAN DO NOTHING OF HIMSELF SAVE WHATEVER HE SEES THE FATHER DOING"

(COULD CHRIST SIN?)

#### INTRODUCTION

... who did no sin (1 Peter 2:22); ... who knew not sin (2 Cor. 5:21).

... in Him sin is not (1 John 3:5).

... but also said that God was his own Father, making himself equal with God. Jesus therefore answered and said to them, Verily, verily, I say to you, The Son can do nothing of himself save whatever he sees the Father doing: for whatever things *he* does, these things also the Son does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all things which he himself does . . . (John 5:18-20).

I do nothing of myself, but as the Father has taught me I speak these things (John 8:28).

All the words and works and ways of the Lord Jesus are accomplished at the direction of the Father, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Not a thing that He said or did is an exception to this:

But I have the witness [that is] greater than [that] of John; for the works which the Father has given me that I should complete them, the works themselves which I do, bear witness concerning me that the Father has sent me. And the Father who has sent me himself has borne witness concerning me (John 5:36,37; cf. 12:49,50).

Am I so long a time with you, and thou hast not known me, Philip? He that has seen me has seen the Father; and how sayest thou, Shew us the Father? Believeest thou not that I [am] in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words which I speak to you I do not speak from myself; but the Father who abides in me, he does the works. Believe *me* that I [am] in the Father and the Father in me; but if not, believe me for the works' sake themselves (John 14:9-11).

Thus, one of the things that the Father gave Him to do was to be tempted in the

wilderness, *and prevail*. He was about to enter on His public service and the Spirit came upon Him and abode upon Him; and the open heavens declared Him as God's "beloved Son" (Matt. 3:16,17). This beloved One did everything as directed by the Father, in the power of the Spirit. Hence we read:

Then Jesus was carried up into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted of the devil (Matt. 4:1).

It was the Father's thought. He brought upon the scene great David's greater Son. For 40 centuries the defiant champion of the Philistines cried: "Give me a man . . .," and here He is. He reached into his bag and drew forth one of five smooth stones -- smooth in the running water (the Spirit; cf. John 7:38,39) -- Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy; inspired of God, wrought by the Spirit. Count them. He reached into the bag and brought forth Deuteronomy, the book of obedience, responded to the champion of the Philistines and pierced through his forehead. His forehead!

Satan was the covering cherub, attendant upon the throne of God:

Thou, who sealest up the measure of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty . . . Thou wast the anointed covering cherub, and I had set thee [so] . . . Thou wast perfect in thy ways, from the day that thou wast created, till unrighteousness was found in thee (Ezek. 28:12-15).

Here was one at the pinnacle of *intelligence*, but the quotation from the book of obedience laid that intelligence, and all its craft, low. Then (at the cross) He ran upon him and with his sword, the power of death, annulled him who had the power of death:

Since therefore the children partake of blood and flesh, he also, in like manner, took part in the same, that through death he might annul him who has the might of death, that is, the devil; and might set free all those who through fear of death through the whole of their life were subject to bondage (Heb. 2:14,15).

This is my Beloved, my impeccable Beloved. Is He your impeccable Beloved too? Do not desire a Christ to be like yourself in your sinful tendencies.

## THE UNION OF THE HUMAN AND THE DIVINE IN ONE PERSON

The fact that in Christ there is the union of the human and divine in Him has a most important bearing on the issue of whether or not Christ could have sinned. Persons wish to escape from the consequences of their doctrine that Christ could have sinned. When pressed concerning what would happen, they hide behind the saying, 'He did not sin, so why speculate?' I suggest that they cannot face the consequences of their doctrine. As to calling it "speculation," that is a vain attempt to divert attention from the fact that Scripture has spoken



(not speculated) on what happens to a sinner:

For the wages of sin [is] death (Rom. 6:23).

... it is the portion of men once to die, and after this judgment (Heb. 9:27).

... fear rather him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (Matt. 10:28).

It is quite clear why such hide behind the word "speculation." But are the above three texts speculation? Hear this Wesleyan:

There is no profit in debating the question as to whether He could have failed and what the results would have been. The truth is that in the consciousness of Christ, *He was really tempted*.<sup>1</sup>

Hear these Open Brethren (others would repudiate it):

#### Question 342 INCAPABLE OF SIN?

*Occasionally we hear in prayer or ministry that our Lord was not only sinless, but 'incapable of sin.' As this expression might appear to reflect on his true humanity (his deity is not in question) would you say that it is a term best not used?*

Fifty years ago, C. F. Hogg began an answer to a question such as this in the following way:

'Testimony is borne that the Lord did no sin, that in Him was no sin. These are statements of fact. The question whether He could have sinned is purely hypothetical, and is barely removed, if at all, from mere curiosity'. Although I agree with his opinion . . . .<sup>2</sup>

In 1 Cor. 15:12-19 we see the apostle Paul drawing out the implications, effects and results of a teaching. Certainly cries of "speculation," "hypothetical" and "mere curiosity" would not have deterred him from doing so. Such cries are but ploys to avoid facing the implications, effects and results of the teaching that Christ could have sinned. As an illustration, suppose a professed Christian refused to believe that the devil was a personal being. You then ask him how Christ was tempted, in order to see the implications, effects and results of his notion. Then you point out that if there is no personal devil, then the temptations arose in the mind of Christ. It follows from this that He was a sinner. Thus, the denial of a personal devil means that Christ was a sinner, and you are yet in your sins. The denial is fundamental evil.

The truth is that the question of whether or not the Lord could have sinned has everything to do with the matter of the union of the two natures in Christ, with the *state* of Christ's humanity, and with what temptation is. These issues

1. Ralph Earle, *The Wesleyan Bible Commentary* 4:27.

2. Peter Cousins, *The Harverburg Seminary Open Questions* p. 18m

are inextricably interwoven. Persons who believe Christ could have sinned seem to have great difficulty bringing themselves to say that the above texts cited would then apply to Christ. They seem to have great difficulty because they know that God the Son could not go to hell. Thus they are driven to have to say (which they don't want to say) that His humanity would have to go to hell. And just here, in such a statement, the evil is exposed for what it is.

The allegation that Christ could have sinned means that while the eternal Son could not go to hell, His humanity could go to hell. The evil is that this divides His person into two persons. But Christ is not two persons. There is one person but two natures.

The fact is that when the Son took manhood, He did not unite with, say, Israel ben Jehuda, another person. The humanity of the Lord Jesus did not have an independent existence apart from the incarnation. It cannot have an existence apart from the union of the human and divine unless the humanity is another person. If He had sinned, the humanity could not be split off and go to hell unless His humanity was another person. In that case Christ would have been two people. So, the doctrine that Christ could have sinned, coupled with what Scripture says happens to sinners, leads directly to the notion that Christ was two persons and that these persons could be separated so that one of these two persons would go to hell. This is not speculation. It is the evil meaning implicit in the doctrine that Christ could have sinned.

The fact is, then, that the teaching that Christ could have sinned is evil and absurd. Its direct tendency is to divide His Person. It is a false Christ, not the Christ Who died for sinners. The union of the human and the divine in one Person means that Christ could not sin. An objector wrote:

God cannot sin, neither can He be tempted with evil. **NEITHER CAN GOD DIE** (1 Tim. 6:16) -- yet Jesus Christ, *fully God*, did die. Why? Because He was also *man*. His humanity was subject to death. Death was a possibility to Him. And so also the possibility as a man to choose to sin.

Christ was not "subject to death." He was not mortal. He had no necessity in Him to die. Death was an act of obedience (besides being voluntary) to the Father's command (John 10:18). He was capable of dying but no necessity to die was part of His humanity. Death is the wages of sin (Rom. 6:23); though, of course, He was capable of being a sinner's substitute.

The fact that Christ could die, in obedience to the Father's will, is not analogous in the least. The fact that Christ died does not defile or divide the Person. The result of the doctrine that Christ could have sinned is to defile and divide the Person. Now, when Christ died, the Person remained undefiled. While His body lay in the tomb, the soul and spirit of His manhood remained

united to the deity. Thus, the death did not dissolve the incarnation because the soul and spirit remained united to the deity. Nor did His death defile or divide the Person. Sinning would do both. The writer has manufactured a totally false analogy that heinously libels Christ, the Holy One of God.

Concerning the misuse of God not being "tempted with evil," I reply with a quotation from W. Kelly, who, commenting on James 1:13-15, wrote:

The Epistle then turns from our holy trials to our unholy ones, and shows their source to be, not in God, but in sinful man. "Let none when tempted say, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted by evils, and himself tempteth none. But each is tempted when by his own lust drawn away and enticed; then lust having conceived bringeth forth sin; and sin when completed giveth birth to death" (vers. 13-15).

The distinctness is evident when we read on the one hand that God tempted or tried Abraham (Gen. 22:1, and Heb. 11:17), and on the other that Israel tempted God (Psa. 78:18,41,56, compared with Exod. 17:7). Never does God tempt any one to evil, but He may and does so bring out their faith and fidelity; but it is alas! too sadly common for His people to tempt Him by doubts of His mercy and active care. Hence the word in Deut. 6:16, "Ye shall not tempt Jehovah your God," the Lord's answer to the devil suggesting that He should cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple on the strength of Psa. 91:11. But the Lord utterly refuses to test God, as if His protection were doubtful in the path of obedience. God is not to be tempted by evils, any more than He so tempts.

The evil temptation comes from within man, though Satan may act on him, for he ever evilly tempts to evil. So it was man at the beginning was tempted when his nature was not evil; but instead of repelling it as the Lord did, he allowed and received it; so that henceforth the race was contaminated like its fallen head. The precise contrast is seen in Christ, to Whom the prince of the world came at the end, and had nothing in Him then any more than when first tempted. But it is wholly different with us, conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity as we are naturally, though now by grace born anew. Therefore have we an altogether distinct class and character of temptation, which the Lord had not, as incompatible with His person as with His work. In Him was no lusting against the Spirit, no contrariety in Him, because He was, as no one else could be, the Holy One of God.<sup>3</sup>

Whenever I hear someone assert that Christ could have sinned, I feel as incensed over the affront to my Savior as the writer of the following (W. Kelly):

How could any one born of God entertain for one moment the thought of the Lord Jesus failing? Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that He is the Son of God? All these speculations of men which lower the glory of Jesus simply show that they do not really believe that Jesus is God while a man. They do not know what they mean by such a confession as that He is the Son of God to be honored as the Father. They do not truly believe that He is

God Himself as truly as the Father or the Holy Ghost; for His becoming a man detracted nothing from it. He took manhood into union with His deity; but the incarnation in no way lowered the deity, while it raised humanity in His person into union with God. Each nature, however, preserved its own properties. There was no confusion. Each was exactly what it should be -- human nature, and divine nature, each in all its own characteristic excellence, combined, not confounded, in His person. And such was Jesus, Who came to glorify His God and Father, and deliver us from our sins to His glory by redemption through His blood.<sup>4</sup>

The doctrine of the peccability of Christ *implicitly* divides His person. This is fundamental evil.

Christ was not two persons; but, every human act of the Lord Jesus had a divine spring in it, consonant with the fact of the union of the two natures in Him. In an evangelical magazine we see:

But if Jesus Christ did indeed divest himself of the *exercise* of the divine nature and lived among men in real dependence upon his Father and found his strength and wisdom in a pure humanity empowered by the Holy Spirit, then we can understand that his prayers were real prayers, his decisions were real decisions, his actions and reactions were genuinely human, and he is indeed our example in all things.

How can Christians who believe in two natures in one Person so speak? This is semi-kenoticism. Notice that this writer did not say that in the emptying (Phil. 2:5-8), the Son divested Himself of omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence; He just divested Himself of the *exercise* of the divine nature. Is it a fact that in the gospels we do not find the exercise of the divine nature in Christ? How can a professed lover of Christ pen such words? He has divided the Person. He is presenting a Christ with a human nature acting apart from the divine nature. By virtue of the union of two natures in *one* Person, the humanity cannot act apart from, independently of, the deity. *Every human act of the Lord Jesus had a divine spring in it.*

Of course, on the other hand, what He is as God transcends what He is as man. It is not true that the Son united with a man. The Son took up humanity:

... The Son's taking humanity into union with His Deity.<sup>5</sup>

... took manhood into divine Glory.<sup>6</sup>

(To be continued, if the Lord will.)

Ed.

4. *The Bible Treasury, New Series* 1:79.

5. W. Kelly, *The Bible Treasury* 18:75.

6. J. N. Darby, *Notes and Comments* 2:399, Carter ed. (p. 283 Stow Hill ed.).  
www.presenttruthpublishers.com

---

---

## *The Holiness of Christian Fellowship*

---

---

### *Chapter 2*

---

## *Moral Evil and Assembly Discipline*

### *How is Discipline to be Carried Out?*

#### *It is the Assembly that Puts Away*

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, (ye and my spirit being gathered together, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ) (1 Cor. 5:4).

In the case of putting away a person, a meeting of overseers, or of brothers, few or many, gifted or not, is NOT COMPETENT to do it. The Spirit has laid down the order to the Corinthians expressly: "... in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (ye and my spirit being gathered together, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ) . . ." (1 Cor. 5:4). Other procedure is unscriptural. In accordance with this Scripture, J.N.D. wrote, regarding acts of discipline and reception, etc.,

The spiritual men, who addict themselves to this work and are occupied with its details, before the case is brought before the assembly so that the consciences of all may be exercised in the case, may doubtless thoroughly explore the details with much profit and godly care. But if it comes to deciding anything apart from the assembly of the saints, even in the most ordinary things, their action would

cease to be the assembly's action and it ought to be disowned.<sup>1</sup>

Again,

(From the French.)

\*\*\* In meetings called for the examination of cases of discipline, I should insist formally that sisters should be excluded. If they were present, I even would not go myself. It is entirely contrary to the word of God, and as unseemly as it is unscriptural. How examine certain cases with young sisters present? It would be a shame for them to desire it. Besides, the word is plain. . . . For my own part, I do not think it even much to be desired that all the brothers should be present. If there are a few wise brothers, who occupy themselves habitually with the good of souls, true elders given by God, and that it be not official, but according to 1 Corinthians 16:15,16, that is better than *all* the brothers; it is thus more evidently not the assembly, which is not equally clear when all the brothers are there: and the danger of an assembly of brothers is, lest they should believe themselves to be the assembly to decide.

But a whole assembly cannot make investigation of facts and the character of facts: two or three must do this. When all the information has been obtained, and the matter weighed before God, they communicate the result at which they have arrived, and it is the assembly that decides: if no one says anything, the matter is decided. If a brother of weight were to make an objection, or if he had anything to communicate, or knew of any circumstance likely to throw light on the subject, they might wait, or re-investigate the matter. If it is but a trifling opposition, the assembly may easily deal with it. I have seen such a case. If it is some one upholding the evil which has been judged, he becomes himself the object of judgement (2 Cor. 10:6).

Two things render it necessary that the action would be that of the *assembly*: first, because it is there that Christ is; secondly, because it is the assembly which purges itself (1 Cor. 5; 2 Cor. 7:11).<sup>2</sup>

Another has said,

Q. Have a few brothers, who stay at the weekly meeting for consultation, usually after the prayer meeting, power to act for the "assembly," say in the matter of putting away, without distinctly calling a meeting of the "assembly"? And if a brother feels he cannot concur in a judgment thus arrived at, is he wrong in saying so at the Lord's table, in the event of such judgment being read there?

J. K.

A. I am aware that, when assemblies are small, and more rarely in larger ones, there is apt to be a want of due care in apprising the saints of a meeting for considering a case of discipline which seems to call for putting away. This ought not to be.

But if a "few brothers" remain at the close of a meeting of the assembly (either on Lord's day or during the week), and if they be of one mind, the case might be so far clear (especially as many could be there if they pleased) as to warrant their bringing it at once before the assembly at the breaking of bread.

1. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:199. See also 3:46, and 2:197.

2. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:415. See also p. 416.

[www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

Only, if they knew of an honest difference of judgment (for one does not take account of party men, relatives, &c.) among brethren, they ought to seek the Lord about it together; for discussion at such a time is most undesirable, as haste is always. They ought therefore in such a case to call a meeting, *or at least announce at a general meeting* (not at a reading or other meeting in a private house) that the saints are requested to stay for consideration of a case of discipline.

If there has been irregularity in this respect, a brother might rightly say so, taking care of the facts first, and of his own spirit in the way it is named to the saints, so as to avoid the hateful appearance of factious opposition, or of other uncomely conduct. But undoubtedly a formal judgment ought to be arrived at by the assembly, not by a few for it; and therefore it is still open even at the last moment to call for arrest of action if the case be not quite clear. The few may come to a sound judgment and be used of God to awaken all to the gravity of the case and the will of the Lord about it: but due means should be used that the assembly should hear *before* judgment is pronounced, so as to satisfy all, and give occasion for correcting those mistakes which are very possible in such a world as this. In a perfectly plain case to hear the facts is enough; and judgment might follow at once. Technical delay of judgment under such circumstances is unworthy of the church, though it may suit the world and the lawyers.<sup>3</sup>

G. V. Wigram remarked,

I have know cases in which one or two have unconsciously assumed to rule, by telling one that had sinned that "he had *better not come to the table*". Where is the authority and power of the assembly? A private opinion of one or two individuals is not the action of the one holy assembly, led by God and the written Word. It falsifies everything, and is the assumption of power. It is evil, too, for it generally hides the sin which God's word would have either cured or set aside. And what means suspended communion? It is either a refusal to have faith and act upon it according to the Word, or else to bear the shame of incompetency, through sin, to find out God's mind about the matter in question, and ourselves and the assembly.<sup>4</sup>

## **BINDING AND LOOSING**

Whatsoever ye shall bind on the earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on the earth shall be loosed in Heaven (Matt. 18:18).

It is true that there was apostolic power to bind and loose. We do not have this today. What abides is that the assembly binds or looses now as it did in the apostolic period, since Christ's presence and authority is there with His gathered saints.

An assemblage of brothers, or of overseers, does not have Christ in the midst (Matt. 18:18-20; 1 Cor. 4:5) and such groups cannot bind and loose. And as

---

3. *The Bible Treasury* 9:223,224. See also 19:43, and 12:184.

4. *Memorials of the Ministry of G. V. Wigram* 2:64.

[www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

it is the assembly that binds, it is the assembly that looses. Brothers cannot loose. It is an act of the assembly as such. The disciplined one is in a certain position and abides in it until the action of the assembly changes that position by the assembly act of loosing. It is THEN, and not before, that this position is changed. It is not the prerogative of individuals to decide at some point that they may change their way of acting towards one under discipline. The status of one under discipline is changed when the assembly looses, as directed in 2 Cor. 2. Let us be clear then. The same Scripture that shows that the assembly binds shows that the assembly looses (Matt. 18:18). 1 Cor. 5 shows binding by the assembly and 2 Cor. 2 shows us that the assembly looses. There is no Scripture warrant to delegate assembly authority. Only the assembly can so act with the Lord present.<sup>5</sup>

J. N. Darby remarked:

But the sanction of Heaven on loosing and binding on earth is declared, in another place, to belong to another depository of power where it is not personal, which does not refer to the kingdom but to the Church, and which (if granted of God's grace) may be found at any time while Christianity subsists, namely, wherever two or three are gathered together in Christ's name, because Christ is there in the midst of them. This is no personal authority of any or all the members, but of an assembly because Christ is in their midst. The language of the passage is so plain that there would be no difficulty to any one, if habits of thought had not clothed it with a meaning which its language leaves no room for. If a brother should offend, the offended one was to seek to gain him; if this failed, he was to tell it to the assembly; if he refused to hear the assembly, he was to be counted as a heathen man. The christian assembly took the place of the synagogue, and, where the assembly had acted, the judgment (till repentance) was final; the offender was held to be outside as a heathen. First, one was to go, then he with others, then the assembly to be informed of it. It was the discipline of the gathered saints in any given place; and, to make the matter precise, we are told that, wherever two or three are gathered in His name, Christ is in the midst of them. Nothing really can be simpler. There is not a word of clergy, nor ministers (however useful these latter may be by their gifts for service), nothing even of elders, though these had their local functions also. The point is that, where two or three are gathered in Christ's name, Christ is. This then is the abiding seat of the exercise of that authority in its due sphere whose acts are sanctioned in heaven. The same authority given personally to Simon Bar-jonas was that authority conferred on the two or three gathered together in Christ's name, and exists wherever two or three are so gathered. This is a very important point. The perpetuity of the loosing and binding power is in two or three gathered together. It was personal in the chosen apostle and continued in none. It is a mistake to think that forgiveness alone is binding or loosing. What the

---

5. *The Bible Treasury* 19:3, 14, 43, 44; 9:71; 12:127; 18:365, 378; *New Series* 1:265; *The Present Testimony* 1:400; *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 14, article "Matt.16"; *Notes and Comments*, article "Forgiveness".



apostle wrote was to be received as the commandments of the Lord.<sup>6</sup>

My dear Brother, -- A judgment of an assembly, even if I thought it a mistake, I should in the first instance accept and act upon. My experience has been that the path of God is to respect the judgment of an assembly of God, while free to remonstrate and beg them to renew their judgment. My writing to you now is entirely individual and in your own interest. I do not judge the case one way or another. But when I first heard of your act of excommunication, I told --, being informed of the circumstances, that it would be impossible to recognize it as an act of the assembly. What I have heard since has amply confirmed this. What you say of females is all true as to teaching, but they form part of the assembly as much as brothers. The weight of an assembly's act is not from the individual voice or judgment of its members, but from the Lord's being in the midst of them when gathered together. What I would press upon you is that there has never been any act of the assembly at all. Grave and godly brethren may give counsel in and help the assembly to a right judgment, but the assembly must act as such if a person is excluded. This has never been the case. I do not judge of the advisableness or rightness of the act. With that I do not meddle. I only say as your brother, for your own sake, that I do not see how it is possible for any sober person to recognize your act as the act of the assembly at all.

May the gracious Lord give you peace in every way. Personally unacquainted with you, I can only have sincerely brotherly affection towards you all, and desire, for the Lord's glory and your comfort, that you may all be blessed and guided aright.<sup>7</sup>

Dear Miss \_\_\_\_, Mr. \_\_\_\_'s objection is the common one of loose brethren, but the question is elsewhere than where he has put it. What does the scripture say about it? Whether men carry out successfully is a grave question for their consciences, but has nothing to do with what is right. I asked myself this question years and years ago, How if all this should fail? Well, I said it would prove I was a bad workman as far as I was concerned in it: but there it is in scripture just where it was, and that is what is to govern us. 1 Corinthians 12 clearly states this unity of the body on earth. Besides the whole teaching of scripture. But the answer as to circumstances is clear. The ground is not the wisdom of a set of individuals, but the promise that where they are gathered to His name He will be in the midst of them. And I have always found that respecting the action of an assembly *prima facie* is the way of wisdom and what God owns. And Mr. \_\_\_\_ forgets that the fact, that we are all one body, gives the title to communicate and remonstrate if called for, and in an extreme case, where evil is *deliberately* allowed, to disown the meeting altogether. The loose brethren have given up the truth of the unity of the body on earth and have gone back into the camp, and are mostly Independents with out a regular minister, or merged in a general looseness that has spread everywhere. But this has not changed the word of God.<sup>8</sup>

**Delivering to Satan.** The act of delivering to Satan (1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Tim. 1:20)

---

6. *Collected Writings* 14:164,165.

7. *Letters of J.N. Darby* 2:132.

8. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:399.

is an act of apostolic power. It was effected in the act at Corinth because the apostle's personal power was coupled with the act of the assembly in putting away from among themselves the wicked person. No one now has that apostolic power, though there is authority to purge out leaven.

**Be Specific.** I once read of a case where a person that had been excommunicated from a group of Christians because of moral evil received a letter from them stating that he had been put away on the basis of 1 Cor. 5:10,11. He obtained a legal judgment against them on the ground of defamation of character because he was not guilty of *all* of the things mentioned in 1 Cor. 5:10,11. Be specific and remember that we live in a litigious climate.

Ed.

## EXTRACTS

"Some have protested against the use made of other private letters in the exposure of evil. Those who thus protest seem to forget that we are to *look diligently*, lest there be any profane person (see Hebrews 12:15,16), even at the risk of breaches of etiquette. It was not courteous of the men of Israel to enter Achan's tent, and to disinter things that were not theirs; but the choice lay between the commandments of a holy God and the claims of privacy. One of the unhappiest moral fruits of the "new teaching" is the fact that many seem more anxious to preserve a false sense of propriety, than that leaven should be brought to light and purged out, as in 1 Cor 5; or, if need be, separated from, as in 2 Tim 2."

\* \* \* \* \*

If we mean to go on with the world, I think it would be far more honest if we said, "No, God has *not* such a thought [to have a people on this earth walking in the footsteps of His own Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, in the heavens] in His mind at all. His purpose is to have a people here to enjoy the world as much as they can; that is his purpose." I think it is a great deal better that we should be honest with our hearts and consciences. There is nothing God hates and detests so much as unreality. The thing that He is looking for in His people is *reality*, and not to be trifling with conscience about these things.

---



---

## ELEMENTS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

---



---

### CHAPTER 4.5: GAL. 3:15-18: THE LAW CANNOT SET ASIDE OR SUPPLEMENT PROMISE.

Brethren, (I speak according to man,) even man's confirmed covenant no one sets aside, or adds other dispositions to. But to Abraham were the promises addressed, and to his seed: he does not say, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed; which is Christ. Now I say this, A covenant confirmed beforehand by God, the law, which took place four hundred and thirty years after, does not annul, so as to make the promise of no effect. For if the inheritance [be] on the principle of law, [it is] no longer on the principle of promise; but God gave it in grace to Abraham by promise (Gal. 3:15-18).

#### NO CONDITIONS CAN BE ADDED TO A CONFIRMED COVENANT

Brethren, (I speak according to man,) even man's confirmed covenant no one sets aside, or adds other dispositions to (Gal. 3:15).

In human affairs the adding of dispositions to an already confirmed covenant is not tolerated. One of the parties cannot later add conditions to a covenant previously agreed upon. The grand point is that the Law cannot in any way modify or add to the promises made to Abraham.

God had made promises to Abraham in Gen. 12. It was *confirmed* in Gen. 22; *i.e.*, regarding those promises concerning *the nations*.

#### PROMISES TO ABRAHAM AND HIS SEED (V. 16).

But to Abraham were the promises addressed, and to his seed: he does not say, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one. And to thy seed; which is Christ (Gal. 3:16).

Promises were addressed to Abraham in Gen. 12:2,3,7; 13:13-17; 15:18-21; 17:1-14; 22:17,18. Some of these promises apply to the natural seed of Abraham, *i.e.*, Israel. But the promise to Israel is not what forms the subject matters of Gal. 3. J. N. Darby wrote:

These "promises" were made after sin came in, but before the giving of the law. Sin came in before ever "promise" was heard of. When Adam had failed in the garden, before anything was said to Adam of the foulest sin in his mind, after he had said, "the woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat" (he had not only committed sin in disobeying God's command, but he had dared to reproach God); before anything was said of that, as soon as the evil was traced up to its source, God, in pronouncing sentence on the serpent as the author of it, gave "promise." But He did not give "promise" to Adam in sin -- to man in that condition (now the law was given to man in that condition), but in the last Adam. Before there was the slightest dealing on the ground of responsibility, "promise" was made in Christ, as the Second Man, the "Seed of the woman." Not a word of it was spoken to Adam personally, yet it was that on which his soul might rest, on which faith could lay hold.

Well, before the Second Man came, before He was revealed, the law was given to shew the effect and consequence of man's being under responsibility. "The law was added [came in by the bye] because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman [the seed came], made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

But there was another step, then, which was this: the promises made to Abraham and his seed (chap. 3:17) were confirmed of God in Christ. When Isaac had been offered up (in figure) and raised (in figure), God spake and said, "By myself have I sworn, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee... and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," Gen. 22. Now Isaac was not the true "seed," Christ, the true "seed," was typified by Isaac, in whose offering the promise was confirmed. "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ," v. 16. The promises are settled on Isaac, after (in figure) he had died and risen again from the dead; and that is what the grace of God has done for us in Christ. Christ came here and lived, accomplishing in the face of Satan, all that the spiritual man could offer to God in his life. But "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Though Christ Himself, as man, might have had the promises, yet He could not have taken up anything with us except through death and resurrection. He could not have had connection with man in the old Adam. Well, He dies, and (having accomplished the work of redemption, done everything, set aside the consequences of responsibility for man, as risen from the dead, in the power of a new and endless life -- "the seed" to whom the promises were made) He takes up these promises.<sup>1</sup>

W. Kelly remarked,

I must decidedly adhere to the conviction that "Christ" is here to be understood personally, and not mystically. I am aware that the difficulty of catching the point of the Apostle's argument has driven not a few (from Beza down to our friends) into the mystical hypothesis; but, in my judgment, without good reason. For the doctrine of the Church's unity, the head and members being together

---

1. "Man's Responsibility and God's Promises: Gal.3," *Collected Writings* 12:234,235.

viewed as constituting one body, naturally accounts for the exceptional use of "Christ" in this way in 1 Cor. 12:12, whereas no such thing applies here. Again, there is the grave objection that, according to the hypothesis itself, Abraham is one of his seed (that is, Christ mystical, the body of true believers), whereas the text itself distinguishes him from his seed. I am satisfied accordingly that there is no reason for taking Christ here mystically, as in 1 Cor. 12 and that it even involves self-contradiction.

What is wanted then is more light, taking the word "Christ" in its usual historical application. The Apostle, I think, alludes to Gen. 12:3, "in thee (Abram) shall all families of the earth be blessed," and to Gen. 22:18, "in thy seed (Isaac) shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." The order of the Greek ought to have been better observed in English: "Now to Abraham were the promises made, and to his seed," would be more exact. He is speaking not of the mere Jewish promises, but of those which insured Gentile blessing. Now these were made to Abram in Gen. 12 and to his seed in Gen. 22 after he had been typically offered up, and received from the dead in a figure. The Jewish blessing, as to the land, power over enemies, &c. is to an expressly numerous seed, as the stars and the sand; whereas not a word of a multiplied seed appears where all the nations of the earth are to be blessed. On this absence of reference to others than Isaac, the one seed of Abraham and type of the Lord sacrificed and risen, does the Apostle argue here, as in Heb. 7, upon the absence of genealogy or succession in Melchizedek. In other words, the Spirit, in recording the promises of Gentile blessing, carefully restricted them to Abraham and to his seed alone, though as expressly he connected the Jewish blessing with seed as many as the stars and the sand; in the former, his eye was really on Christ, the true and sole seed of promise, save as afterwards by grace associating others, and even Gentiles, with Him.<sup>2</sup>

There is something to add yet regarding the promises and Isaac figuratively dying and rising. W. Kelly remarked:

The apostle draws attention to the fact, that this early oracle does not connect the numerous seed when God spoke of blessing the Gentiles, but the one seed, Isaac, as the type of Christ, and of Christ after He had been under death and had passed into resurrection. The importance of this is immense; because, while Christ was upon the earth, He was under law Himself. Risen from the dead, what had He to do with law? The law does not touch a man when he is dead. The apostle argues that the Christian belongs to Christ in resurrection. When any one is baptized into Christ, this is what He confesses: -- I belong to Christ dead and risen, taken out of my old place of Jew or Gentile. The Jews had to do with a Messiah who was to reign over them on the earth; the Gentiles in that day shall be the tail and not the head, and kings shall be the nursing fathers of Zion, and queens the nursing mothers, bowing down to the earth and licking up the dust of Israel's feet; but we, Christians, begin with Christ's death and resurrection. All our blessing is in Christ raised from the dead.<sup>3</sup>

The promise of blessing to Abraham and his seed Christ (Gen. 12:3; 22:18; Gal.

2. *The Christian Annotator* 3:290.

3. *Lectures on the Epistle of Paul . . . to the Galatians*, London: Morrish, n. d., p.74.

3:16,17,18) concerning Gentile blessing are millennial. Meanwhile however we are blessed with Abraham on the principle of faith through which blessing accrues in all ages. There is an application of this promise now for we are believing Gentiles just as well as believing Gentiles of the millennium.

## THE LAW CAN NOT ANNUL THE PROMISE (GAL. 3:17)

Now I say this, A covenant confirmed beforehand by God, the law, which took place four hundred and thirty years after, does not annul, so as to make the promise of no effect (Gal. 3:17).

The law cannot annul the promise. This promise is that of the inheritance (v. 18) which God gave to Abraham in grace (and therefore unconditionally) by promise (v. 18). The promise was made to the Seed (v. 19) who is Christ (v. 16). What the apostle is impressing on the Galatians, who were being imposed upon by law teachers, is that the promise of Gentile blessing (Gen. 12:36; 22:18) was *unconditional*. IT WAS A PROMISE! And furthermore, all is secured in the one Seed, Christ. The giving of the law was separated in time so greatly as to leave no doubt that it had no connection with the Abrahamic promises in such a way as it could add conditions to what evidently is unconditional. It is impossible that the law can modify the promises in any way. The law was a conditional covenant and cannot modify an unconditional covenant. Besides, v. 15 shows that the idea of subsequently adding terms to a confirmed covenant is intolerable. C. I. Crenshaw and G. E. Gunn III, wrote:

Exegetically, Gal. 3:17 says: "the law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God *in Christ* so as to nullify the promise." (the words "in Christ" are in the majority text of the Greek New Testament). The covenant God made was the promise of salvation in the Messiah, and Abraham was a partaker of this promise. For Abraham to be a partaker of the promise and not to be in Christ, is ludicrous, for Paul says, referring to Jews as well as Gentiles, "you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). And the Jew Paul is using for his example is Abraham! <sup>4</sup>

The words *in Christ* are in the KJV. *The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text*<sup>5</sup> reads, for Gal. 3:17, εἰς Χριστόν (*unto Christ or to Christ*) as does the Textus Receptus. Besides that weakening of the argument based on *in*, we do not accept that εἰς Χριστόν is part of the original text. Moreover, these writers have no Scripture for the claim that Abraham was in Christ, but they do have their misguided reasoning for it. Because Jew and Gentile are,

---

4. *Dispensationalism Today, yesterday and Tomorrow*, Memphis: Footstool Publications, 1989, p. 42.

5. Nashville: Nelson, 1982, by Zane Hodges and Arthur Farstad, p. 575.

since the cross and descent of the Spirit at Pentecost, all one in Christ Jesus, does it follow that O. T. saints were also? Such reasoning is as pitiful as the assertion that Paul used Abraham as an example of being in Christ. Further, Christ, Who is God *and* man in one Person, was not Christ until the incarnation. No one could be "in Christ" before the incarnation and until the work was accomplished and that Man was seated in the glory of God. "In Christ" there is neither Jew nor Greek (Gal. 3:28). In the O. T. the distinction was not only kept up, but enforced. But now:

For *he* is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of enclosure, having annulled the enmity in his flesh, the law of commandments in ordinances, that he might form the two in himself into one new man . . . (Eph. 2:14,15).

It is a *new* man, because it did not exist before. It is "*in himself*." What is the character of a theological system that overthrows the basic facts of Christianity as distinct from Judaism? Had such bowed their reasonings down before Rom. 16:25,26, Col. 1:26 and Eph. 3:9, they would have been helped.

### **ON WHAT PRINCIPLE DO WE OBTAIN THE INHERITANCE (GAL. 3:18)?**

For if the inheritance [be] on the principle of law, [it is] no longer on the principle of promise; but God gave it in grace to Abraham by promise (Gal. 3:18).

If the inheritance is on the principle of law then it is not on the principle of promise. What is the law about? It requires something from man, *by man*. It is *conditional*. Now is it not obvious that law and promise are here contrasted? Surely they are contrasted, and the contrast is this: that one is conditional and the other is unconditional. If the inheritance would be obtained on the basis of law, then it would be earned and not given in grace; "but God gave it in grace to Abraham by promise."

Ed.

As Son of God, Christ had a perfect right to say, I will and I will not, and He is the only one who (save on two remarkable occasions) never did so.

G. V. Wigram

# THE LEAVEN OF ANNIHILATIONISM

## and of

## ERRANCY OF SCRIPTURE

The Anglican, John Stott, in *Evangelical Essentials: A Liberal-Evangelical Dialogue*, Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press (1988), presented a case for annihilation of the wicked. In response to an article by Robert L. Reymond (Presbyterian),<sup>1</sup> he wrote:

Professor Reymond is correct that my position is tentative, not dogmatic. Perhaps 'agnostic' would be an even better word, which is what Professor F. F. Bruce calls himself on this issue . . . My plea is that biblical Christians should not be dogmatic here, but allow some flexibility of interpretation.<sup>2</sup>

Concerning fundamental doctrines, we do not accept such 'weaselwords' as "tentative" and "agnostic."

F. F. Bruce (Open-Brethren) wrote an introduction to a book by an annihilationist, E. W. Fudge,<sup>3</sup> answered by John H. Gerstner (Presbyterian), who wrote:

If Edward William Fudge's *The Fire That Consumes* (1982) was not the start of the current conservative attack on hell, it at least has a central role. The mere blurbs on the book show how broad has been its deleterious influence. F. F. Bruce wrote the foreword. This stalwart Plymouth Brother didn't quite agree with Fudge, nor did he disagree. If one is not for hell as a teaching of the Bible, he must be against it because no one is going to tolerate the teaching of this doctrine if he is not persuaded of its truth. Bruce is misleading when he writes that there is "no unanimity among evangelical Christians" on this theme. Even the present defection by many conservatives has not changed the historic or present *overall* fidelity to this doctrine. Clark Pinnock testifies that he has seen no answer to Fudge, and infers that he is not the one to refute it. John Wenham finds Fudge making "his main points with force and persuasiveness." Leonard Goss, Editorial Director, Evangelical Book Club, USA, finds Fudge's denial of hell "convincing." No doubt many others have been led astray by this volume who for one reason or another have not published their defection. Being the most formidable defense of "conditional immortality" (better called "modified

---

1. "Dr. John Stott on Hell," *Presbyterian* 16/1, (1990), pp. 41-59.

2. "A Response to Professor Robert L. Reymond," *Presbyterian*, 16/2 (1990), pp. 127, 128.

3. *The Fire that Consumes, A Biblical and Historical Study of Final Punishment*, Fallbrook: Verdict Publications, 1982.



annihilationism) . . . <sup>4</sup>

To these names may be added Philip Hughes. <sup>5</sup>

J. N. Darby wrote:

My horror of this doctrine is its weakening our sense of the nature of sin, of our responsibility, and of the atonement. If sin means eternal exclusion from God's presence, it is dreadful enmity against God now, exclusion from God then. If death is the only wages of sin, Christ had no more to suffer for me. Nay, if I am a Christian, He had nothing to suffer, if I die before the Lord comes. I have paid the wages myself. If it be only some temporary punishment I had incurred, He had only that to bear. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" has lost its force. It is in vain to say, He gives us life. He can, in itself, quicken without dying. If He died, He died for my sins, and bore them. If death be the wages, millions of saints have paid them. And if a partial punishment be all I had to bear, it is all Christ had to bear. The sense I have of sin and its desert is not, being forsaken of God, shut out from Him when I can know what it is, but a temporary punishment, a quantum of offence, which is all I have to think of, and all Christ had to bear, if anything. <sup>6</sup>

The doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked is a perversion of the fact that *God is light* as well as that *God is love*. It is an attack on the work of Christ,

4. *Repent or Perish*, Ligonier: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 1990, p. 64.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 41-57. *The Biblical Evangelist* for Feb. 1, 1992, p. 8, had something to say about John L. Bray. Readers who have read my *Precious Truths Revived and Defended Through J. N. Darby, Volume 1, Revival of Truth, 1826-1845*, will recall from chapter 7.3 that J. L. Bray has sought to establish that JND received the idea of the pretribulation rapture from the Jesuit, Manuel Lacunza. The article said:

Bray was converted in the mid-1930s and says he was challenged and helped as a new Christian by the writings of Dr. John R. Rice. In fact, in the early 1940s he even served as "Assistant to the Editor" under Rice when the latter's operation was in Wheaton, Illinois. His position then, as a Southern Baptist, was evangelical and at least somewhat committed to dispensationalism. About 10 or 11 years after leaving Rice, however, he jettisoned those ideas, although more than a quarter of a century went by before he went public with his "new beliefs."

. . . On one occasion Bray published a false and malicious slander against the beloved H. A. Ironside, claiming he had admitted the pre-trib rapture position was false, but continued to preach it until his death. We answered that fabrication in a major article, "In defense of H. A. Ironside" (May 13, 1983).

Now Bray has really gone off the deep end in a far more serious manner than anything heretofore. He has joined the Seventh-day Adventists and other cultists in teaching the annihilation of the wicked! This is not merely a difference of opinion in an area where good men may differ. No, *this teaching is blatant heresy!*

In a little booklet published late last year, Bray commented about Jude 7: "The 'eternal fire' of God's vengeance will consume men in that day, with punishment greater on the part of some than others; but ultimately it will be over and will be permanent, complete, total and everlasting (emphasis added).

His itinerary for 1992 includes a Millerite place, Advent Christian Church, in Rhode Island.

6. *Collected Writings* 10:347.

changing its character.

Did our Lord bear the penalty for our sins? Did He bear the punishment for our sins in those awful three hours<sup>7</sup> of darkness? What did He bear? Was He annihilated for us?

And is a man to be tolerated in Christian fellowship who says 'I am agnostic about whether or not punishment for the unrepentant involves eternal consciousness.' This is part of the doctrine of Christ:

If anyone come to you and bring not this doctrine, do not receive him into [the] house, and greet him not; for he who greets him partakes in his wicked works (2 John 10,11).

A little leaven leavens the whole lump (Gal. 5:7). If anyone wants to propagate what an antichrist would propagate, refuse him.

Besides giving up the doctrine of endless, conscious torment, Clark Pinnock is hardly alone in having also defected from the truth of the inerrancy of Scripture, thereby, in effect, making our Lord a liar. Inerrancy is not a doctrine we can dispense with. Dewey Beegle's anti-inerrancy book has a foreword by F. F. Bruce, who wrote therein:

Dr. Beegle's first edition was largely a demolition job. Here he has rearranged and amplified his material, given the work a new and more comprehensive title, and struck a more positive note. He does not ask his readers to agree with him but to take his arguments seriously. In particular, I endorse as emphatically as I can his deprecating of a Maginot-line mentality where the doctrine of Scripture is concerned.<sup>8</sup>

J. W. Montgomery wrote:

Respected evangelical scholars such as Berkouwer, F. F. Bruce, Daniel Fuller, and Bruce Metzger have expressly asserted that they do not consider the inspiration of Holy Writ to require the inerrancy of all the Bible's assertions. The issue is actively debated in the pages of evangelical publications such as the *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation*, and entire evangelical denominations -- the Southern Baptists and the Missouri Synod Lutherans immediately come to mind -- are in the throes of civil war over the degree and extent of biblical authority.<sup>9</sup>

Clark Pinnock wrote:

Third, there are the evangelical opponents of biblical inerrancy. Though a distinct minority, they happen to include some of the best known and most

---

7. The infinite value of His Person imparted the value that His work has.

8. *Scripture, Tradition and Infallibility*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1973.

9. *God's Inerrant Word*, Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1974, p. 20.

capable of the scholars evangelicalism has produced; F. F. Bruce, G. C. Berkouwer, David A. Hubbard, G. E. Ladd, and others.<sup>10</sup>

Harold Lindsell, an inerrantist, wrote:

In Professor Bruce's case, he wrote about Paul King Jewett's book *Man as Male and Female* in the *Evangelical Quarterly*. This is the book in which Dr. Jewett says that the teaching of the apostle Paul in Ephesians about a wife obeying her husband is rabbinic in origin and in error. He contrasts Paul's teaching in Ephesians with Galatians 3:28 that there is neither male nor female in Christ and says that Paul is wrong in Ephesians. Dr. Bruce said:

Dr. Jewett's survey of the biblical evidence and its interpretation over the centuries has the advantage of not being influenced by current fashions in opinion . . . To all readers may be recommended especially his exegesis of the relevant Pauline passages . . . Dr. Jewett interprets Paul with the respect which his apostolic authority requires, but in doing so he vindicates Paul's title to be acknowledged as the patron saint not only of Christian liberty in general but specifically of women's liberty.

This statement by Professor Bruce must be seen in the context of Dr. Henry's evaluation of Professor Jewett:

One of the finest sections in Dr. Lindsell's book is its survey of Fuller Theological Seminary, where the faculty has been unable to keep faith with two successive statements of its view of Scripture. Until recently, after revising the original statement, they held the line at least in respect to faith and morals; but with Dr. Jewett's contention that the Apostle Paul erred on the issue of the subordination of women, there is a breaching of the inerrancy of Scripture also at the level of Christian practice, or ethics.

Two observations are worth making. First: Dr. Bruce, like Dr. Jewett, has gone beyond simple errancy to errancy in a matter of faith and practice. And if Dr. Henry thinks it right to criticize Dr. Jewett at this point, why is it wrong for me to criticize Dr. Bruce at the same point? Both Dr. Jewett and Dr. Bruce do not believe that the Bible is free from error in matters of faith and practice, nor is it free from errors in matters of history, science, etc. Second, Dr. Henry says the Fuller Seminary faculty "has been unable to keep faith with two successive statements of its view of Scripture." But this is also true of Drs. Bruce and Berkouwer, and it is excellent evidence in support of my thesis that once you drop inerrancy, it opens the door wide to further departures about matters of faith and practice. And this is what has happened in the cases of Professors Bruce and Berkouwer as well as in the case of Paul King Jewett.<sup>11</sup>

Another thing that Harold Lindsell remarked about F. F. Bruce is this:

What is perhaps most distressing of all is that William Barclay and F. F. Bruce are listed as the editors of this commentary series. That their names should be attached to a vehicle through which Enslin can infect others, and send forth this

---

10. Quoted by Harold Lindsell, *The Bible in the Balance*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979, pp. 41,42.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 33,34.

kind of pseudo-scholarship to the detriment of men's souls, is unfortunate.<sup>12</sup>

Annihilationism attacks the work of Christ. The denial of the inerrancy of the O. T., an inerrancy in which our Lord believed, is an attack on His Person.

These evil teachings are leaven. May our Lord protect our minds from such evil, for without Him we can do nothing.

Ed.

## JUDAISING

In general we are obliged to be much more occupied with the details of the Christian life than with the great principles of this life. God is patient; but it is sorrowful that the state of the church should be such. Because of the want of spirituality, the Spirit cannot go on to unfold the riches of the thoughts of Jesus; He is then forced to be occupied with the walk, that the gospel may not be dishonored. The understanding of the counsels of God depends on the faithfulness of the walk, and what will be the consequence of this faithful walk? It will be a state of struggle with all, especially with all that Judaizes. It is impossible but that, in the actual state in which the world is, opposition should not be shown against the one who is faithful; and the fact of having more light excites opposition even with Christians. Paul is a striking example of it.

The apostle often repeats this; that the church has not been revealed in the Old Testament. Certainly, the prophets of the Old Testament confirm the blessed position of the church, inasmuch as this truth is based upon the blessing of God being extended even to the nations blessing which they (the prophets) had testified of. (Psalm 18:49; Deut. 32:43; Psalm 117.) There it is the Gentiles who are to rejoice with His people; but what the church is, is never spoken of. In the Colossians it is said of Christ, "Christ [in you] the hope of glory"; whilst that Christ whom the Jews expected was to be a Christ personally present -- a Christ who was to bring in the glory (this will take place at the end) -- so that a Christ who was only a hope when He was there was a thing which could not be understood. It was a mystery, of which the prophets never said a word: they had spoken of a Christ who was to accomplish such or such things, but never of a Christ in us the hope of glory for the church. Christ as in us is the practical and actual point of this mystery.

---

12. *Ibid.*, p. 156.

In Romans 16:26 <sup>1</sup> the apostle teaches the same truth, that the church was a mystery, unknown before the death of Christ. God had always the thought of the church; but it was hidden. Paul, in his communications to the Gentiles, rests upon what the prophets had said of the grace of God towards the Gentiles, and he quotes these prophets; Romans 15:9-12. It is certain that a Christ promised, and who was to be rejected, is clearly revealed in the prophets; but we know that this was an enigma for the Jews -- "We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever" -- and the thought of a Christ who had other members, and those too among the Gentiles, would have been still more incomprehensible. The church is united to Christ; and if we wish to find it in the Old Testament, we must seek Christ Himself, and see it in Him. See, for example, Isaiah 50:8: "He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who is mine adversary? let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me?" and Romans 8:32,33.

This challenge to all the world (because it is God who justifies us), which in Isaiah is spoken by Christ Himself, is in the Romans applied to the church. God only sees Christ; and these things are applied to us as being united to Christ. We are accepted in the Beloved. The thought of a people united to Christ by a spiritual life, or rather of a people united to Christ by one Spirit who was in Him and them, was never touched upon in the Old Testament. Christ Himself had not this position as Head of the body; and consequently the Spirit was not yet thus given.

J. N. Darby, *Collected Writings* 27:24, 25.

### ***Extract***

The opposition that comes from Satan as a roaring lion is very different from his serpent character of seductiveness. There is a great difference between the action of that poor old woman who took a green faggot that she might add to the sufferings of a martyr, and that of trying to turn aside the spirit of a martyr by blandishments and seductions.

G. V. Wigram

---

1. I do not doubt but that in this passage the "prophetic writings" are those of the New Testament; but the apostle constantly makes use of the writings of the Old Testament, to shew grace extending to the Gentiles.

## Extract from "THE RAPTURE OF THE SAINTS"

The church is associated with Christ already gone, is not of the world as He was not, is risen with Him, has its life hid with Him in God. There is no earthly event between it and heaven. It must have been gathered, and Christ rise up from the Father's throne to receive it: that is all. It is this conviction, that the church is properly heavenly, in its calling and relationship with Christ, forming no part of the course of events of the earth, which makes its rapture so simple and clear; and on the other hand, it shows how the denial of its rapture brings down the church to an earthly position, and destroys its whole spiritual character and position. Our calling is on high. Events are on earth. Prophecy does not relate to heaven. The Christian's hope is not a prophetic subject at all. It is the promise that Christ will come and receive him to Himself, that where He is the Christian may be also.

Although the question be already answered in principle, it may be well to put it formally here, When is the Christian to expect the Lord? I answer, Always. It is his right spiritual character. His always doing it is that by which his right spiritual state is characterized. Be ye "as men that wait for their Lord when he shall return from the wedding, that they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching. Verily, I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. . . . Be ye therefore ready also, for at such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." And, after speaking of service to the saints, the Lord adds, "Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Of a truth, I say unto you, He will make him ruler over all that he hath. But and if that servant say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming, and begin to beat the men-servants and the maid-servants. . . . he will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers." Here, as a general principle, the constant waiting for the Lord as a present thing is given as characterizing those who are blessed when the Lord comes, and who reign over all things. That which leads the wicked servant into all mischief is, not the denial of the Lord's coming, but the loss of the sense and present expectation of it.

This was the origin of the church's departure from simplicity, and its fall into clerical authority and worldliness -- the cause of the loss of its spiritual authority. The saints went out, left the world and worldly religion by going out, to meet the Bridegroom. It characterized them as a present thing. It was recalled to its primitive position and liveliness by the renewal of the immediate

expectation of Him. He did tarry, in fact; and the sense of His coming was lost. "Behold the Bridegroom cometh!" was what aroused and prepared them. No events, no earthly circumstances, intervene or modify the direct summons. They go out to meet Him. There is no other thought, no confusion with the government of this world, none of any previous dealing in respect of the marriage-feast (His union with the Jews). They go back with Him to it.

That the apostle lived in, and taught, this immediate expectation, as the proper primitive doctrine of the Spirit of God, is evident, whatever degree of light as to detail may have been possessed. The Thessalonians were converted to wait for God's Son from heaven; with very little clearness of light; but they had been so taught, and Paul approves of their expectation as a divine witness to the world, of which the world itself spake. It was his manner of entering in - they were waiting for Him. It was not a prophetic explanation of events they possessed: there is no event, I repeat, between us and heaven. God's Son was coming from heaven; and they were waiting for Him as the fruit of Paul's entering in among them, owned and delighted in by himself. They drew certain conclusions from it in which they erred, which Paul corrected (as he did another mistake, induced by false teachers, in the second epistle); but their constant expectation was right. The word even is used only here, and speaks of awaiting; but Paul was doing as much. He speaks to them of "we which are alive and remain to the coming of the Lord." We are told this is a class. Be it so. But it is a class in which Paul reckons himself, showing that that class could and ought so to await the coming of the Lord. Why not we?

*Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 11:156-157.*

### ***Extracts***

Where is Christ now? Gone up to heaven and seated there out of the world -- by "the world" I do not mean the earth, but the system set up by Satan all around us now. How much did Christ honor that? The only thing He looked at in it was people that were to be born of God and brought out of it linked to Himself. Are you out of it with Him? Have you a range of life outside things down here, in it but not of it, even as He was not?

There is an immense difference between intercourse, and communion of saints. If there is communion with Christ, much will flow from it. I might do the humblest work, wash the feet of any poor saint as a member of Christ, and feel that it flowed from communion with Christ; but when it comes to mere kindly intercourse one with another, and no roots in such intercourse from communion with Christ in heaven, what is the worth of it?

G. V. Wigram

## A MAN OF GOD

In the New Testament "the man of God" supposes one faithful in the service of souls; but the term is by no means confined to Christianity, being rather in itself a familiar Old Testament expression. By it we may understand a believer who has the moral courage and the spiritual power to identify himself with the Lord's interests, and to maintain the good fight of faith in the midst of perils and obstacles of every sort. Such a testimony is incompatible with yielding to human principles and the spirit of the age.

We must not suppose however that fidelity in such a day as ours wears an imposing garb. An appearance of strength is out of course when declension has come in and judgment is approaching. God will have a state of ruin *felt*, and His testimony must be in keeping. When he calls to sackcloth and ashes, He does not give such a character of power as has price in the world's eyes. Thus one of the truest signs of practical communion with the Lord is that at such a moment one is heartily content to be little. This is reality; but it is only a little strength. The expression of this, therefore, is according to the mind of God.

But that which attracts the world must please and pander to the self-importance of man. The world itself is a vain show, and likes its own. Consequently there is nothing which so carries the mass of men along with it as that which flatters the vanity of the human mind. It may assume the loveliest air, but sinful man seeks his own honor and present exaltation. But when a servant of God is thus drawn into the spirit of men, he naturally shrinks back from fairly facing the solemn call of God addressed to His own, loses his bright confidence, and gets either hardened, or stands in dread of the judgment of God. When Christians lose the power and reproach of the cross, philanthropy has been taken up, which gives influence among men; and general activity in what men call "doing good" replaces the life of faith with the vain hope of staving off the evil day -- in their time at any rate. One need not deny zeal and earnest pursuit of what is good morally; self-denial too one sees in spending for religious or benevolent purposes; but the man of God, now that ruin has entered the field of Christ's confession, is more urgently than ever called to be true to a crucified Christ. And as surely as He is soon coming to take us on high, He will in due time appear for the judgment of every high thought and the fairest-looking enterprises of men, which will all be swallowed up in the yawning gulf of the apostasy.

W. K.



## STEWARDSHIP

### "Will a Man Rob God?"

The subject of stewardship has been much neglected because it rebukes our selfishness.

What is a steward? A steward is one entrusted with "*That which is another's*" (Luke 16:12). We are so apt to regard our possessions as the world does and forget that even "Ye are not your own" (1 Cor. 6:19) but "His own" (John 13:1). Then as to everything we possess we should make good use of it as being "all Thine own" (1 Chron. 19:14,16).

"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2). Be faithful to the True Owner as He said, "Trade while I am coming" (Luke 19:13, J.N.D. trans.). Instead of making good use of the Lord's goods some lay "up in a napkin" (vs. 20), or hide it "in the earth" (Matt. 25:25).

Our blessed Lord who has so abounded in His grace to us, now entrusts us to use all we possess for His glory and for blessing to others. "Distribute, willing to communicate" (1 Tim. 6:18; Heb. 13:16). "Liberal distribution" (2 Cor. 9:13). "Not grudgingly . . . for God loves a cheerful giver" (vs. 7). "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth . . . the liberal soul shall be made fat . . . he that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse" (Prov. 11:24-26). "Working with his hands . . . that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph. 4:28). "So laboring ye ought to support the weak, and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). We will be richly blessed if our object is to give and not to get. A fish trap gets; a fish-hatchery distributes. "Freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8).

"Thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother . . . Beware that . . . thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought . . . Thou shalt surely (lit. bountifully) give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him" (Deut. 15:7,9,10.) How well the Lord knows the heart of His fallen creatures.

It is in connection with stewardship in Luke 16 that the Lord speaks to the covetous and selfish rich that are indifferent to the poor at their door. Oh the opportunities at our doors that we ignore! We close our eyes to them and then pray for those to whom we contribute nothing! What inconsistency! In chapter 12 the Lord says "Beware of covetousness" (vs.15). "Covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col. 3:5 and Eph. 5:5). "The love of money is a root of all evil" (1

Tim. 6:10, J. N. D. trans.). "Those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare" (vs. 9). "The deceitfulness of riches" (Mark 4:19). "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth" (Matt. 6:19). "Men of the world have their portion in this life, and . . . leave the rest of their substance to their children" (Psa. 17:14). In that way the world lays up for their children, but the apostle Paul left a more enduring heritage for his children, 2 Cor. 12:14; Prov. 13:22; 1 Tim. 6:19.

Matthew Henry well said, "There is a burden of care in getting riches, fear in keeping them, temptation in using them, guilt in abusing them, sorrow in losing them, and a burden of account at last to be given concerning them."

Earthly possessions are not our own nor intended to be piled up. "Woe unto them that join house to house" (Isa. 5:8); "build greater barns" (Luke 12:18); "heaped up treasures in the last days" (James 5:3).

Wealth is surplus, generally increasing, robbing God, oblivious of the needy and the Lord's work of evangelizing, printing, distributing, etc.

According to Webster a miser is "one who lives miserably to increase his hoard." To be niggardly is one "who gives the smallest possible." To be stingy is to be tight and lacking in large hearted liberality. See 2 Cor. 8:2 (J. N. D. trans.).

J. G. Bellett's daughter writes of him, "I think he had a dread of wealth. To hear of anyone dying 'worth so much' (as the expression is), especially if he were known as one who made a profession of religion, pained him very much. But the luxury of giving away largely, he fully understood."

Very soon we shall have to leave behind all that is of earth and all that we have failed to use for our blessed Lord.

A. C. Brown

Have you known fellowship in sufferings with Christ? known deep waters? You will have to go down to them. If you do not get sorrow in fellowship with Christ, you will get it in discipline.

The searching eye of God not only reads the heart and lays everything bare in the light; but that searching eye of God looks on the believer with all the affection with which He looks on Christ.

G. V. Wigram

## GOD'S CALL OUT OF THE EARTH

In the midst of the increased and still growing corruption of the whole scene around us, and of the threatened dissolving of all things, it is much laid upon the mind to consider with simplicity and clearness the character of our calling.

The call of God out of the earth, and God's assertion of title to the earth, are things that greatly differ, and should be morally and practically distinguished by the saints.

The call of God proceeds on the principle that God Himself is outside the earth, and that He is not seeking it, but seeking a people to be His in His place outside and above it. The earth, therefore, by this call is left just as it was. For it is a stranger to the purpose of God.

This call of God out of the earth was exhibited in the family of Seth, before the flood. Cain's house was in possession of the earth, and Seth does not interfere with them. Not at all. All he and his generation have to do with the earth is to call on the name of the Lord while they are on it (not to engrave, like Cain, their own name there -- Gen. 4:17), and then to lay their dead bodies in it.

So was it exhibited afterwards in Abraham. He is called of God. But such call leaves the Canaanites without a rival. He does not contend with the potsherds of the earth. He does not dispute their right as lords of the soil. He desires only to pitch his wandering tent upon the face of it, or to lay his bones in the bowels of it.

And so the Church or heavenly family of this dispensation. Their call leaves the Gentiles in power. The Church has nothing to say to "the powers that be," but either to obey unreluctantly, or to suffer patiently, according as the demand made by the powers be such or not as involves their subjection to Christ.

This determines at once our **duties**. We render to the powers ordained of God their dues, without in any wise seeking to disturb them, knowing also that even if they behave themselves unrighteously, we are not constituted their judges.

But the character of our **service** is likewise determined by this call of God. Service to God is wanting in its true character if it does not intimate that He is not now reasserting His title to the earth; or, in other words, our service to Christ must be to Him as the **rejected** Christ. For He is such an One all the time He remains in the "far country". The cry has followed Him there from the earth, "We will not have this man to reign over us." And is that cry to be

answered by the servants who occupy their talents during His absence? (See Luke 19.) Surely not. They serve Him in the patient sense of His rejection all the time, and "they are not ashamed of His chain."

In like manner, moreover, this determines what our **habits** should be. Our habits should tell that the earth is not **our** place, as our service should tell that it is not **our Lord's** place.

This affords a holy and serious admonition to our souls.

Our call does not connect us with the earth. Our necessities do so, it is true. We need the fruit of the ground, the toil of the hand, and the skill of the heart, to provide things needful for the body. Our necessities, thus, connect us with the earth, and we may attend to it for the supply of such necessities. But our call does not connect us with it, but rather separates us from it.

To link the Church and the earth is acting at once on apostate principles. To aim at changing the character or condition of Christ in the world, or to serve Him **save as the rejected One**, is not service rendered in spiritual discernment.

These things we may know well and admit easily. But if we refuse to link **the Church** with the world, are we daily watching to refuse to link **the heart** with the it, **the hopes** with it, **the calculations of the mind** with it? If it be easy to see the Church now on the eve of losing the world, and to see this without regret, is it alike easy to see our interests losing it, our name and distinction losing it? Such an one was Paul. He would not reign as a king yet; but he had learnt how to have and how to want, how to abound and how to suffer need.

In God's dealing by Israel, there was an assertion of title to the earth. Joshua went into "the possession of the Gentiles" and took with him "the ark of the Lord of all the earth", that his sword might make it the possession of the Lord and His people. But Paul went into the possessions of Jews and Gentiles, not to disturb their tenure of anything there, but to take out of them a people unto God, to link souls with the disallowed Stone, and to teach them that their blessings were spiritual and heavenly.

So, according to the Lord's teaching. See the two parables in Luke 19 and 20. In settling Israel, the Lord gave them a vineyard, a **portion of the earth**, and told them to till it for Him, rendering Him dues as the Lord of the soil. In settling the saints of this age, He gave them talents, **such gifts and opportunities of service as were suited to the fact of His absence and rejection by the world**, having no estate or kingdom here till He should return.

Practically to forget such distinctions, or to act on the principle that the

Church is God's instrument for asserting His claim to the earth, is apostasy from her calling of God.

In His ministry the Lord was judging Satan, but refusing to judge the sinner. And, according to this, at the end of His ministry He tells Peter to put up the sword, and Pilate that His servants could not fight.

The way of His saints is to be according to all this. They are to judge morally or spiritually (i.e. defilements within themselves), but not contend about the interests of the world. The apostle condemns them for not doing the one and for doing the other (see 1 Cor. 5, 6), with this difference, however -- their duty in the first matter is peremptory (1 Cor. 5), their way in the second is left more to their measure of grace (1 Cor. 6). And according to this also the apostle tells us that our weapons are not carnal but spiritual, our warfare not with flesh and blood, but with spiritual wickedness (2 Cor. 10, Eph. 6). We are really or spiritually defeated when we fight carnally: for the devil has raised in us that temper which has sent us forth to the carnal fight.

*The Bible Treasury 5:229, 230*

### ***Extracts***

Do you comprehend the breadth, length, depth, and height of God's thoughts about that divine Person -- you, a creature of yesterday! Look back these thousands of years -- that One whom man nailed to the cross and put out of the way, was there creating the world! And then, as man, God showed that a person was there able to deal with sinners, with the worst, making them a part of the bride.

As a man, all human affections are in His heart. We know, if we believe that there is love in the heart of anyone towards us, how we rest on him. Ah! there is a volume of love in His heart, and it is fixed on each individual given Him by the Father.

It is not only length, depth, breadth and height abstractly; there is a center - Himself. I know that the God-man who loves me is the center of all God's thoughts and counsels; my heart is resting on the very object which God's heart rests on, and all that is precious to God is mine

G. V. Wigram

## SCRIPTURE NOTES

### **JOHN 20:22, 23; ACTS 2:1-4**

There is a great difference between these two scriptures. It is clear from John 7:39, that the Holy Ghost was not bestowed upon believers, did not come to dwell in them in the sense of Acts 2, until after that Jesus was glorified. It is also seen from the words of the Lord Himself that He did not regard the action in John 20 as in any way anticipating the special blessing of Pentecost. (See Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,5.) Distinctly understanding this will prepare us to consider the meaning of the Lord's words in John -- "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," etc. It is, in fact, the fulfillment of chap. 10:10: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Before the cross, during His earthly sojourn, His disciples, who really believed on Him, had life; but it was only from Him in resurrection that they could receive it "more abundantly." But the fact that they did so receive it involves the new place taken by the Lord as risen from among the dead. He was the Second Man in incarnation; but He did not take His place as such . . . until after the resurrection. It is this fact which imparts to the scene in John 20 all its significance. Jesus had already revealed to the disciples, through Mary, that His Father was now their Father, and His God their God. He had thus associated them with Himself in His own relationships; and thenceforward He was the Head of a new race. When therefore He came into their midst, where they were assembled, after that He had spoken peace unto them, shown them His hands and His side, and commanded them to go forth in the power of the peace He had bestowed, He communicated the life more abundantly to enable them to enter upon their new place and relationships: a life, the full issue of which would be conformity to His own condition in glory. It should also be remarked that the very form in which He communicated the Holy Ghost, as the power of life, explains its meaning. "He breathed on them"; and, turning back to Genesis, we read that "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Chap. 2:7). The first man was quickened by a divine communication of breath, was then "made a living soul"; "the last Adam," as a quickening Spirit, breathed of His own life in resurrection upon His disciples, and they lived in its power through the Holy Spirit. This contrast, moreover, involves undoubtedly the truth of the person of the Lord; but into this we do not here enter.

Such then is, we apprehend, the truth of this scene and action. What the disciples received in this way was the Holy Spirit as the power of life, corresponding with what we find in Romans 8:1-11; to receive the indwelling Spirit as power, as the anointing, as well as the earnest, the seal, and the Spirit of adoption, they had yet to wait until the day of Pentecost. And hence it was not until Pentecost that they were brought into the full Christian position.

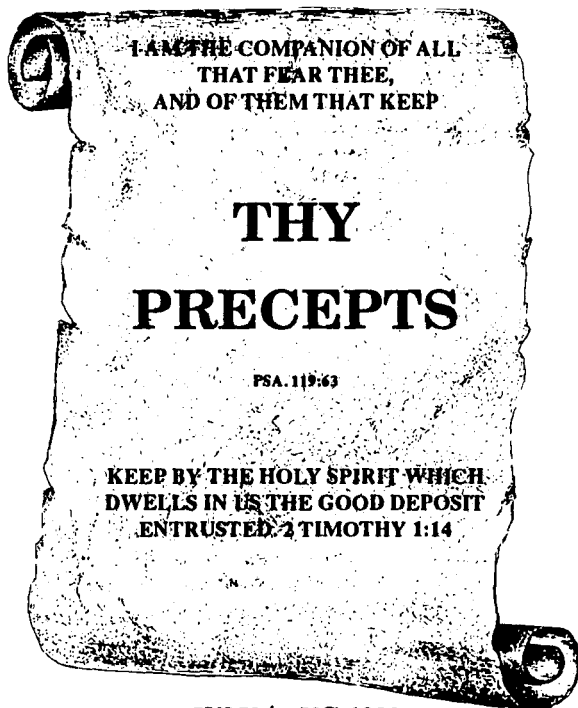
E. D. *The Christian Friend and Instructor* 1888, pp. 49, 50.



**PRESENT TRUTH PUBLISHERS**  
**411 Route 79 • Morganville, NJ 07751**

[www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)





**JULY / AUG 1992**

**Vol. 7, # 4**

---

## **CONTENTS**

---

**The Truth of Christ's Person**

**Could Christ Sin? ..... 97**

**The Holiness of Christian Fellowship**

**Chapter 2: Our Attitude About Discipline ..... 106**

**Elements of Dispensational Truth**

**Chapter 4.6: Gal. 3:19-25; Under the Law ..... 119**



---



---

## THE TRUTH OF CHRIST'S PERSON

---



---

### "THE SON CAN DO NOTHING OF HIMSELF SAVE WHATEVER HE SEES THE FATHER DOING"

(COULD CHRIST SIN?)

*Is Capability of Sinning  
Essential to Manhood?*

Before entering into this question it may be helpful to remind ourselves of various expressions used in Scripture which have a direct bearing on the state of sinners.

*Sins* are acts that in fallen man spring from the activity of the evil principle at work in our beings. The evil principle at work in our beings is called sin (Rom. 5:12,13; 6:7; 7:17, etc.).

"*Sin* is the evil nature that produces lust, the enmity of the heart against God." This evil nature was acquired in the fall. 2 Cor. 5:21, 1 John 3:5 and John 8:46 show that Christ did not have sin, did not have a sinful, or fallen nature.

*The body of sin* (Rom. 6:6) "signifies the whole condition of the natural man as fully subjected to sin and its dominion."

*The law of sin* (Rom. 7:23) is "the uniform principle of the flesh in moral character." It acts in a fixed manner, contrary to God. The law of sin is the law of the old nature in man, which characterizes the natural man (1 Cor. 2:14).

"*Flesh* is used in the New Testament for our sinful nature, as it works habitually through its lusts. So 'flesh,' 'sin in the flesh,' and 'sinful flesh' are substantially the same, though it may be in different aspects and application; the '*mind of the flesh*' is also used, its bent, and purpose or object. Sin has a much wider sense -- 'who taketh away the sin of the world,' for instance, 'to put

away sin.' But if we look at it in the sense of a nature and principle, it is the same as flesh" <sup>1</sup>It is not enough to say that Christ was sinless, though true in itself. For example, it has been said:

We hold, then, that our Savior, in his humanity, was, in both these senses, sinless; at first relatively, just as Adam before his fall, with a perfectly human nature to which the liability to temptation must be conceded; otherwise no true manhood could have existed, no true example for our race could have been presented in his life. <sup>2</sup>

There are four falsehoods implicit here in just one sentence of babbling about the Son:

1. without the capability of sinning there could have existed no true manhood;
2. a false equation of Christ's humanity with Adam's before his fall;
3. a false view of "temptation" is implicit in the assertion;
4. without capability of sinning Christ could not have been a true example. First, I would reply that the union of the human and divine in one Person shows the falsehood of these four points. These four points cannot be true. But let us look at them.

## NO TRUE MANHOOD WITHOUT THE CAPABILITY OF SINNING?

Is the Lord Jesus true man right now? Can He sin now? You say, 'but He is resurrected now.' Do you mean that He is not true man now? The notion that capability of sinning is essential to true manhood is an unholy notion and derogatory to the glory of His Person whether when here below or now in the glory. Do you also suppose that when we are with Him in the glory we shall be able to sin? Christ communicates a new nature to the believer and we read in 1 John 3:9:

Whoever has been begotten of God does not practice sin, because his seed abides in him, and he cannot sin, because he has been begotten of God.

The seed is "his seed." It is something communicated. The believer is begotten of God, born of God (John 1:13; James 1:18). This seed, the new nature, cannot sin, but here in 1 John 3:9 it is said of the believer, "he cannot sin." Here, what is true of the nature is predicated of the person. Hence in 1 John

---

1. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:196; italics mine.

2. *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature* 9:266.

4:17 we read:

... even as *he* is, *we* also are in this world.

This is how God is able to look at His children; though, of course, if His child does sin, he has an advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1,2). Here what is true of the new nature is predicated of the believer, in God's sight:

We know that every one begotten of God does not sin, but he that has been begotten of God keeps himself, and the wicked [one] does not touch him (1 John 5:18).

In effect, we are told that the character of the humanity of the Holy One is less than the character of the nature given to the believer. The truth is that the impeccable One communicates an impeccable nature to the believer. The evil one could not touch Christ.

## **WAS CHRIST'S HUMANITY IN THE SAME STATE AS ADAM'S UNFALLEN?**

Those who say that Adam's humanity was holy before he sinned thereby declare themselves ignorant of what it is to be intrinsically holy. A holy being is not ignorant of good and evil. Adam did not have the knowledge of good and evil before he sinned. He was forbidden to eat of "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (Gen. 2:9). When he sinned he acquired this knowledge but fell from sinlessness to being a sinner. In the fall he acquired an indwelling taint of evil, a sinful nature. There was now a new law of his being, called in Rom. 7:23, "the law of sin which exists in my members." A law is a fixed, or uniform, principle of operation. The law of sin dominates the sinner. Morally, it controls his will. His behavior follows the dictates of this will dominated by the law of sin. The "natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him; and he cannot know [them] because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14). Notice the word *cannot*. This denotes total spiritual incapacity. He is captive to "the law of sin" in his members (Rom. 7:23). "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" (Rom. 8:7). The will of the natural man is bound (not free) by the law of sin in his members. But there is conscience, acquired in the fall, and there is the knowledge of good and evil, though often suppressed. This knowledge came through sinning. Before the fall, Adam was *innocent*, meaning ignorant of good and evil and being sinless.

Before he sinned, then, Adam did not have this knowledge. Dare you say that the Holy One did not have this knowledge? What? Christ did not have the knowledge of good and evil? Of course He had this knowledge. And how did

He acquire it? He "did no sin" (1 Pet. 2:22). So, not having acquired it by sinning just when did He acquire it? It is something implicit in His holy being. He was holy, not only because He was God and man united in one Person, but He united holy manhood to Himself. Why, of course He did. Before the fall, the *state* of Adam's humanity was innocent. After the fall, the *state* of Adam's humanity was sinful, with "the law of sin" bringing him into captivity. The *state* of Christ's humanity was holy, hence He is called "the holy thing" (Luke 1:35) as come into the world. He did not work His way into this *state*.

J. N. Darby remarked upon our Lord's humanity:

It was not man where no evil was, like Adam innocent, but man in the midst of evil; it was not man bad in the midst of evil like Adam fallen, but man perfect, perfect according to God, in the midst of evil, God manifest in flesh; real, proper humanity, but His soul always having the thoughts that God produces in man, and in absolute communion with God, save when He suffered on the cross, where He must, as to the suffering of His soul, be forsaken of God; more perfect then, as to the extent of the perfection and the degree of obedience, than anywhere else, because He accomplished the will of God in the face of His wrath, instead of doing it in the joy of His communion; and therefore He asked that this cup should pass, which He never did elsewhere. He could not find His meat in the wrath of God.

Our precious Savior was quite as really man as I, as regards the simple and abstract idea of humanity, but without sin, born miraculously by divine power; and, moreover, He was God manifest in flesh.<sup>3</sup>

Even *saints* are *holy ones* (Acts 9:13,32,41, etc.), and the Scriptures are holy (Rom. 1:2) as is the law (Rom. 7:12).

It is not the case that no other human beings were said to be holy (Mark 6:20; Luke 1:70; or even a place -- Acts 7:33). But as born by natural generation, such were naturally sinners.<sup>4</sup> However, such were children of God (John 11:52; Rom. 9:8 -- though not knowing the place) and thus were born of God, having the new nature.

Their walk and testimony were such that they were called holy; or, looked at as saints, they are holy ones (cf. Col. 3:12). But Christ was not born by

---

3. *Collected Writings* 10:183.

4. In 1 Cor. 7:14 the word holy is used of children where a parent is the Lord's. It is used here to designate them as not unclean, but set apart to the Lord -- in contrast to children of mixed marriages in the O. T. It does not mean they are intrinsically holy.

natural generation (Luke 1:35) <sup>5</sup> and was thus free from all taint of sin. However, He was not merely innocent and sinless, but constitutionally holy. Thus He was "the holy and righteous one" (Acts 3:14), God's "holy servant Jesus" (Acts 4:27,30). He was so by conception and thus held humanity in a different *state* than Adam either innocent or sinful. Thus, His humanity, as such, was in a different *state* than all others in the world.

The Lord Jesus never sinned, no not as a child <sup>6</sup> or man. Even before that temptation in the wilderness, the Spirit came down as a dove and abode on Him, and the opened heavens declared Him to be the beloved Son in Whom God had found His delight (Matt. 3:17). If Christ shortly after sinned, how was God going to undo this? What about the O.T. prophecies of Christ's glory? They would all have been falsified and God have been untruthful. The Scripture of Truth would be the writings of falsehoods.

The Lord Jesus was sealed as He was about to enter upon His public ministry and as in Lev. 2 the cakes of fine flour were anointed with oil, so the Spirit came upon Him, "the Son of man . . . for him has the Father sealed, [even] God" (John 6:27; cf. John 3:34). We are sealed after being cleansed by His precious blood (Eph. 1:13). He needed no cleansing but was sealed as a vessel of perfection, about to enter on public service as the "holy servant" (Acts 4:27,30).

Not only has our Lord that holy humanity right now, in a holy state; He has it in a resurrected and glorified state. And we to whom He has communicated the impeccable seed (1 John 3:9), are going to bear His image above (1 Cor. 15:49) when the power of the mighty work of atonement is put forth to touch

5. "The difference then of His humanity is not in that it was not really and fully that of Mary, but in that it was so by an act of divine power, so as to be such without sin; and, moreover, that in place of being separated from God in His soul, like every sinful man, God was in Him who was of God. He could say "I thirst," "my soul is troubled," "it is melted like wax in the midst of my bowels;" but He could also say "the Son of man who is in heaven," and "before Abraham was, I am." The innocence of Adam was not God manifest in flesh; it was not man subjected, as to the circumstances in which His humanity was found, to all the consequences of sin" (*Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 10:182).

6. "That Christ, as regards His humanity, increased in wisdom and stature, this the word is careful to tell us, and to us it is one of the most precious truths. His delights were with the sons of men, and He became truly man. This was the anthem of the angels when the manger received Him. That His acts as man were done in the power of the Spirit is also revealed to us. "If I," says He, "by the Spirit of God cast out demons." But the fullness of the Godhead was there: He was the Son assuredly; but, says He, "the Father who abideth in me, He doeth the works," and "I and my Father are one." In the fear also that we might believe that He had returned to the relationship of Son, or had recovered it at His baptism by John, the scriptures lift a corner of the veil which enveloped the thirty years of His life passed in obscurity at Nazareth, and present Him, at the age of twelve years, in the full consciousness of Sonship" (*Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 23:173).

our very bodies, which shall then be fashioned like His own body of glory (Phil. 3:20,21). Then shall we, too, be impeccable -- without, note well, being united to deity -- and yet we will be fully human. There is then such a thing as impeccable humanity.

The notion that if one is impeccable he cannot be truly human is absurd on the face of it. The reasons professed Christians do not see this is because there is a sinful lust to have a Christ as much in their own state as they can get. They seek kinship in Him to their own inner response to temptation and inclination to sin and are looking for His sympathy for their sinful tendencies.

The terrible notion that Christ could have sinned tends to equalize Him with Adam. Scripture does the opposite; it contrasts them.

The first man Adam became a living soul; the last Adam a quickening spirit. But that which is spiritual [was] not first, but that which is natural, then that which is spiritual: the first man out of [the] earth, made of dust; the second man, out of heaven (1 Cor. 15:45-47).

W. Kelly wrote:

He could and did suffer, no doubt, from hunger, thirst, and weariness; but these things are in no way the index that human nature was fallen in Him, but of the circumstances through which humanity, holy or unholy, might pass. In his innocence Adam had no such experience; after his fall this and more was his lot. The holy person of Jesus did know these circumstances, and magnified God in them: what have they do with the state of His humanity? with its holiness as contra-distinguished from a fallen or an unfallen Adam's? Who will venture to affirm that Adam, if kept from food even in Eden, would not have suffered from hunger? The argument is worthless, save to betray the will to depreciate the Lord of glory. The grand vice of it all is merging Him as much as possible in the fallen condition of the race. If innocent human nature had to do with a Paradisiacal state, certainly neither fallen humanity nor holy humanity when here below was spared from tasting the bitterness of a wilderness world. This therefore does not affect the momentous point of the different state of humanity in Adam fallen and in Christ even while living here below. Thus the argument founded on our Lord's suffering hunger and thirst and weariness is a manifest sophism, because it confounds the circumstances which humanity may experience with humanity itself; it assumes from these circumstances an identity in the state of manhood, contrary to the most express teaching of the Bible and to all true knowledge of Christ. God tells us the facts to enhance our sense of the Savior's grace and exalt His moral glory in our eyes; man, set on by Satan, hastens to pervert the facts so as to tarnish His humanity and debase His person.

That the Lord Jesus was liable to sin is not only the denial of His perfect humanity, but evinces, to say the least, the grossest ignorance of His person. It is an insult to the Son because of His humiliation, which no consideration can palliate, which man's unbelief and Satan's malice can alone account for. Certainly He was tried and did suffer to the uttermost; but thence to infer or allow that He had from the fall such frailty and inwardly temptable nature as ours is, I must regard and denounce as a heinous libel on Christ, as a lie most



destructive to man. Scripture, while it clearly reveals the manhood of the Savior, seems more careful to uphold His unstained glory than that of any other person in the adorable Trinity. And no wonder. God is jealous lest the Savior's unspeakable grace should expose Him to dishonor. How painful that He should be wounded afresh in the house of His friends!

Some doubtless do not go so far or fast as others; there are too misled as well as misleaders. But there are not a few who stop short, for the present at least, of the natural consequences of the system they have somehow admitted into their minds. They may not allow liability to sin, and yet contend for fallen humanity, in Jesus. But will they affirm that He could have fallen nature in His person without touching the unsullied glory of His person? It is hard to see how the person stands if one of the natures composing it be fallen. Let them beware lest the only door of refuge be that of Nestorianism which divides the Lord's person, virtually setting up a double personality in sharp antagonism (not two natures united in one person), in order to save His divine glory from being darkened by the shade of a fallen manhood.<sup>7</sup>

Of such a One J. G. Bellett could say,

In his person (but surely there only) *man* was reconciled to God. In Him God recovered His complacency in man, and that too with unspeakable gain; for in Jesus man is more to God than he would have been in an eternity of Adam [sic] innocence.<sup>8</sup>

God cannot sin because He is holy. The seed of God in the believer cannot sin (1 John 3:9). The Lord Jesus could not sin (John 5:19) because He was holy. The law of His being is holiness.

In the believer there is still operative "the law of sin" (Rom. 7:23). A law is a fixed, or uniform, principle of action. "The law of sin" within operates to sin. The seed of God within (1 John 3:9) operates to holiness. The holy humanity of Christ operates to holiness. It is the law of His being as it is the law of God's being.

Nor does holiness imply in any way the possibility of its opposite flowing from what is intrinsically holy. It is not so in God, nor is it so in the seed of God in us (1 John 3:9). Our unholiness proceeds from "the law of sin" within us. Why predicate the possibility of the opposite in the Holy One, except to lower Him towards what we are in our natural estate? The idea that Christ could have sinned is fleshly religion. The flesh, which wants to sin, says that Christ was tempted to sin.

W. Kelly wrote:

---

7. "Christ Tempted and Sympathizing," *The Bible Treasury*, 20:188, 189.

8. *The Moral Glory of the Lord Jesus*, p. 3.

... misquotes Heb. 4:15 by leaving out the last words, which are essential to the truth. He and all who judge of Christ from themselves, from human nature as it is in us, did not understand its bearing. Christ has been tempted in all things in like manner with us, *sin excepted*. The sense is not merely that He never sinned when tempted, but that He had been thus similarly tempted in all points "apart from sin," and not merely without sinning. In Him was no sin; in us there is. This characteristic and peculiar difference is here pointed out as an exception of the utmost magnitude qualifying His temptations in contrast with ours. In Him even what was born of His mother was holy, whilst we, the regenerate, no less than others, were shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin. He therefore did not know sin, and never had a lust or passion from fallen humanity. His temptations were exclusively those of a holy being, and full of suffering to Him, because He felt always according to God when the enemy thus tried but found nothing in Him -- alas! how much in us, even in the regenerate. Flesh yields to evil temptation and is gratified, instead of suffering.

They talk indeed as if it was necessary to sympathy with us, that Christ should know our unholy temptations, as in Jam. 1:14,15. But this is most superficial as well as false. He sympathizes with us so much the more, because we have an inward traitor which He had not, while He suffering perfectly in keeping out the enemy is undistractedly and perfectly free to feel for us in every trial. In fact, if their principle were at all sound, it ought to go farther; for it would involve His failing under temptation, in order to comfort adequately those bitterly conscious of their failures. But the principle is false and evil. The believer abhors the notion of Christ's sympathy with his evil thoughts, feelings or ways. *He* hates them all and judges himself for them, and finds the true answer to sin in Christ a sacrifice for it. He seeks and obtains Christ's sympathy with the new man in loathing every evil within, and comes not in vain and even with boldness to the throne of grace, to receive mercy and find grace for seasonable help.<sup>9</sup>

J. N. Darby well said,

**If sin was needful to temptation, then would sin be justified in every temptation we were in, for we could not, they say, be tempted without it . . . God condemned sin in the flesh, by the exhibition of a tempted man, in every point without it [Heb. 4:15].<sup>10</sup>**

## ABLE NOT TO SIN?

It is said that Christ was able not to sin. Was Adam able not to sin? Is this *ability doctrine* the teaching of Scripture? No. In effect, it denies the true *state* of Christ's humanity: *impeccability*. "Able not to sin" does not describe the truth of Scripture and must be rejected, for it implies that He was able to sin. That would violate the law of His intrinsic holiness. "Able not to sin" is just a 'nicer' sounding way of putting the evil doctrine that the Holy One could have

---

9. *The Bible Treasury* 18:75.

10. *Collected Writings* 15:29, 30.

sinned.

There are persons who, thankfully, believe in Christ's impeccability but use an illustration of a thin bendable wire (Christ's humanity) welded to an unbendable steel bar (Christ's divinity) and say He could not sin. The conclusion is correct but the illustration is incorrect in not seeing the proper intrinsic, characterizing holiness of Christ's humanity. Avoid such illustrations.

It is pathetic how the carnal mind reasons in order to make out a case for a Christ capable of sinning:

To use the terms of the schoolmen, the *posse non peccare* or *impeccabilitas minor*, in him, grew, through vanquished opposition and the achieved results of perfect obedience in love, into the *non posse peccare* or *impeccabilitas major*, "into the impossibility of sinning, which cannot sin because it will not" (Schaff).<sup>11</sup>

None of this is possible in Jehovah-Jesus. Allegedly, He arrived at a point where He could not sin because He would not will to do so. The truth is, He only *could* do the Father's will:

The Son can do nothing of himself save whatever he sees the Father doing: for whatever things *he* does, these things also the Son does in like manner (John 5:19).

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

## EXTRACT

It can never be true that we are crucified to the world unless the heart is in constant communion with the cross of Christ, with Christ crucified. The cross comes in, in everything, as a matter of daily experience. How is one to pass into the old age of a Christian? How find one's self left aside, no longer with any energy? Surely only by the Cross. How can we keep under such flesh as ours? Does the "old man" ever get any better? Not a bit! but you must learn to be able to carry the cross, saying of everything that is evil, "I can have nothing to do with that, because my Lord was crucified on account of it."

G. V. Wigram

---

11. *Ibid.*

---

# *The Holiness of Christian Fellowship*

---

## *Chapter 2*

---

### *Our Attitude About Discipline*

#### **BOWING TO DISCIPLINE**

Calling to mind the obedience of you all (2 Cor. 7:15).

The following letter by J. N. Darby takes up the question of private judgment and bowing to discipline.

\* \* \* The point I take to be fatally dangerous is confounding private judgment and conscience. We see the full-blown fruit of it in the present state of Protestantism, where private judgment is used to authorize the rejection of everything the individual does not agree with.

The difference is plain in the case put. A father's authority is admitted. Now if it be a matter of conscience, Christ's authority or the confession of His name, of course this cannot stand in the way. I am bound to love Christ more than father or mother. But suppose I reject my father's authority for everything my private judgment differs in as to what is right, there is an end of all authority. There may be cases of anxious inquiry as to what my duty is, where spiritual judgment alone can come to a right judgment. This is the case in the whole christian life. We must have our senses exercised to discern good and evil -- to be not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is; and such exercises are useful. But the confounding a judgment I form simply as to right with conscience is, in result, confounding will with obedience. True conscience is always obedience to God; but if I take what I see as sufficient, confusion of a deadly character soon comes in. Does one not submit to a father's authority unless he can bring, even in an important matter, a text of scripture for everything he desires? Is there no setting up of self and self-will in such a principle?

But I go farther; and it is the case in question. Suppose in an assembly a person has been put out for evil. All admit that such, if truly humbled, should be restored. The assembly think he is humbled truly; I am satisfied, suppose, that he is not. They receive him. Am I to break with the assembly or to refuse subjection to their act, because I think them mistaken? Supposing (which is a more trying case to the heart) I believe he is humbled and they are satisfied he is not, I may bow to a judgment I think erroneous and look to the Lord to set it right. There is such a thing as lowliness as to self, which does not set up its own opinion against others, though one may have no doubt of being right.

There is another question connected with it -- one assembly's act binding another. I do not admit, because scripture does not admit, independent assemblies. There is the body of Christ, and all Christians are members of it; and the church of God in one place represents the whole and acts in its name. Hence, 1 Corinthians are taken in with the assembly at Corinth as such; yet this last is treated as the body as such, and made locally responsible for maintaining the purity of the assembly; and the Lord Christ is looked at as there; and what was done was done *in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*. This is wholly ignored when one speaks of six or seven clever, intelligent Christians, and a number of ignorant ones. The Lord in the midst of the assembly is set aside. The flesh, it is said, often acts in the assembly. Why assume it does and forget it may in an individual?

Again, why speak of obeying the Lord first, then the church? But supposing the Lord is in the church? It is merely setting up private judgment against the judgment of an assembly meeting in Christ's name with His promise (if they are not, I have nothing to say to them); it is simply saying, I count myself wiser than those who are. I reject entirely as unscriptural the saying, "First Christ, then the Church." If Christ be not in the church, I do not own it at all. I assume that the church has not Christ, making them two parties. I may reason with an assembly, because I am a member of Christ, and hence of it -- if it is one, help it. But if I own to it as an assembly of God, I cannot assume Christ is not there. It is simply denying it is an assembly of God. The thought is wanting of what an assembly of God is. This is not surprising; but it necessarily falsifies judgment on the point, which is not "if the word" -- but if I *see* not the word for it. It is just trusting on's own judgment as against others and the assembly of God.

I could not for a moment put a question of blasphemies against Christ on such a ground. It is really wickedness. The attempt to cover them by church questions, or by pleas of individual conscience, I abhor with a perfect abhorrence.

Allow me to put the question as to minor questions in another shape. Suppose I am of another assembly, and I think they judge something in a mistaken way, as I to *impose* my individual way of thinking *on them*? If not, what am I to do? Leave the assembly of God if it be such (if not I do not go there)? You cannot help yourself. If I do not continue in an assembly, because it does not agree with me in everything, I can be of no assembly of God in the world. All this is simply a denial of the presence and help of God's Spirit and of the faithfulness of Christ to His own people. I cannot see godly lowliness in it.

But if an assembly have judged as such in a case of discipline, admitting all brotherly communications and remonstrances, I distinctly say another assembly should, on the face of it, receive their act. If the wicked man is put out at Corinth, is Ephesus to receive him?: Where then is unity? where the Lord in the midst of the church? What led me out of the Establishment was the unity of the body: where it is not owned and acted on, I should not go. And of independent churches I think quite as ill, or worse, than of the Establishment. But if each assembly acts independently of another and receives independently of it, then it has rejected that unity -- they are independent churches. There is no practical unity of the body.

But I shall never be brought to such wickedness as to treat acceptance of blasphemers as an ecclesiastical question. If people like to walk with them or

help and support the bearing with them at the Lord's table, they will not have me. I distinctly judge that the principles defended shew want of lowliness as to self and a setting aside of the very idea of the church of God. I am not going to mix the two questions. I do not accept the setting aside my spiritual liberty: we are a flock, not an enclosure. But in questions of discipline, where no principle is denied, I do not set up my judgment against that of the assembly of God in that which God has committed to its care. It is just setting myself up as wiser, and neglecting God's word which has assigned certain duty to an assembly, which He will honor in its place.

Let me add, there is such a thing as obedience in what we do know, which goes before speculating on possible claims in obedience, where we should like to be free to go our own way. "To him that hath shall more be given." Doing what we know in obedience is a great way of knowing further.

Again, "the bond of unity between the churches is said to be the lordship of Christ." But there is not a word about churches (when we speak of unity), nor bond of churches; nor does unity consist of union of churches. Lordship is distinctly individual. Nor is Lord of the body a scriptural idea. Christ is Lord to individuals, Head to the body, over all things. Unity is not by lordship. Of course, individual obedience will help to maintain it, as all godliness will; but unity is unity of the Spirit, and in the body, not in bodies. Both Ephesians and Corinthians teach us distinctly that unity is in and by the Spirit, and that Christ has in this respect the place of Head, not of Lord, which referred to individual Christians. This error, if acted on, would falsify the whole position of gatherings, and make mere dissenters of them, and in no way meet the mind of Christ.

As to confounding infallibility and authority, see *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:421,422.

Another has said,

The most solemn act of the church of God is, "Put away from among yourselves that wicked or evil person." The word for evil is that used for the world; 'the whole world lieth' in it; the opposite to the church. But the person being put away, then arises the question, "How is that person to be regarded or treated now?" We get help to answer the question in 2 Thess. 3, where we are directed not to keep company with a brother because he refused to work with his hands for his daily bread. Now if the rule be so stringent for such a minor offence, when there is no immoral conduct, nor church insubordination, how much more must it applying the case of a person put away! In 2 Thess. 3 the person is not put away, but is subjected to distance and coldness of manner, in order that he might be ashamed; that he might feel how his brethren disapproved of his unhandsome mode of living. Hence when one is put away it is enjoined, "with such an one no not to eat." The excommunicated is for the time suspended from all connection with the body, and apart from the support of the Holy Spirit. If he truly feels his position, he must be soon overwhelmed with grief; and if he does not, he will become the tool of the enemy. If the Spirit of God suspends a person's place in the church, and this with the express object of eliminating from

---

1. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:418-421.

the offender the flesh which had offended, surely no spiritual soul could act in any other way.

There is often a well-intentioned kindness in the more amiable to relax the severity of excommunication, but they defeat their own object; they are not wise, for they are not in the fellowship of the Holy Ghost. God is wiser than man. Grace is wiser than nature. The grave position of the excommunicated is weakened, if not entirely frittered away by the unspiritual pity with which human feelings would mitigate the penalty of excommunication; never remembering that the object of the penalty is to effect a great result, which as far as they are concerned must be defeated by this unwise and unspiritual social familiarity.

Another thing is, the one who fails in carrying out the most solemn responsibility known in the house of God, invariably fails in everything connected with divine order elsewhere. If the greatest be disregarded, how can the least command attention? If I disrespect Him in His own house, surely He will allow my folly to be exposed, and often in a very painful way in my own house.

Lastly, be it remembered, that the more faithfully I adhere to the Spirit's action in putting away, the more am I seeking for the budding of repentance in the one put away, and the godly sorrow which works it. The first one to whom the Lord appeared after His resurrection was the repentant Peter: He delights in confirming His love to the repentant one. If I understand the mind of the Lord in directing the offender to be put away, I submit myself fully to His will; and as He waits to be gracious, so do I, if I am led by Him, rejoice in being allowed to confirm my love to the restored one.<sup>2</sup>

## ***Are Family Ties an Exception to 1 Cor. 5:11?***

With such a one, not even to eat (1 Cor. 5:11)

Let us consider the case of the near of kin, such as the husband, wife, or dependent children. Mr. Darby wrote about the case of the wife whose husband had been put away as follows:

Here it says, "no, not to eat". I would not dine with such an one: I would give him to eat if he were hungry, but not eat with him. Take a wife whose husband is put out. It may be awkward, but her action is not keeping company with him as a case of will: it is one of subjection to authority.<sup>3</sup>

It is clear that Mr. Darby recognized that the wife had a scriptural duty to perform as being in subjection; and, as being obedient to Christ because she loves Him, she does His will. The subjection of a wife to her husband is based

---

2. *A Voice to the Faithful* 15:61-64.

3. *Collected Writings* 26:330, Morrish ed.

on divinely instituted authority, and does not cease <sup>4</sup> if the husband is "put away" from amongst the saints by discipline of the assembly. By doing the will of Christ in fulfilling those duties of a wife, she does not wilfully "keep company" with her husband who has been put away, though she eats at the same table as he does.

Mr. Darby has also written about the case of a dependent son who was under assembly discipline. The entire letter is reproduced here for its valuable comments on the subject:

My dear Brother, -- I hold it of all importance to maintain intact the discipline of God's house, as to not eating with those under discipline. I got a dreadful scolding from one for acting on it. Nor do I in the least blame --. It is very well that the son should feel that the father did not feel lightly his son's getting put out. I should not eat with him, and if he ate at the same table, I should not enter into conversation with him, and if -- did, I should not like to be at the table. If the lad's spirit be at all subdued, and there was fear of alienating him by harshness, I might have him eat at the table, telling him that I could not have free intercourse with him. But as he was necessarily in the house I should not refuse letting him eat at the same table. But I could not keep company with him till he was humbled. This would not hinder anxious love as regards him, and the assurance of it; but familiarity and company at table, as if nothing had happened, I should not accept. I give my son his dinner if needed, I shew him my heart yearns over him, but I could not be familiar and at ease with him. I should not eat *with* him, if even I ate at the same time. Something would depend on the age of the son, and how far he was under the father's authority. If young and under it, I must let him eat, and treat him as I would treat on under rebuke. If grown up and independent, I should be less disposed to do so. <sup>5</sup>

Some, in an attempt to justify a course contrary to 1 Cor. 5:11, enlist the support of certain Old Testament scriptures. The tendency of doing so is to make God the author of their course (by claiming that they are following God's word in doing so), while in fact it is fleshly activity and lack of courage to be faithful. An Old Testament scripture enlisted in support of such a course is Lev. 21:1-4. In this portion of scripture the priest was allowed to defile himself by the dead in the case of a near relation, and there fore it is claimed by analogy that one may visit with, eat with, and socialize with, a relative put away as a wicked person. There are two considerations concerning this to which I would call attention:

1. As to typical teaching, it is leprosy in the Old Testament (as typifying the worst energy of active evil) that corresponds to leaven. Leprosy in the

---

4. This subject is more fully treated in "The Deportment of a Christian Woman," second ed. obtainable from the publisher.

5. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:63.



head or beard suggests doctrinal evil held (Rev. 2:14) or taught (Gal. 5:9) respectively, while leprosy in the body suggests moral evil (1 Cor. 5).<sup>6</sup>

2. "Defilement by the dead" suggests moral contact with that in man which has no life toward God. The energy of active evil is not the prominent thought as is the case with leaven (or leprosy) working, but of moral contact with moral death.

These two considerations should be sufficient to show that the use of Lev. 21:1-4 to justify the practice of relatives eating with, or socializing with, one who has been "put away" as a wicked person, is a misapplication of scripture. (See also Lev. 13:46.)

In addition to the above considerations we must ask, "Does the New Testament allow the Christian to have deliberate moral contact with that which is spiritually dead?" No, our Lord said, "Suffer the dead to bury their own dead" (Luke 9:60). Of course, a Christian may bury his relatives, or anyone else, but let nothing interfere with the call or rights of God. The law allowed divorce for many reasons; our Lord allowed but one. The law *allowed* many things; it made nothing perfect. Bow to the word of the Lord in 1 Cor. 5 and do not force Lev. 21 against the clear instruction of the Lord. This is the obedient, and therefore the holy, loving, happy path.

There is still another matter which those who would force Lev. 21 against 1 Cor. 5 have failed to consider, or have ignored. Num. 19:11-14 provides instruction concerning a person that touched a dead body. It specifies *cleansing*! Read the entire chapter. Numbers 9 shows the effect of such defilement concerning the eating of the passover. Ezek. 44:25,26 (a millennial passage) shows that the priest had to be cleansed from the defilement contracted. And Num. 5:2 states that whoever is defiled by a dead person was put out of the camp. The cleansing could, of course, soon take place following the instructions of Num. 19, a case altogether different from leprosy. If one pleads Lev. 21:4 to set aside 1 Cor. 5:11, at least the meaning of Num. 5:2-9 and Num. 19, and Ezek. 44:25 should be consistently practiced therewith! The obvious truth is that it is a false use of Lev. 21:1-4, and such a misuse of the word of God tends to make Him the author of transgression!

To treat with indifference the judgment of the Lord Jesus Christ concerning a wicked person, a judgment expressed in the assembly action of putting away a wicked person, is a very serious thing. Mr. Darby regarded this so serious a

---

6. This subject is treated in greater detail in "Leprosy and God's Presence Among His People," to be had from the publisher.

matter that he wrote:

Thus, supposing evident sin, as at Corinth, and one supported him in it and refused the clear common consent of all, so that it was a rejection of the assembly's authority when the case and the word were clear, they might hold him guilty with the offender.<sup>7</sup>

The Lord knows, I have no desire to offend anyone; but we are dealing with a foundation matter of holiness in God's house, and in our walk, and so we must be most plain. We are assured, however, that none who really trembles at God's word will be offended, but rather will rejoice with the truth, as love does (1 Cor. 13:6), glad of help or correction afforded on a subject of profound importance. Is not the *avenged* "love" shown to a wicked person in reality making provision for the flesh and sparing self? If we would judge ourselves and keep Christ before us, and keep before us the fact that it is *His* sentence that declares the person to be a wicked person (1 Cor. 5:13), -- leavened (1 Cor. 5:7) -- and that LEAVEN LEAVENS THE LUMP -- we would see and judge the seriousness of this false "love and grace".

The instruction in 1 Cor. 5:11, "with such a one not even to eat," is so plain and it is such a fundamental instruction; and it is so consonant with the first principles of holiness; and is so elementary; that if anyone who professes to love Christ is resentful or angered (rather than rejoicing with the truth -- 1 Cor. 13:6) by what has been said, it shows a seriously defective condition of soul. In connection with our attitude towards exposure of unholiness, the people's response to Ezra's identifying himself with the sin of God's people, and his confession, is very instructive. We find four responses:

1. Those that trembled at God's word (Ezra 9:4).
2. The people who bowed to the word (Ezra 10:1).
3. Those who opposed (Ezra 10:15)
4. Those who helped the opposers (Ezra 10:15 in JND transl.)

Let us cry out to God for grace to be found in the first and second groups whenever the word of God instructs us concerning our path here.

---

7. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:46.

## ***Announcement***

### **3NT**

3NT (three New Testament translations) is a computer program of three versions of the New Testament now available from Present Truth Publishers for users of IBM PC compatible computers.

Requiring much less hard disk space than you might think, you can now have the New Testament full text of the King James Version (KJV), the New Translation of J. N. Darby, and a version "newly translated from an amended text" by William Kelly (this version is incomplete in that much of Matthew, Mark and Luke are missing as well as a few other short passages). These three versions are supplied in a compressed file format along with a program that displays the three versions side by side on the computer monitor. Each version may be exported as an ASCII file for use with most word processors. This is not a concordance program, but the user may select any book, chapter, and verse, and scroll through all three versions simultaneously. System requirements: IBM PC or compatible computer, DOS 2.0 or greater, 256k RAM and 1.5 Mb free space on a hard disk.

**3NT** ..... \$15 (Postage Paid)

Please specify diskette type:

- ☐ low density 5 " diskette (360 K).
- ☐ high density 5 " diskette (1.2 Mb).
- ☐ low density 3 " diskette (720 K).
- ☐ high density 3 " diskette (1.44 Mb).

Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for shipping.

NJ residents add 7% sales tax.

Send orders to:

**PRESENT TRUTH PUBLISHERS**  
411 Route 79  
Morganville, NJ 07751

### ***H. E. Hayhoe's Assessment***

The effort of the enemy is to make assembly judgments so difficult that they will not take place at all. This will not come all at once, but gradually, so that evil will remain unjudged. Mr. Potter said once: "We all know how we dread discipline in the assembly". Why? Because of the spirit of rebellion against authority, and the desire to cover up evil, when it is near enough to be a reproach upon our name or family. It is clear that we should always bow to assembly judgments, save where it would commit us to a path that is unscriptural. In other words, we should have a positive scripture for refusing to accept the judgment of an assembly. The Word gives the assembly authority. The Word only can set aside that authority. Did our owning of either the 1881 or 1909 acts of those gathered to His name commit us to an unscriptural path? The answer is simple and clears the mind when principles of the truth have weight in the soul. This does not mean that a mistaken judgment ought not to be reviewed, but in the meantime we bow to it, and wait upon God that those who have erred may see His mind and recall what was not the mind of the Lord

(H. E. Hayhoe to P. Wilson, Aug. 19, 1939).

### ***What Can You Do?***

"What can you do? It is the last days." Have you heard that? Is the one who asks that question looking for direction, or is it a statement to excuse not doing anything? Now, such a question may arise in the face of the toleration of known evil. "What can you do? It is the last days." Well, we know it is the last days because we have read so in 2 Tim. 3. The last days began before Paul was gone. And in that same letter in which he designated the time as the last days he told us what to do:

Let everyone who names the name of [the] Lord withdraw from iniquity (2 Tim. 2:19).

Have you done that? If not, why do you disobey? Do you redefine evil so that it is not really that bad? -- excusing your unfaithfulness to the Lord?

For there is nothing covered up which shall not be revealed, nor secret that shall not be known: therefore whatever ye have said in the darkness shall be heard in the light, and what ye have spoken in the ear in chambers shall be proclaimed on the housetops (Luke 12:2,3).

Are you being neutral?

Ed

## ***J. G. Deck on Neutrality***

J. G. Deck, who 'ran away' to New Zealand to escape responsibility regarding the Bethesda matter, was recovered many years latter and warned us thus:

In a work of Satan NEUTRALITY is impossible: if there is an attempt to shun the responsibilities and sorrows of a path of entire decision for Christ, the spiritual senses become **deadened**, the heart **hardened**, the conscience **torpid**, the judgment **perverted**, and soon **hostility** to the witnesses against the evil succeeds indifference to the truth.

(Quoted in N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 2:567)

## ***Playing Church***

Awful as it is, I have known persons looked up to, pleaders against others and judges in cases, and the judgment, *ostensibly by the assembly*, given against one that was innocent, and who was excommunicated for that which the pleader and judge had himself committed; and the same sort of thing is oftener the case in the domestic regulations of the assembly. Lord, what is man when left to himself? What are we when we play with thy name, and at making, maintaining, and governing in (so-called) churches?

(*Ministry of G. V. Wigram* 2:63).

## ***High Treason Against God***

It is well to remember here that christian discipline has always the recovery of the soul for its object. Even if the offender should be delivered unto Satan, it is for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord -- a most forcible reason for exercising this discipline, according to the measure of our spiritual power; for we cannot go beyond that. At the least we might always humble ourselves before God, in order that the evil may be removed. To be indifferent to the presence of evil in the church is to be guilty of high treason against God; it is taking advantage of His love to deny His holiness, despising and dishonoring Him before all. God acts in love in the church; but He acts with holiness and for the maintenance of holiness: otherwise it would not be the love of God which acted; it would not be seeking the prosperity of souls.

(*The Bible Treasury* 12:288).

## ***J. N. Darby's Teaching Regarding the One Body***

"I understood the breach arose between you and Rotherham [i.e., between the Exclusive meetings at Sheffield and Rotherham] by reason of your reception of Goodall. With the main facts of his case I am acquainted, for I took part in what passed, and now allow me to put the case as it stands as to him. I put it merely as a principle. He (or any one else) is rejected in London. The assembly in London have weighed, and I with them, the case, and counted him as either excommunicated or in schism. I put the two cases, for I only speak of the principle. I take part in this act, and hold him to be outside the Church of God on earth, being outside (in either case) what represents it in London; I am bound by Scripture to count them [sic] so. I come to Sheffield; there he breaks bread, and is—in what? Not in the Church of God on earth, for he is out of it in London, and there are not two churches on earth, cannot be, so as to be in one and out of another. How can I refuse to eat with him in London and [yet] break bread with him in Sheffield? have one conscience for London, and another conscience for Sheffield? It is confusion and disorder. I do not apprehend I am mistaken in saying you received Goodall without having the reasons or motives of the Priory or other brethren in London. If you have had their reasons, the case is only the stronger, because you have deliberately condemned the gathering in London and rejected its communion; for he who is outside in London is inside with you."

This letter was dated Feb. 19, 1864 and was quoted by the hostile critic of JND, W. B. Neatby, *A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, pp. 225, 226. If JND was alive today, would you be in fellowship with him on the basis of this teaching?

## *Various Considerations*

### **DISOWNING DISCIPLINE**

J. N. Darby remarked,

But whilst a local assembly exists actually in a personal responsibility of its own, and while its acts, if they are of God, bind the other assemblies, as in the unity of the one body, this fact does not do away with another which is of the highest importance, and which many seem to forget, namely, that the voices of brethren in other localities have liberty equally with those of the local brethren, to make themselves heard in their midst, when discussing the affairs of a meeting of the saints, although they are not locally members of that meeting. To deny this would, indeed, be a serious denial of the unity of the body of Christ.

And more than this, the conscience and moral condition of a local assembly may be such as to betray ignorance, or at least an imperfect comprehension of what is due to the glory of Christ and to Himself. All this renders the understanding so weak that there is on longer any spiritual power for discerning good and evil. Perhaps in an assembly, also, prejudices, haste, or indeed the bent of mind, and the influence of one or of many may lead the assembly's judgment astray, and cause it to punish unjustly and do a serious wrong to a brother.

When such is the case, it is a real blessing that spiritual and wise men from other meetings should step in and seek to awaken the conscience of the assembly, as also, if they come at the request of the gathering or of those to whom the matter is the chief difficulty at the time. In such a case their stepping in far from being looked upon as an intrusion ought to be received and acknowledged in the name of the Lord. To act in any other way would surely be to sanction independency and to deny the unity of the body of Christ.

Nevertheless, those who come in and act thus ought not to act without the rest of the assembly, but with the conscience of all.

When an assembly has rejected every remonstrance, and refuses to accept the help and judgment of other brethren, when patience has been exhausted, an assembly which has been in communion with it is justified in annulling its wrong act, and in accepting the person who was put out if they were mistaken as to him. But when we are driven to this extremity, the difficulty has become a question of the refusal of fellowship with the assembly which has acted wrongly, and which has thus of its own accord broken its fellowship with the rest of those who act in the unity of the body. Such measures can only be taken after much care and patience, in order that the conscience of all may go along with the action as being of God.<sup>8</sup>

It is a solemn thing to reject an assembly action. Another has said,

... Suppose such an assembly, say at Corinth, had put out from among themselves the wicked person, and another assembly received him, the latter thereby denies that the first has acted in the character of an assembly of God,

---

8. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:199,200. See also 2:216,319; and *The Bible Treasury* 9:63.

representing there the body of Christ. It denies the action of the Holy Ghost in the assembly, or that what has been bound on earth has been bound in heaven;

Rejecting an assembly decision rejects that assembly as gathered together to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. It denies that the Lord is there any longer. It denies this to all who make themselves one with that assembly, i.e. all who own the discipline. Sometimes such a separation is right, i.e. in cases where positive proved evil has been "bound" and sanctioned. On the other hand, there have been divisions resulting from refusing assembly actions where no proven positive wickedness was done and maintained. False motives, false principles, and low state foster this. And does any Christian who professes to own the truth of the one body believe that those who refuse the assembly action are still gathered together on the ground that there is one body? Or that division occurs and those who support a false act are still gathered together on the ground that there is one body? The inventors of such notions prefer the fellowship of larger numbers to the truth of God!

## UNANIMITY OF JUDGMENT?

J. N. Darby remarked,

... unanimity is nonsense, a denial of the power and operation of the Spirit, and clean contrary to the word of God. First, it is nonsense; because till the case is decided the person charged is one of the assembly, and you are not going to make him agree as led by the Spirit in judging his own case. If you do not allow him, you have put him out before his case is decided. It is real nonsense. Waiting for quiet godly men who doubt is all right: unanimity is so many men agreeing. The world must go on and so judges by a majority, but for the saints nothing can be done unless all agree -- this is man, not the Spirit of God. Supposing it was a flagrant case of stealing or adultery? Are you to wait till he agrees to put himself out? Again, supposing the person or persons are obstinate, self-willed, evil walkers? The assembly must, in either case, go on with wickedness, with what God judges in its midst, till the guilty think proper to judge themselves, or break up altogether. It is denying the operation of God's Spirit in the assembly's clearing itself: better not to have any discipline at all.

it will be said that we have not the power -- say of Paul. Be it so. But put out "from among yourselves" is a duty, obedience to the plain word of God, not power in the sense of an apostle. Evil is to be got rid of "that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened." The requiring unanimity is contrary to the plain word of God on the point. Paul says, "Having in readiness to avenge all disobedience when your obedience is accomplished." This puts the case that after the labor of the apostle to produce obedience and produced its full effect, some might remain not subject to the word; then he would come with the rod



and avenge disobedience. The case is stated of no unanimity, and dealing with those who stood out. I quite understand that people may seek to say the power is not here. But that is not the question, but that unanimity is not supposed even when the power was there; and I am persuaded that though power is not manifested as it was, Christ is just as true to His church, and has just as much power now as then, and will shew it. But unanimity is a mere human device: there is no such thought in scripture. It is merely a set of men must agree: the power of the Holy Ghost is denied. The judgment is not valid because men agree, but because God is there: and Christ being there is not supposed by the apostle necessarily to produce unanimity.<sup>10</sup>

## WHAT ABOUT A MAJORITY?

Another has said,

Now it is quite evident a minority *may* be the most spiritual In the case of Corinth, all, as far as appears in public, were gone wrong, and allowed, and were puffed up about evil. A majority, judging *as such*, cannot be said to have the Holy Ghost guiding them because they are a majority. This is quite manifest. It is a mere human principle, such as the world is obliged to act on, because it has no other way of getting out of its difficulties. But the Church of God has. It has the presence and guidance of the Holy Ghost.<sup>11</sup>

Counting persons does not settle the truth of a matter, nor is it a spiritual mode of determining the mind of God. I remember that a brother once said, at a meeting of brothers for the case of the Lord's interests, that we do not ask for opinions, to count them. If one has an exercise of soul he is free to bring it before his brethren. Also, the judgments of each brother do not carry the same weight. It is well to remember these things when seeking the mind of the Lord on any occasion. God's assembly is not a democracy.

## DOUBTFUL CASES

J. N. Darby remarked:

But if there were godly brethren who doubted about the facts, or the judgment of scripture on the facts -- provided the rightness of discipline in itself be recognized, so that it is not the principle of retaining known evil, or the denial of the competency of the assembly to judge evil -- then I should say they should wait and look to the Lord to make them of one mind. Speaking of a "dead-lock" is supposing only men are there, whereas Christ is. If the assembly be in a state incompetent to judge, it is for the assembly to humble itself, that through grace it may be able to know God's mind. There is One above it all able to bring about

---

10. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:143,144. See also 2:244,245; 3:61; and *Ministry of G. V. Wigram* 2:63.

11. *The Bible Treasury* 2:352.

His thoughts, and he who has faith will find the sureness of His hand if He be really waited on. But nothing requires more waiting on Him than discipline, personal feelings are so apt to come in.<sup>12</sup>

## DECLARING ONE OUT OF FELLOWSHIP

Sometimes persons tire of spiritual worship and return to some religious system; or there is some difficulty and they withdraw from fellowship. In another case, one just may have stopped remembering the Lord. They are then "declared out of fellowship," i.e. it is announced that they are no longer regarded as being in fellowship at the Lord's table. Does it mean that such are wicked persons as in 1 Cor. 5? No.

Sometimes the going out is an act of mere ignorance; as for instance when one, used to a sermon every Sunday morning, grows weary of worship in spirit and truth, and pines for a discourse to relieve him of the distaste he feels for the Spirit's liberty of action in the assembly. How cruel to stigmatize the weak one, unspiritual though he may be, as a "wicked person"!<sup>13</sup>

However, if there is a charge of one of the kinds of sin noted in 1 Cor. 5, the assembly does not declare such a person "out". He must be "put away" as "a wicked person." It is not merely announced by someone that he is out. The leaven must be judged in an assembly meeting (1 Cor. 5:4) wherein *the assembly* proves itself pure in the matter (2 Cor. 7:11).

Only in the case where leaven is not involved may one be declared, or announced, as being out of fellowship. On the other hand, however, a person must not escape censure by quickly withdrawing in order to escape an impending discipline.

## IS IT SCRIPTURAL TO CALL AN EXCOMMUNICATED PERSON A BROTHER IN CHRIST?

Another, with whose judgment I concur, said,

I think it is not. He who persisted in gross evil (as in 1 Cor. 5) is treated as a wicked person; and this is the more in point, as the Holy Ghost knew him, spite of his frightful sin, to be converted, as we know afterwards from 2 Cor. 2:7.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, the Spirit of God says, "if any one called a brother. . . ." *He* does not call

---

12. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:47.

13. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 3:255.

14. *The Bible Treasury* 2:288.

him a brother. Should we?

## THE WITHIN AND THE WITHOUT IN VIEW OF 2 TIMOTHY 2

Do ye not judge them that are within? But those without God judges  
(1 Cor. 5:12,13)

The duty to separate from evil abides in a day of ruin. We do live in a day of ruin in spite of the denials of those who palliate evil, who deny the truth concerning the holiness of Christian fellowship, and who pretend that the ruin does not exist. 2 Timothy instructs us in view of this ruin and this bears upon the matter of the "within" and "without" of 1 Cor. 5:12,13.

Those gathered together to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ are not the assembly of God in such and such a place, for the assembly of God in such and such a place embraces all Christians in that place. (For the doctrine of an assembly in a city, see the helpful remarks in *Letters of J. N. Darby* under index title of "Assembly in a city".)

Those gathered together unto the name of our Lord Jesus Christ are part of the ruin and must act so as to recognize the fact. Matt. 18:20 is so worded as to allow for the ruin. We still may now be gathered per Matt. 18:20. but when the Corinthian saints were so gathered the condition depicted in 2 Timothy did not exist. the wicked person was put "outside", into Satan's sphere (1 Cor. 5:4). He was outside the church everywhere. But now we are in the time depicted by 2 Timothy. It is not true that we can regard all Christians not gathered to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ as "outside" because such a thought does not take account of the ruin, the condition depicted in 2 Tim. 2. Those "outside" are regarded in 1 Cor. 5 as put there by an act of the Lord Jesus Christ acting in and through the assembly gathered together unto His name (1 Cor. 5:4).

In a day of ruin we still have His presence thus (Matt. 18:20), only the ruin teaches us not to regard all who are not gathered together . . . as "outside"; yet so far as the discipline exercised through the saints gathered together to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ is concerned they *act on the principle* of the "within" and "without". such "put away from among yourselves that wicked person", without claiming to be exactly equivalent to the "yourselves" denoted in 1 Cor. 5. the call to separate from leaven abides amidst the ruin, as we shall also see when we consider 2 Tim. 2 in Part 2, yet we do not act as "*the assembly of God*" or claim such status. To do so denies the ruin. However, we refuse intercourse with leaven and pursue righteousness per the instructions in 2 Tim. 2 where the pathway in the midst of ruin is shown to be one of exclusion of leaven and refusal of connection with it.

We ought, then, to walk in that path which should characterize all of the people of God, taking account also of the ruin in which we find ourselves and the directions given in the Word with regard to it.

We must have the mind of the Lord regarding expressions used by the Spirit of God in connection with the condition about which He used it. There are things which can now be taken up in such a way as to pretend that the assembly of God on earth is in its original outward unity; or to pretend that a group is set up as the assembly of God. Our faces belong in the dust concerning the general state of the church and our part in it, and concerning the recovery of the truth and the humbling things that have transpired since, and our part in that.

J. N. Darby remarked:

In the first of Corinthians it is of moment to remark because it is the epistle in which a local assembly is spoken of as practically in certain respects representing the whole assembly of God, that the epistle is addressed to all believers everywhere -- all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. We get a church-character, but the apostle in his address is careful to associate all Christians with those at Corinth. Hence, if one was put out as a wicked person by the assembly at Corinth, he was "without," that is, outside the *whole* church of God (not of the body of Christ vitally, but the assembly on earth). Nor can you indeed read the entire epistle without seeing that what was said by the apostle, and consequently done by the assembly at Corinth, was an act valid for the whole body of saints on earth; that they are viewed as involved in it, as indeed they are expressly mentioned. To say he was only outside the particular assembly, when he was put out of it, is a monstrous and mischievous perversion. when the apostle says "them within," and "them that are without," to say that he only means within or without a particular body ("do ye not judge them that are within? them that are without God judgeth"); it is clearly "within," or "without," *on earth*; and it is clearly not within or without a particular assembly; the difference is between Christians and men of the world.<sup>15</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

The removal of wickedness does not require that we be filled with knowledge first, but that we be humbled and godly enough to do what is due to Christ.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

---

15. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 20:397. See also p. 451.

---

## THE TRUTH OF CHRIST'S PERSON

---

### CHAPTER 4.6:

### GAL. 3:19-25: UNDER THE LAW

#### *GAL. 3:19-22: FUNCTION OF THE LAW*

#### WHY THEN THE LAW (V. 19)?

Why then the law? It was added for the sake of transgressions, until the seed came to whom the promise was made, ordained through angels<sup>1</sup> in [the] hand of a mediator (Gal. 3:19).

The words "it was added" indicate that the law was not there before Moses, spite of theologians who claim Adam had the law.<sup>2</sup> Adam had *a* law. *The* law came by (was given by) Moses (John 1:17), not by God to Adam. The law was added to the course of trial of the first man.

But law came in,<sup>3</sup> in order that the offense might abound (Rom. 5:20).

The function of the law was to convict man of his total ruin. Scripture, referring to the law says:

For the letter kills, but the Spirit quickens. (But if the ministry of death, in letters, graven in stones . . . For if the ministry of condemnation . . . (2 Cor. 3:6-9).

The letter killing means the law, called here a ministry of death and condemnation.

Theology would also say that the law was given to restrain transgressions.<sup>4</sup>

1. [See Acts 7:53 and Heb. 2:2. Cf. Psalm 68:17. Moses was the mediator (Deut. 5:5). The law was ordained through angels but that does not mean they were mediators. See *The Bible Treasury* 2:159.]

2. See *Collected Writings* 10:149 for why that idea was invented. See also 10:99, 100 and *Notes and Comments* 5:7.

3. See *Collected Writings* 10:4.

4. I was surprised and sorry to find this taught in the Dallas Theological Seminary's *Bible Knowledge Commentary*, Wheaton: Victor Books, p. 599 (1983).

We just looked at two Scriptures which contradict that notion. Obviously, those who state such notions are ignorant of the character of the trial of the first man. J. N. Darby explained:

"The law was added, because of transgressions." This is constantly cited as if it meant to restrain them. But it really means, I have not the least doubt, to introduce them -- thus convicting man of his perverse and wicked will. The law could not be added to restrain them, because there were none until it came; for where no law is, there is no transgression. It was added to turn evil in man's heart into transgression by positive commandment, and give the knowledge of sin to the easy conscience of man. It is important to distinguish between the law as a dispensed government of a single people, and law, the effect of law, on the human heart. The English Authorized Version will help us little as to this, though the great body of the Apostle's argument is founded on the nature and effect of law on the human heart.

God's intention then in law was as to spiritual things to bring in transgression and convict of sin -- man being already and hopelessly lost. As an outward dispensation for the Jews, it doubtless tended as a civil system to repress grosser evils: but then God was king of the country and people, and the people governed by it, and that in early times, emerging out of heathenism, before Christ came and was rejected. The Gentiles have nothing to say to it in this sense. It was a schoolmaster up to the time of Christ; then faith came and Judaism ceased. The only way a Gentile can be under law is as a principle of personal responsibility, in which he has to answer for himself, and which ground it is a ministry of death and condemnation (2 Cor. 3), the strength of sin, and useful only to bring guilt on his conscience, and the sense that he has no power to free himself, or any possibility of his being freed from the power of sin while on this ground.<sup>5</sup>

It should be clear to the reader that there can be no transgression unless there is law to transgress. The giving of the law was a stage in the exposure of the total ruin of the first man, up until, and the consummation in, the crucifixion of Christ.

Before the giving of the law sin was in the world. It entered through Adam (Rom. 5:12). Sin was in the world between Adam and the giving of the law (Rom. 5:13). "But where no law is neither is there transgression" (Rom. 4:15). Adam had a law and transgressed that law. It is necessary to have law in order for transgression of law to exist. Between Adam and the giving of the law there was no transgression of the law. Yet, sin was there between Adam and the giving of the law. After the law was given, sin expressed itself in the form of transgression.

Sin is not the transgression of the law.<sup>6</sup>

---

5. *Collected Writings* 13:385.

6. See *Collected Writings* 10:98,155,159 and 24,60,150 and *Notes and Comments* 4:46,65. the mistranslation is "an abominable error," *Notes and Comments* 5:35.

Sin is lawlessness (1 John 3:4).

Lawlessness, acting without reference to the will of the Creator, indifference to it, was in the world from Adam to Moses. The law brought it out in the form of transgression of positive prohibition.

Now, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Thus was told out the love and grace of God as well as the righteous demands of His justice. When all of man's resources were exhausted, God showed His resources. He fell back upon His grace and provided the Lamb for a burnt offering and was completely satisfied and vindicated concerning the question of sin. Then could He come out in the fullness of His grace to the sinner and be just in justifying him. (Yea, then the mystery, the secret kept from ages and generations (Rom. 16:25,26) was unfolded.) But the law must come between the promise and the fulfillment of the promise that man might learn on what basis he is blessed. I should add that we do not have the fulfillment of the promise now. That fulfillment is millennial, but there is an application meanwhile because we are Christ's. We are heirs of the promise, but as we have already seen, there is much beyond that which we have meanwhile as members of the body of Christ.

Another wrote:

It [the law] was not given till more than four centuries after the promise to Abraham (Gal. 3:17). Abraham then was never under it, nor did God ever put Gentiles under it (Rom. 2:14: Gal. 4:3-5), as the council at Jerusalem distinctly owned (Acts 15:14-21). Wherefore then serveth it? "It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made" (Gal. 3:19). It "entered that the offence might abound" (Rom. 5:20). It has not its application to righteous people, but to lawless, etc. (1 Tim. 1:9,10). It could not give life, so righteousness could not come by it (Gal. 3:21), and "as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse" (Gal. 3:10), and the righteousness which is of the law is clean contrary to that which is of faith (Rom. 10:5-10). Further, it has dominion over a man only as long as he liveth, and those once under it as Jews, were, if Christians, dead to it by the body of Christ, to be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead to bring forth fruit unto God (Rom. 7:4).<sup>7</sup>

The function of the law is here traced by J. N. Darby:

The law was added because of transgressions till the Seed should come and the promises be made good. To Him they were confirmed, and if we are His, consequent on the work of redemption, we are heirs according to promise; but the inheritance is not of law at all, it is of promise in contrast with law, which cannot affect the unconditional and confirmed promise. But it will be said that, though no formal law was given, the law must be an enactment of it, the authority of the lawgiver intervening. That the contents of the law were holy,

---

7. *The Bible Witness and Review* 3:317.

and just, and good, is nothing to the purpose; that the natural conscience acquired by the fall saw many things contained in it to be right, is true; but to have a transgression and a law there must be a formally given commandment. Since the law given to Adam, God never gave a law till Sinai came, unless we except the condition of not eating blood to Noah. It was *never* given to have righteousness by; for man was a lost sinner before it was given, and Christ's death needed. It was given to make the offence abound, to bring in the conviction of the helpless condition of sin man was in more definitely and distinctly. It was never meant to be the means of having righteousness, it came too late for it: if a law had been given which had given life, then man in that life had wrought the righteousness, and righteousness would have been by the law. But such was not God's plan, and He took care to shew it, and gave the promise on which the blessing depended before any law at all, confirming it to the Seed - Christ; and then, when He had established the blessing otherwise than by law, He gave the law.

Now if I am to take the use and application of law, I must take it as God used and applied it, and that was not to produce righteousness but to make the offence abound, having previously given the blessing in a way which excluded any bringing in of the law for it. Justification and righteousness then are declared to be in another way than by law, and by a way with which it is impossible to connect the law, because nothing can be added to the promise confirmed to Christ. Adding the law, setting it up again, when we have gone to Christ, the promised Seed, for justification, is frustrating the grace of God; for if righteousness came by law, Christ is dead in vain. But if we are righteous by Christ's keeping the law, it does come by the law, and Christ's death is in vain. The inheritance is not by law, says the apostle; righteousness is not by law: the doctrine which teaches that it is, is a subversion and denial of Christianity as Paul taught it. The apostle's reasoning is careful and reiterated on this point; it is his great thesis as to justification. That is, his great thesis as to justification is to deny and denounce what my adversaries insist on, and in the chapter which follows the one to which I have alluded the apostle carefully shows that the two principles of promise and law cannot go together, that the scripture declares that the bondwoman and her seed must be cast out.

What does he say in the Romans? "For the promise that he should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith"; that is, the righteousness of faith is not by law at all. "For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of none effect." Yet we are told it must be by law and so only, and Christ's keeping it; that is, righteousness is in a work done according to our responsibility in flesh, and accomplished before any redemption is wrought by blood; whereas we are all called to reckon ourselves wholly dead as regards that life, yea, told we are dead, and so justified or freed from sin, and alive now to God as risen in Christ, taught not even to know Christ after the flesh. And what consequently am I called upon to believe in order to righteousness being imputed to me? On Him who raised up Christ from the dead, who was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification. I am not called upon, the law being in question, to believe He kept it for me that I might have righteousness imputed to me; I am told the promise does *not* come in that way, but to believe that He was delivered for my offenses and raised again for my justification. It is to a Christ raised from the dead I am called to look. It is not to His keeping the law that God teaches me to look for my justification. I am taught that my



righteousness does not come by law or that His death is vain.

If I go a step farther, I find not only that Christ died for me and rose again, but I am dead and risen with Him so as to have no existence in relationship to that to which law applied. Law applied to a man alive; but I have died. I am become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that I might be to another, to Him who is raised from the dead. "When we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members; but now we are delivered from the law, having died in that in which we were held." The law has power over a man as long as he lives, but our old man is crucified with Christ: the whole footing we are on now, not in the life in which we are born of Adam, to which as long as it lived law could apply, but created again in Him who is raised from the dead, passed out of the region to which law applies, not by enfeebling it, but by dying as to the nature and state to which it applies and to sin at the same time, and being a new creature, accepted in the Beloved and belonging to another, so that we cannot live to the old, nor admit the claim of law over us, and so be to another while we are to Christ.

If we turn to the Ephesians, where the subject of our place in Christ is fully viewed, we find man, Jew or Gentile, viewed as dead in trespasses and sins, and Christ Himself as Head. God's power raises Him up and gives Him to be the Head of the body; we, by the very same power, when dead in trespasses and sins, have been quickened together with Him, and raised up together -- Jew or Gentile, under law or without law, near or far off, alike children of wrath -- and made to sit together in heavenly places in Him. Under law? Surely not; but brought out wholly from the place, state, and condition we were in before, were it under law or lawless, by the power of the new creation, in union with Christ as sitting at God's right hand. It is not a making good the duties of the old state or creation, but holding all as dead and ruined in it, and forming a new, which has its duties -- good works which God has afore prepared. We were predestinated, the whole place and glory too, before the world, and the works afore prepared as suited to the new place, even to be "imitators of God as dear children," and not, as Paul says, to build again the old thing out of which we have been delivered.

This alone gives a just estimate of what Christianity is. I do not say that every truly converted person has laid hold of this. A man may be a Christian and only just know that he is forgiven -- blessed knowledge too. But the doctrine I oppose denies the truth I am speaking of, builds up again that out of which we are delivered, makes Christ a restorer of the old man, not the beginning to us of the new in the state into which He is entered as risen. The making Christ a keeper of the law for us as being under it is destroying the very truth and nature of Christianity as scripture teaches it. Was then the breach of the law by those under it held to be of no account and immaterial? In no wise. Christ took its curse so as to maintain all its authority in the highest way, but not to put Jews back, and Gentiles for the first time under it; but, having risen after having died as bearing the curse, to introduce both into a wholly new place founded on the power of divine life in resurrection, where neither Adam innocent nor Adam fallen, nor the Jew under law nor the lawless heathen, ever were, one more than the other, different as their states might be. Taken even in their highest character, the duties of man as man are not the manifestation of God; and this last is what we are called on to follow and imitate. Christ was perfect as come in the flesh, and born under the law; but by redemption He has placed us on a new ground, where we are not in the flesh at all nor put under the law. We are

sons in the power of resurrection, not servants. Christ has perfectly glorified God as regards the old position, both in His own walk and in bearing the curse due to our failure in it; but He has not put us into it and met our failures in it as now under law by keeping the law, but delivered us out of it by redemption, and given us a part with Himself in the new place into which He is entered, and no other.

People make this great mistake, that because the moral law is in itself good and perfectly holy, therefore man is necessarily and always under it. This is not so. It was not the case at the beginning: men were distinctly placed under promise as contrasted with law, and the law's use and place is distinctly stated in scripture. Man was under a law when innocent, a specific law which only tested obedience, and required no personal knowledge of right and wrong. He failed and became a sinner. To give him a law then as a way of righteousness and life would be only condemnation and death.

But God shewed that He did not mean putting man under law to be the way of righteousness. His order of dealing was this: an absolute unconditional promise, to which the blessing was attached, and which was irrevocable and unchangeable, was given. The question of righteousness was not raised by it. God promised and of course would give the blessing as promised. This promise was confirmed to the Seed -- Christ; and, if we look closer into the figure, confirmed to Him after being offered in sacrifice and raised. However, it was confirmed to the Seed, that is, to Christ. After this the law is added, enters, but cannot change the promise. It raised the question of righteousness, and put it on man's accomplishment to shew that he could not make it out, and to the Seed came, to whom the promise was made. The administration of law, its use with man, was special and occasional. Christ, the seed, was to be life and righteousness, and the One through whom the Spirit was to be received, not the law. But He comes in connection with man's position in flesh. Though He knew no sin, He was in the likeness of sinful flesh, "born of the seed of David according to the flesh" -- *γενομενος* of a woman; *γενομενος* under the law. This was man's and Israel's place as a sinner; Christ's place sinless, and in a sinless way. He glorified God in it, as man had dishonored Him. But He works redemption and takes a new place, taking believers out of the old, so that now we say "when we were in the flesh," "ye are not in the flesh." Promise confirmed to the Seed; law till the Seed came; the Seed come; the time of the law closed, and the redemption of him who was under it valid for every believer, who thereon receives the Spirit: such is the divine order of God's dealings. He who puts us under law, or makes law so universal as to hinder promise being first (when man was a sinner and law only brought in for important purposes by the by), upsets the revealed order and principle of all God's dealings with man.<sup>8</sup>

## A MEDIATOR

But a mediator is not of one, but God is one (Gal. 3:20).

J. N. Darby pointed out:

---

8. *Collected Writings* 10:63-67.

This is on the ground of the contrast between promise and law. When the law was given, there was a mediator needed, because there are two parties, God and the people to whom the law is given. The stability of promise depends on the faithfulness of One: there is no need of two. Under law, God does not reveal Himself. He reveals what He requires of man, but there is no love and no grace in love. The mediator Moses reported the words of God to the people. The thought in this verse, "A mediator is not of one, but God is one," is not about Christ, the Mediator, as in 1 Timothy 2, but rather the abstract notion, that if you have a mediator you must have two parties; whilst, by contrast, a promise is given from one. God giving promise and Christ receiving it are one -- God is one. The church, as such, was never the subject of promise. It was hidden from ages and generations, and revealed now. That which makes obscurity in the passage is that the conclusion is not drawn, though the premises are laid down.<sup>9</sup>

Thus, the promises are unconditional -- there was only one party, God, sovereign promising blessing, whereas the law was a conditional covenant. But this brings up the subject of whether or not if a covenant has a mediator, is it *ipso facto* a conditional covenant. It may be; or, it may not be.

Covenant in scripture is different from covenant as understood by us in common language. It is the form of dealing God takes with man, not an agreement between God and man, or man and God. The church gets all the spiritual blessings of the new covenant, because in Christ. Thus we have all the moral blessing of the new covenant, in the Spirit, though not in the letter. "The blood of the everlasting covenant" in Hebrews 13 is that which is finished and done with, and will go all the way through, and is available for all. The blood will never lose its value. It is the groundwork of all God's dealings with man in all ages.<sup>10</sup>

## THE LAW OR PROMISE (VV. 21,22)?

[Is] then the law against the promises of God? Far be the thought. For if a law had been given able to quicken, then indeed righteousness were on the principle of law; but the scripture has shut up all things under sin, that the promise, on the principle of faith of Jesus Christ, should be given to those that believe.

In view of what Paul had written regarding the function of the law, namely, that it was added for the sake of transgressions (i.e., to bring sin out in the form of transgressions), the question may be raised: Is the law against the promises of God? No. The Scripture, using the law, shut up all things under sin in order

9. "Thoughts on Galatians 3," *Collected Writings* 34:401. See also *The Bible Treasury*, New Series, 3:48. This note appeared in *The Christian Annotator* 1:74:

Galatians 3:20, p. 7. -- I refer your readers to a very scholastic writer in the "Vindication of Protestant Principles," Parker, 1847. Herrman assures us there were 304 interpretations of these words; and in 1821, Weigund had examined 243 of them.

Thomas Myers.

10. *Collected Writings* 34:402.

that blessing would come on the principle of faith, not of works. The law cannot quicken, cannot give divine life. Righteousness cannot be obtained on the principle of law.<sup>11</sup> It is obtained on the principle of faith:

For [it was] not by law [that the promise was to Abraham, or to his seed, that he should be heir of [the] world, but by righteousness of faith. For if they which [are] of law be heirs, faith is made vain, and the promise made of no effect. For law works wrath; but where no law is neither [is there] transgression. Therefore [it is] on the principle of faith, that [it might be] according to grace, in order to the promise being sure to all the seed, not to that only which [is] of the law, but to that also which [is] of Abraham's faith, who is father of all (Romans 4:13-16).

## THE LAW AS A TUTOR UP TO CHRIST (VV. 23-25).

But before faith came, we<sup>12</sup> were guarded under law, shut up to<sup>13</sup> faith [which was] about to be revealed. So that the law has been our tutor up to Christ, that we might be justified on the principle of faith. But, faith, having come, we are no longer under a tutor; for ye are all God's sons by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:23-25).

These verses are not meant to imply that there was no faith previous to when Christ was here.

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him; for before [his] translation he has the testimony that he had pleased God. But without faith [it is] impossible to please [him] (Hebrews 11:5,6).

"Before faith came" means faith as God's declared ground of blessing in finished work of Christ. Compare John 1:17 and Gal. 4:1-3.

Christ is the Second Man (1 Cor. 15:47). The law was for the first man in his Adamic standing and responsibility. The first man, in the persons of the Jews, was under the tutor, the law. The *lesson* that the tutor was teaching is resented by the first man, the man who does not want to believe that no good thing dwells in him.

"We were guarded under law" does not mean under 'the moral law.' It does not say "under *the* law," but "under law," referring to the character or principle of it, before faith came. The guarding indicates a hedging in, no liberty (Cf.

11. "Christ's righteous lawkeeping" is not put to our account. We are made the *righteousness of God* in Him (2 Cor. 5:21). They are not the same thing.

12. ["We" means we Jews. The Gentiles were not under the law.]

13. [The translation of "up to" is discussed by W. Kelly in *The Bible Treasury* 19:380. The passage does not teach that the law brings us to Christ. It was a tutor up to Christ. After that it is no longer such.]

Gal. 4:9 and 5:1, "bondage").<sup>14</sup> The regenerate man of Rom. 7 who was under law in his conscience finally realized he was brought "into captivity to the law of sin" (Rom. 7:23) and cried out for deliverance (Rom. 7:24). In Christ he was set free (Rom. 8:2; cf. 2 Cor. 3:17).

Note that "the law has been our tutor up to Christ"; not, to bring us to Christ. It is a statement of the end of the tutor's time. It was not the law's function to bring the Jews to Christ. We have previously considered the function of the law. Justification is not possible through law but is on the principle of faith. And by faith in Christ Jesus "ye are all God's sons." Notice the change from "we" (we Jews) to "ye all." Ye Galatians, ye all are God's sons, as is the reader of these lines, apart from the tutor. Ye sons of God, ye are not under the tutor; no, not even as the rule of life. The tutor is not the rule of life. The same book that shows that the faith that has come and displaced the tutor also tells us what our rule is: "the law of the Christ" (Gal. 5:2):

But far be it from me to boast save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom [the] world is crucified to me, and I to the world. For [in Christ Jesus] neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision; but new creation. And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace upon them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God (Gal. 5:14-16).

Regarding the law, it is asserted by anti-dispensationalists that:

Its purpose was to bring us to Christ (Gal. 3:24).<sup>15</sup>

Without it, we would never have arrived at Christ.<sup>16</sup>

In view of the fact that Gentiles never were under the law (Rom. 2:14; Gal. 4:3-5; Acts 15:14-21) these remarks betray grave ignorance of the ways of God and the testing of the first man.

Theology says that the law is a transcript of the mind of God. J. N. Darby well said that the law was a transcript of what the first man ought to be.<sup>17</sup> Christ's walk was far above the law, which law did not require sacrifice for sinners or the bearing of a sinners' curse; and more, the law was not the manifestation of the Father, etc., etc.<sup>18</sup> The law was a tutor up to Christ. It

14. "Obedience the Saints Liberty" is a paper written by J. N. Darby, *Collected Writings* 28:103-107. Christian liberty is freedom to do the will of God in the power of the Holy Spirit by those having the seed of God (1 John 3:9).

15. *The Wesleyan Bible Commentary* 5:348.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 349.

17. *Collected Writings* 7:285; see also 10:16 and *Notes and Comments* 5:7, 30, 65, 67.

18. See J. N. Darby, *Notes and Comments* 5:38.

was not two tutors. There was only one tutor. Anti-dispensationalists divide the law into two parts, the ceremonial (which is supposed to be done away) and the moral law (the 10 commandments - which are for the Christian as his rule of life). However, it is clear that there is not a ceremonial tutor and a moral tutor so that the ceremonial tutor was up to Christ and then is gone, but the moral tutor continues on and tutors Christians now. Is not the anti-dispensational scheme a two tutor scheme? We are not under a tutor:

But faith having come, we are no longer under a tutor; for ye are all God's sons by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal 3:25).

As those "in Christ," in the new creation (Gal. 6:15) we walk by the "rule" of the new creation (Gal. 6:16), "the law of the Christ" (Gal. 6:3). Grace and truth came by Him (John 1:17). The Scripture of Truth teaches us the *truth* that we are taught by *grace*, not by a supposed moral tutor:

... that they may adorn the teaching which [is] of our Savior God in all things. For the grace of God which carries with it salvation for all men has appeared, teaching us that, having denied impiety and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and justly, and piously in the present course of things, awaiting the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all lawlessness, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous for good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise thee (Titus 2:10-15).

Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (John 1:17). We believe that grace teaches us (Titus 2:10-15). We are sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal 4:1-7). Such are not looked at as in their minority, under a tutor, but as in their majority, brought into sonship, walking according to "the law of the Christ" (Gal. 6:2), the rule of the new creation (Gal. 6:15,16) of which Christ is the Head. For so believing what the Scripture states, those who in effect divide the tutor into two tutors (ceremonial and moral) and place the Christian under the moral tutor (the moral law) label us antinomians. Now, if that charge is false, where does that leave those who say so?

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

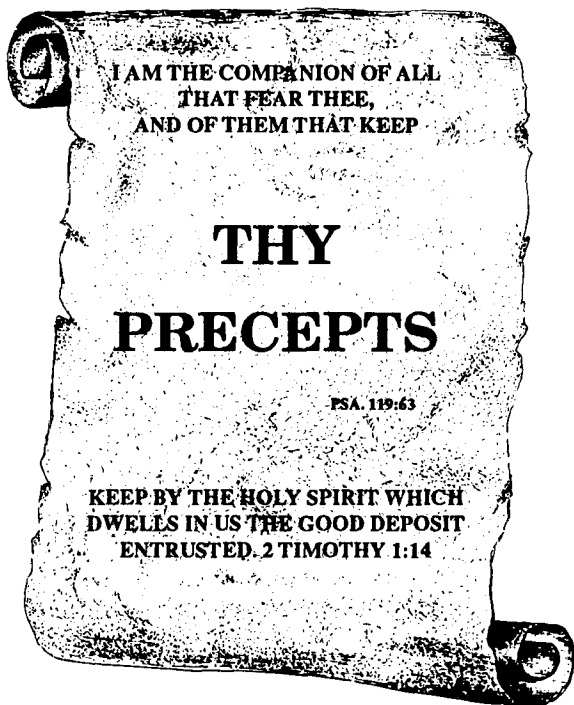




**PRESENT TRUTH PUBLISHERS**  
**411 Route 79 • Morganville, NJ 07751**

[www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)





**SEPT / OCT 1992**

**Vol. 7, # 5**

---

## **CONTENTS**

---

Could Christ Sin? .....	129
The Spirit of Contentment .....	137
The Holiness of Christian Fellowship .....	138
State of Soul and the Mind of God .....	148
The Crystal Goddess Ad .....	153
Baptism Does not Remove Dirt from the Body? .....	154
God's Grace and Man's Ruin .....	154
Usefulness .....	156
Fellowship and its Responsibilities .....	157



---

---

# THE TRUTH OF CHRIST'S PERSON

---

---

## "THE SON CAN DO NOTHING OF HIMSELF SAVE WHATEVER HE SEES THE FATHER DOING" (COULD CHRIST SIN?)

### *What is Temptation?*

We noted previously that the notion of the peccability of Christ involves the idea that He had inner kinship of response with us to temptation. Examination of this notion will show that it also involves a minimization of the true character of sin in the flesh. We must next see how this is so.

#### THE EVIL DOCTRINE ASSERTED.

The well-known scholar, Ralph Earle, wrote:

The temptation of Jesus was no play-acting on the stage. Some have put the whole emphasis on His deity until the temptation has become unreal -- just something displayed for effect. But that attitude actually denies the historicity of the Gospels.

The author of Hebrews has underscored the reality of the temptation. He says that Jesus "suffered being tempted" (Heb. 2:18). That is, His temptations were as real to Him as ours are to us.<sup>1</sup> There is no profit in debating the question as to whether He could have failed and what the results would have been. The truth is that in the consciousness of Christ, *He was really tempted*. Otherwise the whole thing would have been an empty farce, and the author of Hebrews could not honestly have said that He was *in all points* tempted as we are (Heb. 4:15). That means they were real temptations to Him.<sup>2</sup>

It is a terrible dishonor to Christ to say that about Christ's consciousness; that in His consciousness He was tempted to sin -- in the same way as you and I. This writer said:

---

1. This statement lowers Him down to me. The temptations caused the Holy One sufferings we cannot fathom. The sufferings were consonant with who He was.

2. *The Wesleyan Bible Commentary*, Vol. 12, pp. 437-438. [truthpublishers.com](http://truthpublishers.com)

It seems best to assume that there was no physical form [of Satan] visible to the eyes of Jesus, but rather that the temptations came as suggestions to His mind. For that is the way the most crucial enticements come to God's people today. Jesus' temptations have more meaning and value for us if they were in the form of mental suggestions. This seems to be Satan's favorite method of attack.<sup>3</sup>

Observe what this detractor of Christ's glory has done:

1. He said that he *assumes* that "the temptations came as suggestions<sup>4</sup> to His mind." Thus he seeks to settle the issue by assumption.

- a. When the devil led the Holy One up a high mountain,<sup>5</sup> was it just a suggestion in His mind that He go up there? Also:

And he led him to Jerusalem, and set him on the edge of the temple . . . (Luke 4:9).

Was the power of the devil manifest or was it not? Did the devil set Him on the edge of the temple or not? Are these things mere internal suggestions of the mind? The theory is absurd and unholy.

- b. The writer does not know what sin is. If these temptations were internal suggestions of the mind, then Christ had sin within Him. But He knew no sin (2 Cor. 5:21) and no one could convince Him of sin (John 8:46).

2. "For that is the way the most crucial enticements come to God's people today."

- a. Above, I remarked that the writer does not know what sin is. In this sentence, as is the case when he wrote, "This seems to be Satan's favorite method of attack," he blames almost everything on Satan. He does not understand the two natures of the believer and the working of the mind of the flesh (Rom. 8:7).

---

3. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

4. J. N. Darby made the following comments regarding a writer who did not know what sin is:

I have heard those under the influence of this system talk of suggestions, and slur over what has passed in their hearts. Mr. Smith (p. 105) says, "Let us beware of one special snare of Satan -- that of trying to persuade us that temptation, or mere infirmity, is sin. Christ was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. His temptations were actual and real pressures to evil. He yielded not, and was without sin. Neither is the unwelcomed, unindulged, rejected temptation sin to us." This is very bad. Mr. Smith must forgive me for speaking plainly. He has fallen into the snare of Satan. Mr. S. is so exceedingly loose in his statements, that one has to make all sorts of necessary distinctions before there can be any answer (*Collected Writings* 23:291).

5. I am aware that there are commentators that regard these things as "visions."

[www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

- b. He wants Christ to be just like sinners except for the fact that He did not actually sin. Notice that he put Christ below even Adam and Eve in innocency. With them, the tempter came from outside. He came in an observable form. But no, that would not serve his purpose as well in Christ's case.

3. "Jesus' temptations have more value and meaning for us if they were in the form of mental suggestions."

Here we see the writer determining what was in Christ by what he finds in himself. J. N. Darby wrote:

The evil of the Methodist and Calvinistic experience system is that, instead of applying Christ as God's answer to their experiences, they apply another experience perhaps to it, and go back to what has passed in their own minds; that is, they are occupied with self, nourishing self, instead of substituting Christ for it.<sup>6</sup>

## TWO KINDS of TEMPTATION.

It has often been remarked by those who hold Christ's impeccability that there are two kinds of temptations, and also that there are two natures in the believer. J. N. Darby noted:

Temptation is used in two senses in scripture. We are tempted when we are drawn away of our own lusts and enticed, and we are tempted from without by the enemy. The latter the Lord underwent, the former of course never.<sup>7</sup>

The temptations from without, i.e., outside ourselves, not arising from our sinful lusts, are tests. James 1 speaks of these tests from outside,<sup>8</sup> but he also speaks of the lust within:

In Scripture, everything that tests us is called temptation, not merely the sin in us which does, of course, tempt us. Christ was tempted; but in His case, it was, not exactly "without sin," but, "except sin." Not only He did not fail, but there was no sin in Him. When, however, I talk of my old man, I want the hatchet of God's word for that, not sympathy with it. There was failure with the disciples in the garden of Gethsemane, and the Lord might have reproached them for it, but He did not. When Scripture speaks of being tempted like as we are, this is in the path in which God would have us to walk, where everything possible is trying to turn us out of it; it is a path in which we find what feeble creatures we are, and in which Christ is always making good to us what we need.

In James 1, the word "temptation" is used in both senses. When he says,

6. *Collected Writings* 23:206.

7. *Collected Writings* 23:190.

8. Other references to James 1 are: *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 23:207; 28:42.

"Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations," he is speaking not of sin, but of trials and exercises. And again, when he says, "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed," we do not want sympathy with that. As I learn the evil of the flesh in me, I want to have it thoroughly judged, and so I say, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts." I want God to be with me as I am walking here in feeble faith; but when we fail, then intercession of another kind is needed to restore. We need Christ to be both strength and grace to us in the path of faith; and we go to the throne of grace with the consciousness that *there* is our righteousness -- propitiation -- and thus we can reckon on the constant grace of God to strengthen us.

With Christ, temptation was always the occasion of obedience; with us, it is too often not so.<sup>9</sup>

There is, however, a second meaning to the word "temptation." Though it often signifies trial from outward circumstances, it is also employed for another sort of trial -- that which comes from within, the temptation from lust, which is entirely different. God can try us externally, in order to bless us, and He does so. He tried Abraham, but He cannot in any way tempt by lust. When it is a question, not of putting obedience and patience to the test, but of sin, the condition of the soul is dealt with, for its correction and advancement. But as regards the calling forth of lust, it cannot be said that God tempts. "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man, but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."

Christ Himself was tested of God throughout His whole life, and nothing but a sweet savor came forth. Always perfect in obedience, having come to do His Father's will, He yet learned obedience in this world of sin and enmity against God. Satan desired to rouse self-will in Him, but in vain. He was indeed led of the Spirit to be tempted of the devil, but that He might overcome him for us, who, through sin, are subject to his power.

No lust was found in Him; but He was capable of being hungry, and He suffered hunger. He had been declared by the Father's voice to be the Son of God, and Satan desired that He should leave the place of servant, which He had taken in becoming man, and do His own will: therefore he suggests to Him to make bread of the stones. Here we have a temptation of the enemy; but the Lord abides in His perfection; He would live by the word which proceeded from the mouth of God. God put Him to the proof through suffering, but no lust was found in Him; and when Satan would make use of hunger -- which is a human need apart from sin, and was found in Christ as a man -- He remained in perfect obedience, and had no other motive for action than His Father's will.

With us there are temptations springing from the inner man, from lust, altogether different from the trials coming from without, which test the state of the heart, detecting self-will, if we are not perfectly subject to the will of God, or if we are actuated by other motives besides His will.

Now James is always practical. He does not search out the root of everything in the heart, as Paul does; he takes lust as the source which produces actual sin. Paul shows that the sinful nature is the source of lust -- an important distinction,

which also illustrates the difference between the two writers, or the object of the Holy Ghost in the Epistle of James, namely, the outward practical life, as the evidence of the character of that life, which owes its origin to the word of God, that had wrought through faith. With James, lust -- the first movement of the sinful nature which discloses its real character -- having conceived, brings forth sin, and sin being finished, brings forth death. It is the history of the workings of the evil nature. James is occupied with its effects, Paul with its source, in order that we may know ourselves; Rom. 8:8.<sup>10</sup>

## ***Lust Is Sin***

### **LUST**

Lust is sin; of course it is!

What shall we say then? [is] the law sin? Far be the thought. But I had not known sin, unless by law: for I had not had conscience also of lust unless the law had said, Thou shalt not lust; but sin, getting a point of attack by the commandment, wrought in me every lust (Rom. 7:7,8).

There is a "law of sin which exists in my members" (Rom. 7:23). The truth that lust is sin is sometimes denied, and its denial helps on many who deny Christ's impeccability. Therefore we will consider this matter at length using valuable and penetrating comments from J. N. Darby. First we will look at comments on the seriousness of the issue:

Were they (the Lord forgive the word!) lusts in that blessed One, suggestions of His own sin in the flesh! Was there anything in Him which was not to be indulged because it was evil? Let Mr. Smith explain himself. What did He riot yield to? When Satan succeeds in "touching" us, he awakens the thought of evil, even if we do not yield to it. Did he succeed in doing this with Christ? "The thought of foolishness is sin," says the word. Was this in Christ? In His temptation He was hungry. This was no sin; it was a human need, and He felt it, and Satan sought to lead Him to do His own will as to it. But He lived by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. All the glory of the world from without was offered, but it awakened indignation, not any question. God's word was His motive for acting, as well as His rule. He was led of the Spirit to be tempted. We are tempted when we are led away of our own lusts.

All this flows from the damnable doctrine that lust is not sin. What is it? Is it holiness or righteousness? Where does it come from? It is the fruit of the sinful nature; "sin taking occasion by the commandment wrought in me all manner of lust." Those who rest on fruits in James -- and I do not call it a strawy epistle -- find no sin till it has conceived and brought forth. Those who go to the root with the word of God know that there is sin in the flesh. If Satan were to suggest to eat a handful of mud and dirt, would any one be inclined to do it? If he succeeds in touching us, it is because there is a desire in the sinful nature to

which he adapts himself. If we are full of Christ, he will not succeed; but if the suggestion is awakened in our hearts, sin is awakened into the activity of desire, though we may rightly resist it; and if we look to Christ, we shall be victorious. Was any such suggestion awakened in the blessed One? All this loose insinuation as to Christ, to excuse and cover sin in ourselves, is very bad indeed. Was anything within Christ which He had to resist? It must not be covered over with loose words, as "temptation or infirmity," which words have professedly in scripture a double meaning. (See James 1.)

The word judges thoughts and intents, the priesthood takes notice of difficulties and trials. Was the pressure of evil in Christ from within or without? From without He was spared nothing, but it only brought out a sweet savor. Within there was nothing but what gave the sweet savor in life and in death. I know of nothing more horrible than thus sacrificing the holiness of Christ to excuse and allow "suggestions," suggestions of sin in us. Instead of taking Him as the living standard of holiness, holiness is lowered in us, so as to allow of evil suggestions, and Christ is brought down to this level, that sin in us may be passed over. I do not rest on the word peccable, applied to Christ by some of those in these views; evil and unholy, I should say, unintelligent as the thought is, because it is not the real question.

Mr. Smith speaks of "that deep evil of our nature which is antecedent of sins or sinning." Was there anything of this in Christ? Mr. Smith would surely answer No. It was not an innocent thing which was born of the virgin Mary, but a "holy thing." Could Satan introduce anything of it in Him? He takes the love of money in Judas with subtle wile to betray the Lord. It was a suggestion, a temptation from without, but met that which was within, awoke it, and then there was a suggestion, in which the thought of the heart had a part -- even if judged and resisted. There may be suggestions of blasphemy or despair, which are fiery darts of the enemy, when there is no lust. But there were never even such as these in Christ; if forsaken, He could say, "My God," and "Thou continuest holy." Did the enemy succeed in arousing evil thoughts in Christ which He resisted? I ask of any honest Christian are not these suggestions, thoughts in his heart? If they are not evil, why does he resist them? It will not do to talk of pressures of evil. From without? Yes. Did these pressures awaken in Christ's heart suggestions which He resisted as evil? If so, He ceased to be absolutely "that holy thing" -- really never had been. He was a holy man, not an innocent man, and ever maintained His holiness -- met Satan by obedience and dependence on God by the word. The wicked one did not touch Him. There were no suggestions; there are, or may be, in us, because the flesh, sin in the flesh, is there. Others, under the influence of these doctrines, I have heard say, He was imperfect, alleging His growth in wisdom and stature. He was a true real man, and, as a child, He was perfect as a child; the vessel grew as ours does. But this shows the way this doctrine works. Was He ever anything but perfectly holy? That is the question. If there were evil suggestions in His heart which He had to resist, He was not.<sup>11</sup>

In his paper on *The Doctrine of the Wesleyans on Perfection* we again find the issue well stated and answered.

---

11. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 23:292, 293.

[www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)



N. But I do not say that lust is not sin; it is *desire* which is not sin. And when you maintain that we cannot observe the law, you seem to forget that it is written, That the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; Rom. 8:4. In fact God never commands man to do what man cannot accomplish. And in this epistle of John, which you *imperfectorists* would get away from, it is declared, eight times over, that he who is born of God sinneth not.

A. You certainly did say that lust is not sin, and your definition expressly declares it; for the lust in my nature in [sic, is] not a voluntary transgression of the divine law, if I have a will, through grace, directly opposed to it.

N. If I said that lust is not sin, it is because James says, When lust hath conceived, it *bringeth forth* sin (James 1:15), and you confound temptations with lusts.

A. Alas! into what uncertainty and contradictions does error plunge the mind of man! As to the argument you derive from James, that apostle himself affirms that "every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed."

N. No. The proper translation of that passage is not, of his lusts; but, of his desires.

A. Your distinctions are deplorably subtle and dangerous. Thus men play with poison. It is in vain that I look for this difference; for the word which you translate *desire*, is the same Greek word which Paul employs in Romans 7 to express the *lust* by which he had been convinced of sin. And pray observe, it is there said that sin produced lust (v. 8). It is true that when lust hath conceived, it *bringeth forth* sin *as an act*; but it is just as true that sin, which is in our nature, produces all sorts of lusts. With your definition of sin, which it [sic, is] totally anti-scriptural, you may indeed reason on the subject; but you will find yourself constantly in opposition to the declarations of God's word. Temptation may, doubtless, be distinguished from sin. When I abhor the evil, and the new man rejects with indignation that which Satan presents, or, it may be, flattery, it is a temptation and not a sin. But lust in me is always sin. I do not say it will be imputed to me; but that is solely and absolutely because of the *blood of Christ*. But the "new man" judges it as sin. Woe is me, if I do not judge it!

N. But Christ had desires.

A. Oh! see to what you are reduced, to bring Jesus Christ down to your level in order to exalt yourself! It is a fearful principle. No, no; you dare not say that Jesus Christ had desires like those which are found in our fallen nature. You will reply, that there are desires which are not sinful. I admit it. There are for example hunger, thirst, and such like. These desires are the result of wants which our heavenly Father knows to exist in us. But would you venture to compare those desires which are in the human heart, and which, you say, occasion in the most pious, errors which require the *blood of Christ*, with the desires which were in the heart of the adorable Savior? Is it not true that all the *thoughts* of Christ proceeded from the Holy Spirit, while He still felt the wants and sufferings of a man? Did then those evil desires which are in us, which require to be kept under, and which, if not restrained, produce sin, exist in the heart of Jesus Christ? My dear friend! the more I look into your doctrine and its tendency to reduce to the same level God, Christ (who knew no sin), and us poor vile creatures fallen from our first estate, the more do I see that, instead of

being a doctrine of sanctification, it is a doctrine which, while it pretends to exalt our condition, abases all that is worthy of being exalted, exalts all that should be abased, and destroys the distinction between good and evil. You tell me, moreover, that God commands nothing but what man can accomplish. Where do you get that in the Bible? The law, for example, was given to the Israelites, that is to say, to man in the flesh. Can man fulfil it? <sup>12</sup>

## INFIRMITIES; ARE THEY SINFUL TENDENCIES?

For we have not a high priest not able to sympathize with our infirmities, but tempted in all things in like manner, sin apart (Heb. 4:15).

Why would Christ have sympathy with sinful tendencies, if infirmities are sinful tendencies? John MacArthur wrote:

Weaknesses does not refer directly to sin, but to feebleness or infirmity. It refers to all the natural limitations of humanity, which, however, includes liability to sin. Jesus knew firsthand the drive of human nature toward sin. <sup>13</sup>

We need strongly to reject the notion that the Holy One does 'sympathize with our sinful tendencies.' Moreover, Adam in innocency had no drive of human nature toward sin. The writer has placed Christ lower than Adam. "The drive of human nature toward sin" is exactly "the law of sin which exists in my members" (Rom. 7:23). It is an unmitigated, heinous, libelous, outrage against the Holy One to say, teach or believe that "Jesus knew firsthand the drive of human nature toward sin." This flies in the face of Scripture:

Who knew not sin (2 Cor. 5:21).

J. MacArthur says "knew firsthand." <sup>14</sup> Scripture says "knew not." He may say 'I do not mean he had indwelling sin.' But that is the implication of his words.

2 Cor. 5:21 does not refer to sinful acts but to the internal root of those acts -- that very law of sin which exists in my members (Rom. 7:23). There was no sin in Him (1 John 3:5). Nor does J. MacArthur understand John 14:30 nor John 8:46. These texts all refer to what indwells us. 1 Peter 2:22 refers to acts that flow from indwelling sin.

Hear the apostle Paul:

12. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 3:182-184.

13. *Hebrews*, p. 113.

14. In his *Matt. 1-7*, Chicago: Moody, p. 411 (1985), he wrote, "He did not in the least degree allow temptation to develop into desire, much less into sin (cf. James 1:13-15). He did not think the matter over or give it any consideration: He simply stood firmly in His Father's will and said no!" This is true, but the above quotation contradicts this.

And he said to me, My grace suffices thee; for [my] power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather boast in my weaknesses, that the power of the Christ may dwell upon me. Wherefore I take pleasure in weaknesses, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions, in straits, for Christ: for when I am weak, then I am powerful (2 Cor. 12:9,10).

Just think of the apostle boasting of sinful tendencies! We ought to resent, repel and reject the slur on the Holy One that He sympathizes with our sinful tendency. Sinful tendency is "the law of sin which exists in my members" (Rom. 7:23).

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

## THE SPIRIT OF CONTENTMENT

It is remarkable how much the spirit of contentment has to do not only with the happiness of a soul but with its holiness. There is scarcely another thing that so tends to disturb our relationship with God and man as discontent. It makes an individual ripe for any evil. It helps, on a great scale, to the revolutions of nations and other social ruptures. On a smaller scale, it subverts the equilibrium of families and the right attitude of individuals as nothing else can. So we read of "unthankful, unholy" classed together by the Spirit of God. We also find unthankfulness mentioned as leading into idolatry. The Gentiles not only did not glorify God as God, but they were unthankful, and they fell into all kinds of moral depravity. There is nothing more important than to cherish a thankfulness of heart, sanctifying the Lord God in our hearts, having confidence in His goodness, and also in the certainty that He has given to ourselves individually exactly the thing that is best for us. But the only way to be thus content, whatever may be our lot, is to look at God as dealing with us in Christ for eternity.

W. Kelly

---

---

## *The Holiness of Christian Fellowship*

---

---

### *Chapter 2*

---

#### *Restoration*

#### **WHAT IS REPENTANCE? AND HOW IS RESTORATION SECURED?**

For grief according to God works repentance to salvation (2 Cor. 7:10).

It is often said that the object of discipline is restoration. Rather, this is AN object, not THE object. The first thought is the Lord's glory. Secondly, the assembly must clear itself. Thirdly, discipline has for its object the repentance and restoration of the WICKED PERSON.

Having regret for causing a problem, being sorry to be a cause of trouble, is not repentance. Even "godly sorrow" is not repentance, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation" (2 Cor. 7:10). Repentance is a matter of the conscience wherein the soul sees itself as God does, and sits in judgment of itself with the judgment of God. David committed sin with Bathsheba that the New Testament would call leaven. His repentance is given in Psalm 51, and this is instructive for us to read so that we may see the true character of repentance. When this has been reached by the guilty, then the assembly may forgive and loose.

It is not for everyone to occupy himself with such cases except in love to pray for such. It is for grave brethren to seek the restoration of such an one. The meddling that many do in such cases, under the pretence of love, is really a fleshly sympathy with the guilty that would spare the flesh in others as it does in oneself. Leviticus 14 gives us typically what is involved in restoration and this is taken up elsewhere.

The man put away as a WICKED PERSON (1 Cor. 5) did repent and so the Corinthians were instructed, "Assure him of your love" (2 Cor. 2:8). It would have been grievous failure to assure him of their love before the right time. It would be meddling with the work of God in a precious soul.

This person was "bound" until he was "loosed". The sin was bound upon him until such time as *the assembly* loosed him. It is at the time of loosing that their love to him is expressed. Individuals, or a group of brothers, cannot loose him any more than they can bind. It is done *in assembly* with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Corinthians also were grieved according to God (2 Cor. 7:10), although there were some who were not (2 Cor. 12:19-13:2). It wrought (2 Cor. 7:11):

1. Diligence. They had been careless.
2. Excusing, or clearing. They had been tolerant.
3. Indignation. There had been apathy on their part.
4. Fear. They now sensed what was due to God.
5. Vehement desire. They now longed to be right with God.
6. Zeal. They earnestly desired to obey.
7. Vengeance. They realized the affront to Christ and judged it and purged the heaven.

Thus, in every way, in this seven-fold character, they proved themselves pure in the matter (2 Cor. 7:12).

Self-judgment, repentance and separation from evil to the Lord, is ever the way of blessing!

Several brothers will undoubtedly be much involved in the case of one who is to be restored. The following thoughts from *Ministry of G. V. Wigram*, vol. 2, p. 63, are apropos to seeking the restoration of one put away.

In rebuke or putting away, I do not get rest or feel I see the whole case until three things are clear. 1st, the root sin; 2nd, the occasion; 3rd, the overt display of sin. 1st, David knew how to climb, using God, from the sheepfold to the throne; but knew not aright God's relative position to himself; 2nd, at rest on the throne, not going out to war when the kings go out, he saw, in his idleness, Bathsheba; 3rd, though on God's throne he defiled himself and dishonoured God by adultery, corruption, and murder. Thus he learnt David's self, and afterwards God (Ps. 32). So in Solomon's case, in Job's, in Peter's. This is important, because, until *the root sin* is judged, there is no real healing; and the overt sin is very unlike the root sin; not it at all, generally.

## OLD SIN

J. N. Darby wrote,

I copy a letter just sent me, written to a brother at Lyons many years ago. "In sin

is very vague. One who is disciplined for fornication is not engaged in the sin when they excommunicate him. He is always in the sin he has committed until he repents and confesses it. There lies the whole question. If there be a long time since he sinned, and the state of soul is entirely changed, I should not bring up the sin again. The question is, has he really repented; otherwise, the time that is passed makes no difference, be it two days or two years. If the sin was committed before his conversion, his state is totally changed; if since, then it is that of which the assembly has to judge. If the assembly leaves the sin unjudged when it knows it, it makes itself responsible, and is identified with the evil doer. This 1 and 2 Corinthians shews very clearly, and seems to me of all importance . . . to have a firm hand as regards this sin -- love towards the sinner surely -- seek his restoration; one ought to do so, and there is sometimes failure in this -- but the holiness of the table of the Lord must be maintained. To separate because there is a difference of judgment is to break the unity of the body. If the assembly cannot come to any decision, it is a proof that its spiritual state is bad, and then it is well that all should humble themselves together; but if there be a determination to allow the sin (in any one), God will judge them if they separate." . . . <sup>15</sup>

## **THE PASSAGE OF TIME DOES NOT ALTER THE CHARACTER OF A MORAL ACTION.**

It is repentance and confession that puts sin away. A person about to be received, who was known to have so sinned and repented, is one case. If a person was at the Lord's table all along, and sinned as in 1 Cor. 5, and this came out some years later; and it is alleged that he had repented and therefore should not be disciplined; I ask, how can one have repented as in 2 Cor. 7:9-11, 2 Cor. 2:7, and especially Psalm 51 -- how can one have passed through this, and others in the assembly not know it? How has all this been kept secret? It seems clear that the assembly must clear itself. Mere distance and time are of no account. If one commits a sin of 1 Cor. 5 and apprises others of it, stating that he is sorry for it and seeks repentance before God -- and is disciplined; but another keeps it secret for some years and apprises others, or they discover it, and he says that he has repented -- and is not disciplined; is this a just balance, the balance of the sanctuary, not even to speak of what is due to Christ?

## **RESTORATION OF ONE PUT AWAY ELSEWHERE**

. . . First, when a brother excommunicated by the assembly, and who lives elsewhere, seeks to be brought in again, it is for the assembly in the place where he seeks restoration to judge of his state at the time he seeks it. It is there naturally that the state will shew itself. But it is suitable, as you say, that the assembly in which he seeks to be re-admitted, should put itself in communication with that from which he was put out. It may know of many things that ought to be settled, and that the other is ignorant of; then too community of interest and

---

15. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:414.

the unity of Spirit are maintained by this means.<sup>16</sup>

Of course, these comments assume that the excommunicated person has not moved elsewhere where his sympathizers are and where they may seek to undo the excommunication. To press the one body as a cover for this is EVIL and not to be accepted!

## THE SINS NOTED IN 1 CORINTHIANS 5

Obviously, 1 Cor. 5:11 is not an exclusive listing of sins for which a person must be put out. Theft and murder are not named, for example, as sorcery and occultism are omitted also.

With the aid of *The Englishman's Greek Concordance* let us trace the scripture usage of these words used in 1 Cor. 5:11.

**Fornication.** Fornication (*Pornia*, p. 647) is always translated "fornication". Matt. 5:32 and 19:9 show that adultery may be called fornication also. Matt. 15:19, Mark 7:21 and Gal. 5:19 show that adultery may be listed separately from fornication. Adultery is a class of fornication as in the incest of 1 Cor. 5:1. The word fornication must not be restricted to illicit sexual relations between unmarried persons. It is a general word for sexual deviations from the Creator's order.

Uncleanness (*akatharsia*, p. 20) is several times listed with fornication and/or adultery. See Gal. 5:19; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:5; 2 Cor. 12:21. The great whore of Rev. 17 is noted for the filthiness, or uncleanness, of her fornication. In Rom. 1:24 we learn that God gave the heathen up "to uncleanness, to dishonour their bodies between themselves." The sin of homosexuality is uncleanness and, I believe, rightly falls under the general classification of fornication. 2 Cor. 12:21 and Rev. 17:4 would indicate this as would the above consideration of fornication and adultery. Jude 7 proves it!

The spread of homosexuality and its palliation, even by professed Christians, should have no effect on the Christian's judgment of it because it is judged by the Word of God. This sin is denounced in scripture clearly and repeatedly. See Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:24-28; 1 Cor. 6:9 and 1 Tim. 1:10. See Gen. 19. 1 Cor. 6:11 shows that deliverance from this sin is available.

Lasciviousness (*aselgia*, p. 87) is another related evil, coupled with fornication and uncleanness in Gal. 5:19 and 1 Cor. 12:21 (licentiousness), and

---

16. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:303.

with uncleanness in Eph. 4:19. It seems to refer to an evil unrestrainedness that is coupled with sexual sin.

*Pornee*, p. 648, is translated harlot and whore. *Pornos*, p.648, is translated fornicator(s) and whoremongers. Sexual relations between man and wife have been given by the Creator and we are to hold marriage in honour in every way and the bed undefiled. Wrong teaching has made persons think that the bed is always defiling in some way. This attitude dishonours God, and His Word, Who tells us to hold the bed undefiled. But abusers of this -- fornicators and adulterers -- He will judge (Heb. 13:4). Within marriage, then, sexual relations are to be held as honorable and undefiled by Christians in accordance with the Word of God.

There is something especially peculiar about the sin of fornication. "Every sin which a man may practise is without the body, but he that commits fornication sins against his own body" (1 Cor. 6:18). There may be persons who dream that if a couple has sexual relations only once it is not leaven. Not so! How many times does adultery have to take place before the marriage tie is broken by it (Matt. 19:9)? One act of adultery breaks the tie (and adultery is fornication), and the partners offended against may forgive and God will recognize the marriage as valid; or the offended one may get a divorce and God will recognize the marriage as dissolved. Of course, in any event adultery must be treated as leaven.

It is clear from the New Testament that fornication is a word which may be used to describe a number of sins that may also be described by other words. Thus:

1. Homosexuality is fornication (Jude 7).
2. An unmarried life of sexual relations is fornication (1 Cor. 7:2). *Of course*, premarital sex is fornication!
3. Sexual relations with a stepmother is fornication (1 Cor. 5:2).
4. A married person's sexual relation with another than the spouse is called fornication (Matt. 5:32 and 19:9). Thus it is clear that adultery is fornication, but not all fornication is adultery. Cf. Jer. 3:2,3,8 and Ezek. 23:43,45. There is no ground for claiming that Matthew referred to the postmarital discovery of premarital unfaithfulness. Fornication, not desertion, is the ground for divorce. The so-called 'Pauline privilege' is a myth: Paul did not state another ground for divorce. You say that you have difficulty with "not bound" (1 Cor. 7:15) because one is already gone? Why do you not have difficulty with "let them go away" if they



are already gone? Let us beware of being selective about our difficulties. If the unbeliever goes away, let him go away. Do not make various attempts to stop him or try to make him return. You, though a Christian, are "not bound" to make such attempts; you are "not bound" to try to hinder; you are "not bound" to carry out any Christian marital obligations with such. The Christian need not have a disturbed conscience about it. "But God has called us in peace" (1 Cor. 7:15).

Our Lord founded His teaching about divorce on the created order and *therefore* allowed *one* ground for divorce and remarriage by the innocent one. Paul did not change that and introduce another reason for divorce: that would have been a retrograde step, a departure from the order grounded upon the order of creation, upon which our Lord insisted.

That the word fornication can be used to describe adultery is also seen in the figurative use of the word in Rev. 2:21; 9:21; 14:8; 17:2,4; 18:3; 19:2. On the other hand, some lists of sins that mention fornication also include adultery: Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mark 7:21; 1 Cor. 6:9; Gal. 5:19; Heb. 13:4. In such a case, adultery is singled out and fornication refers to other perversions.

Not only is homosexuality leaven; so is its toleration and/or support by professed Christians. From a scriptural perspective there is nothing "gay" about it. It is not a question of how a homosexual is otherwise in society or at work. Nor is it a matter of cultures. It is not a relationship of love countenanced by Scripture, nor is it rooted in the gospel of Christ. Scripture is against it explicitly and implicitly.

Perversion has alleged "that we may *know* them" (Gen. 19:5) means that the men of Sodom wanted to "get acquainted" with them. But Lot said, "Do not wickedly!" At least he recognized the character of sodomy; but alas, what was he going to do with his daughters? Gen. 19:8 refers to sexual matters (*to know*) also, not "getting acquainted". Gen. 19:9 shows how anxious the men of Sodom were to "get acquainted". And though blinded, they still tried hard to "get acquainted" (Gen. 19:11). They were perverts. "And the people of Sodom were wicked and great sinners before Jehovah" (Gen. 13:13). God's displeasure was registered by the fire and brimstone that consumed them. "Do not err: . . . nor those who make women of themselves, nor who abuse themselves with men . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 6:9). We shall soon find out by experience whether practicing "Christian" homosexuals and their supporters are right, or if the Scripture is right. But God has already marked His judgment (Gen. 19) of this perversion from the order of creation (Gen. 3) before the law was given. The law denounced it also (Deut. 23:17; cf. 29:23; 32:32; 1 Kings

14:24; 15:12). Jude 7 says, "as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities around them, committing greedily fornication, in like manner with them, and going after other flesh, lie there as an example, undergoing the judgment of eternal fire." Solemn words! Cf. 1 Tim. 1:10.

Other characteristics of the homosexuals in Sodom are given in Ezek. 16:49,50.

Two other references to homosexuality in the books of Moses are Lev. 18:22 and 20:13, which refer to *morality*.

Rom. 1:26 and 27 is a clear condemnation of homosexuality to all but the perverted. Verse 26 refers to what is called lesbianism. Today these sins are called expressing love and tenderness, and, commitment in an on-going relationship. Rhetoric and semantic juggling will not change Rom. 1:26 which says "vile lusts." Jude 7 classes sodomy as fornication. Homosexuality is a species of fornication. The *act* of homosexuality comes under the judgment of 1 Cor. 5:11-13.

**Avaricious or Covetous.** A covetous person (p. 628) is an idolater (Eph. 5:5); yet an idolater may be distinguished from a covetous man (1 Cor. 5:11). Covetousness appears to be a species of idolatry therefore.

In Eph. 4:19 J. N. D. translates, "who having cast off all feeling, have given themselves up to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with *greedy unsatisfied lust*." The emphasized words are a translation of the word which is elsewhere translated "covetous" and help us to see its force. This greedy unsatisfied lust may be for power (2 Pet. 2:3,14), or money (Luke 12:15), or land, etc.; but in Eph. 4:19 it is connected with fornication. In Eph. 5:13 J.N.D. renders it "unbridled lust" and it is found again in a context of fornication.

**Idolater.** We already noticed that idolaters (*idololters*, p.193) are distinguished from the covetous, but that covetousness is idolatry (Col. 3:5). "Idolater" appears in 1 Cor. 5:10,11; 6:9; 10:7; Eph. 5:5; Rev. 21:8; 22:15. We hardly need say that literal idolatry is a sin included under the judgment of leaven, but there are other aspects of idolatry. "Neither be ye idolaters, as some of them: as it is written, The people sat down to eat and to drink and rose up to play" (1 Cor. 10:7). This is idolatry -- leaven. We must remember also that "self-will is as iniquity and idolatry" (1 Sam. 15:23). A person characterized by self-will is as an idolater and this is leaven. Idolatry is a work of the flesh (Gal 5:20) that finds its answer in the lake of fire (Rev. 21:8). Covetousness is the worship of something else than God and it is thus idolatry (Col. 3:5), as is the worship of pleasure (1 Cor. 10:7) and self-will (1 Sam. 15:23). When the

## ***Second Announcement***

### **3NT**

3NT (three New Testament translations) is a computer program of three versions of the New Testament now available from Present Truth Publishers for users of IBM PC compatible computers.

Requiring much less hard disk space than you might think, you can now have the New Testament full text of the King James Version (KJV), the New Translation of J. N. Darby, and a version "newly translated from an amended text" by William Kelly (this version is incomplete in that much of Matthew, Mark and Luke are missing as well as a few other short passages). These three versions are supplied in a compressed file format along with a program that displays the three versions side by side on the computer monitor. Each version may be exported as an ASCII file for use with most word processors. This is not a concordance program, but the user may select any book, chapter, and verse, and scroll through all three versions simultaneously. System requirements: IBM PC or compatible computer, DOS 2.0 or greater, 256k RAM and 1.5 Mb free space on a hard disk.

**3NT** ..... \$15 (Postage Paid)

Please specify diskette type:

- ☐ low density 5 " diskette (360 K).
- ☐ high density 5 " diskette (1.2 Mb).
- ☐ low density 3 " diskette (720 K).
- ☐ high density 3 " diskette (1.44 Mb).

Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for shipping.

NJ residents add 6% sales tax.

Send orders *in USA funds* to:

**PRESENT TRUTH PUBLISHERS**

411 Route 79

Morganville, NJ 07751

# ***Precious Truths Revived and Defended Through J. N. Darby***

## **VOLUME ONE**

### ***Revival of Truth***

**1826 - 1845**

***An historical review including exposures of past and present calumnies employed in attempts to discredit these truths.***

***R. A Huebner***

Some of you have not yet ordered a copy of this over 250 page history of the recovery of precious truth. Bound up with this is the early history of JND himself. Exactly when he began to learn these truths, and under what circumstances, is established. Also established is when he left the Church of England and when at his suggestion three others and himself began to break bread. Special attention is given to the recovery of the pretribulation rapture and the present calumnies charging a Jesuit, demonical, or occult source for this truth. His own statements are shown to be factual. A number of histories (by W. B. Neatby, H. H. Rowdon, F. R. Coad, etc., are demonstrably shown to be in error regarding the 1827-1833 era -- error, I suggest, partly due to their anti JND agenda. A detailed subject index is included as well as a comprehensive bibliography.

Price each is \$12.00 plus \$1.75 postage. Five or more copies may be ordered at \$10.00 each, plus postage of \$1.75 and \$.50 for copy two and up. NJ residents add 6% sales tax.

**Please pay with order in USA funds.**

## *A Scripture Index*

A massive Scripture index for various old magazines is being entered into a computer database (Paradox). I desire to borrow bound copies of the following magazines for *a short period* in order to Xerox copies and to enter the Scripture references. Please let me know what I may borrow from you.

Bible Subjects for the Household of Faith, vol. 3, 5 and up.

The Girdle of Truth, vol. 5.

The Christian Friend and Instructor, 1900.

Food for the Flock, vol. 5, 8, 10 and up.

Helps by the Way, vol. 3, 4, 5, 6.

Helps in Things Concerning Himself, (W. T. Turpin), vol. 2, 3, 6 and up.

Help and Food, vol. 8, 22, 24, 26, 27, 37, 38, 39.

Light for the Pilgrim Path, (W. T. Turpin), vol. 1, 4 and up.

The Remembrancer, vol. 1-3, 7-9, 11 and up, but not 14, 16, 20.

Words in Season, vol. 3, 6, 8, 11 and up.

Scripture Truth, vol. 25, 26, 27.

Our Hope (A. C. Gaebelein), vol. 1-9.

Helps for the Poor of the Flock, vol. 1, 2.

The Christian's Library (A. H. Burton), vol. 2 and up, but not 10 (starts 1899).

Editor

## JUDAH AND JERUSALEM

### *God's Voice to Ourselves*

Lullaby ministry, sweet sounding to the carnal ear, while being popular, is deceiving and it defeats *that which is most needful, the humbling of ourselves* under the mighty hand of God. "Saying Peace, Peace, when there is no peace," "people love to have it so." . . .

As apostasy ripens the most needed truth is least wanted. How sad! It is unwanted, unpalatable, unwelcome, unpopular, unbearable! "Smooth things" (Isa. 30:10) are preferred rather than faithful conscience-convicting and humbling ministry. . . . "Nothing can be more offensive to the Lord than that . . . His people should cloth themselves with the privilege of His presence, and use this pretention to honor self and justify evil, or maintain a divine claim in spite of it (*Synopsis of the Bible*, J. N. Darby, vol. 2, p. 516, Morrish ed.).

This extract is found at the beginning of *Judah and Jerusalem* by A. C. Brown

[www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

-- which was printed by Present Truth Publishers in 1972. My brother in Christ and personal friend was rightly much concerned about the general conditions and also distressed about an evil doctrine of the blood of the atonement, which though finally dealt with, was treated with indifference by some (1970). Was anyone listening then?

A. C. Brown sounded more warnings in other papers, as in *Unfaithful Princes*, for example. Was anyone listening? It seems to me unspeakably sad to have to think that his warnings were despised. A few who restrained the **flesh** in 1985 were gotten rid of in 1986 on, of course, a Scripturally sounding charge.<sup>1</sup> Did that help conditions? -- or was it, in reality, saying "Give us **flesh** to eat"? Where are matters *now* in 1992? Is it really so that present *scattering* and *division* and **flesh** are not related to the above matters? What is God, in His governmental ways, saying? Does my asking upset you?

These things are not a reason to abandon truth once held, though disgust, exasperation and resentment do so. But such things are self at bottom. Scripture does tell us to cease to do evil, but it also tells us to learn to do well.

**Let love be unfeigned; abhorring evil; cleaving to good (Rom. 12:9).**

Withdrawal from iniquity (2 Tim. 2:19-22) is no reason to give up truth that others have abused. Throwing out the baby with the bath water has often received comment. Where is discernment in this? Beware lest you then use a right withdrawal from iniquity as a cover to abandon truth. That is neither learning to do well nor cleaving to good. Rather, it is another form of self-pleasing.

True, we are ignorant, and the flesh is in us; but God is always behind, and He is faithful, and will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able. Temptation may be simply a trial of our obedience, as in Abraham's case, not a snare to lead us astray. Satan presents what has no appearance of evil. The evil would be -- doing one's own will. Now it solves every difficulty to ask -- not, what harm is there in doing this or that? -- but why am I doing it? Is it for God or myself? What! I am to be always under this restraint? Ah! There the secret of our nature comes out; we do not like the restraint of what God will approve. It is restraint to do God's will. We want to do our own will.

*Collected Writings of J. N. Darby 25:54.*

Ed.

---

1. Right after that it came to light that a new doctrine concerning divorce and remarriage was rapidly spreading; a doctrine which receives completely what is really adultery. The true teaching, set forth through extensive quotations from what had been taught heretofore may be had in a paper, *Matthew 19:9*, from Present Truth Publishers for \$3.00. "Let love be unfeigned; abhorring evil; cleaving to good (Rom. 12:9). Are you an exception? Or, are you resentful that

soul becomes devoted to something so that that thing receives God's due, that is idolatry.

**Railer or Abusive Person.** A railer (*loidoros*, p. 464) is called a reviler in the K.J.V. of 1 Cor. 6:10. It denotes one who abuses others verbally. See John 9:28; 1 Cor. 4:12; 1 Pet. 2:23; 3:9.

Blasphemy (*blasphemeo*, p. 107) is a related thought. In English we now seem to restrict blasphemy to injurious language against God. In Scripture it is used of injurious language against man as well (Rom. 3:8; 14:16; 1 Cor. 4:13; 10:30; Titus 3:2, etc.)

In 1 Pet. 3:9 we saw that when our Lord was reviled (railed upon) He reviled not again. The Gospels say that He was blasphemed, though the word might be translated "reviled" (Matt. 27:39; Mark 15:29), "injurious" (Luke 22:65) and "spoke insultingly" (Luke 23:39).

These two words seem to denote a calumniating, slanderous, abusive, insulting and scornful character of speech.

We must beware of charging a person with this -- it is leaven -- merely because we do not like what he said, or merely because he said something about us. But where this character is in evidence, the leaven must be purged.

**Drunkard.** The Old Testament contains many cases of drunkenness. I am not aware that the law forbade drunkenness, though priests were to abstain altogether while serving (Lev. 10:9). The law made nothing perfect (Heb. 7:19), as seen also in the case of divorce (Matt. 5:32; 19:9). When grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, a change occurred, and He allowed only one cause for divorce.

Nonetheless, drunkenness was associated with shame (Gen. 9:21; 19:33,35; 1 Sam. 25:36; 2 Sam. 11:13; 13:28; 1 Kings 16:9; 20:16). Eli even suspected Hannah of being drunken (1 Sam. 1:13) at the tabernacle. Isa. 28:7 shows how wine and strong drink grievously affected priests and prophets. There is good advice given in Prov. 31:4-6, and the royal priesthood (1 Pet. 2:9) would do well to keep this in mind, withal recognizing that nowhere in Scripture is the use of alcoholic beverages proscribed. The New Testament allows its use, and also recognizes a medicinal use (1 Tim. 5:23).

W. Kelly has fully dealt with the teetotal system in a lengthy paper: "The Testimony of the Bible to the Use and Abuse of Wine &c &c, With a Notice of the Corresponding Terms in Hebrew and Greek Scriptures. . ."

While the use of alcoholic beverages is not forbidden in the New Testament, drunkenness is expressly condemned after the descent of the Spirit, and there appear exhortations to soberness. Several lists of vices denounce drunkenness: Rom. 13:13; Gal. 5:21; 1 Cor. 5:11; 6:10.

"Be not drunk with wine, in which is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18) does not mean that being filled with the Spirit manifests itself as drunkenness. Indeed not! We must be sober (1 Thess. 5:5-8; 1 Tim. 3:2; 2 Tim. 5:4; Titus 2:2; 1 Pet. 1:13; 4:7). Our Lord gave warning against eating and drinking with the drunken during His absence (Matt. 24:49; Luke 12:45). Drunkenness is incompatible with the Spirit's presence, Who through Paul called drunkenness leaven in 1 Cor. 5.

**Extortioner or Rapacious.** *Harpax*, p. 82, is translated "ravening" in Matt. 7:15 and "rapacious" in 1 Cor. 5:10,11; 6:10, by J.N.D., who renders *harpagēe*, p. 82, "plunder" in Heb. 10:34. Let us beware of "sharp" business practice which leads on to extortion.

## A SIN NOT NOTED IN 1 CORINTHIANS 5

We noted that 1 Cor. 5 is not a list; i.e., it is not a catalog of offences for which a person must be put away as a wicked person. Murder, theft, and "drug abuse" are omitted in the passage.

By "drug abuse" I mean the taking of drugs for the purpose of altering the mental state for pleasure or occult purposes. It may be for the purpose of experiencing "self consciousness"; or for experiencing "reality"; or for experiencing consciousness of "the ground of being"; or for contacting spirits; etc. No Christian should take drugs for such like reasons.

The faithful saints of God do not condone the "hippyism" of the 1960s and drug abuse. Let us examine the relationship of drug abuse to alcoholic beverages.

The New Testament allows the use of alcoholic beverages but not the getting under its effect. Be not filled with wine, but be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18). The Spirit should characterize our behaviour and control our thinking, not the effect of excess of wine. When alcohol begins to affect behavior, it may not be leaven, but, we are in the wrong. Wine may be drunk for its flavor, but *never* should be drunk in order to produce a mental state of intoxication. But drug abuse (taking LSD, for example) is for the purpose of producing a mental state of euphoria, or for gaining certain "experiences", "self consciousness", "consciousness of reality," etc. These are not Christian motives, and the last



one is patent idolatry. Drug abuse, in contrast to having a glass of wine or beer, inherently has a bad motive.

There is, then, a difference between having a glass of wine and having marijuana or LSD or heroin, etc. in order to produce a certain mental state. It lies in the motive as well as in the result. If alcoholic beverages are drunk for the same purpose as abusing drugs, it is to be treated the same way. Christians must not "try" drugs, nor must they "try" getting drunk. Young Christians who "cannot" understand this difference and plead in excuse for drug abuse that others drink alcoholic beverages, *will not* understand rather than *cannot*. Self-will is idolatry (1 Sam. 15:22; 1 Cor. 5:11).

"Sorcery", *pharmakia*, is found in Gal. 5:20, Rev. 9:21 and 18:23. It is the word from which we derive "pharmacy". Sorcery involved the use of drugs for occult purposes and was used in conjunction with occult incantations. "Sorcerers", *pharmakos*, is found in Rev. 21:8 and 22:15.

Sorcery, then, involves occult use of drugs, and from this a Christian must be separate. The use of hallucinogenic drugs is leaven and falls under the class of sins named in 1 Cor. 5.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

Ed.

## STATE OF SOUL AND THE MIND OF GOD:

### A WORD TO BELIEVERS

There are two things which should mark every saint of God; namely, experience flowing from having to do with God, and intelligence as to His mind, so far as He is pleased to reveal it. State of soul is especially connected with godly experience, without which there cannot be divine intelligence, so as to judge, walk, and worship aright, or profitably communicate God's mind to others.

Daniel, in the second chapter of his Book, is the blessed expression of what marked a saint of God, and that at a time of weakness and failure, when circumstances were by no means favorable. But under God they proved to be an occasion for the saint to enjoy communion with God, as well as to become the vessel to make known His mind as to the rise, course, and end of the world under given responsibility, together with what is beyond it in blessing on God's part.

After knowing God in grace, the most blessed thing, surely, must be to be allowed to have to do with Him about *everything*, both in the confidence of what He is, and in the exercise of that faith which trusts in Him at all times. The object doubtless God had, as to His creature Man, was, that he should implicitly trust and confide in the One who created and blessed him; hence his true and perfect happiness was in it.

Satan, the enemy of God and man, sought, and alas! succeeded in shaking man's confidence in God, giving him the thought that he should be independent, and would do better without than with God. Alas, the snare and success, with its fearful consequence! If man has failed to give God His worthy place of confidence and trust, grace has worked and does work, in order to recover and bring man as a believer back, to own and have to do with God. Saints more or less, throughout the Old Testament, shine in thus owning and honoring Him. Daniel as a saint was no stranger to God; his experience was not only that of one believing in God, but there were marks of the after life of faith together with the refusal and separation from what was a denial of it. When God gives faith, He gives the exercises which are proper to it, bringing about the very circumstances, as both a test and a display of sufficiency to the soul possessing it.

Daniel manifested the state of soul he was in, at the moment of hearing the difficulty which he was not THEN prepared to solve; but he knew God was

acquainted with all that man was a stranger to, and troubled about, and his faith at once confided in *Him*. What holy and peaceful dignity, at a moment of universal trouble, with no human way out of it, to be able to look away from every *thing* and *person* to the *living God*, with the assurance that He will interpose to display *Himself*, and honor those who put their trust in Him. If faith is confident, it is never presumptuous; hence Daniel who owns and believes God, betakes himself to that which is exactly opposite to the spirit of independence, set up by the will of man at the first. Prayer is the happy expression of dependence, and is the healthy mark of a soul right with God, as well as walking with Him, and counting on Him. Daniel in his experience was no stranger to prayer, together with its positive value in the hour of need; so he invited others of like experience, and sought from God the needed mercy. How unspeakable blessed to be able to go to God and count upon Him; truly may it be written, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." Special circumstances of trial and pressure in which man had been totally helpless proved a ready occasion for faith to exercise its confidence in, and dependence upon, the living and known God; therefore special mercies were sought from the God of heaven, and in due time the suited and ready answer came.

The life of dependence has its special moments, as in this case, when, in the knowledge of having the ear and interest of the living God, the saint is assured, as the apostle John states, of having the petition desired of Him. Daniel in the habit of his soul was evidently no stranger to ever looking to God, answering in a way to the exhortation to the believer in a later day, "Pray without ceasing." Truly there never can be a moment when the saint is not dependent upon God; neither can there be a circumstance in which the sufficiency of God will not shew itself. What a refuge is the living God in the hour of trouble! How blessed when there is a state of soul, with the exercise of faith to appropriate it, as well as the resources in the only One equal to every circumstance, and who loves to communicate His mind so as to exalt Himself, and honor the faith confiding in Him.

Daniel proved that prayerful dependent waiting upon God was the attitude suited to receive divine communications; for it was *then* the thing troubling the world, with its responsibility and course, which was given to the one who was not only outside the spirit and current of it, but had refused its associations and advantages, verifying that God knows those who honor Him. The receiving direct answers from God, as the fruit of seeking and waiting upon Him, leads to an experience of soul which can only find its level in turning to God in worship and thanksgiving. Daniel as a receiver and worshipper seemed in spirit and character with Eliezer in early times (Gen. 24), who gave an *outlet* to his prosperous way in worship and thanksgiving, or as the Elders around the throne

in heaven (Rev. 4), who, having received crowns of gold, cast them before the throne in holy and happy worship.

When every thing received from God returns to Him the glory and praise of it by those so favored, such are counted worthy to be entrusted with making God known to others with the blessing and teaching. Daniel, when going into the presence of the king to communicate the mind of God, carried the savor and power of what he had expressed in his worship, both as to God Himself in His majesty and greatness, and what He alone can do, confessing too, that however favored the vessel, it was nought save as God was pleased to use it.

Truly such a state of soul, with such experience of unshaken confidence in God, prayer of faith, and the answers, leading to holy and happy worship, may well be sought for in these times of assumption and self-sufficiency, with, (it is to be feared,) no little lack in having individually to do with God. The true dignity of the saint of God shines when permitted to go before the world, in its hour of distress going direct from God, as the bearer of His mind, whether in the form of a fresh revelation, a revealer and interpreter of dreams, or to make known what has already been revealed in the scriptures.

What a moment for Daniel to go forth with the received intelligence, both as to the king's dream, and the interpretation of it!

If Nebuchadnezzar was to be set in privilege and responsibility as to direct rule under the God of heaven, it was the saint of God, though a captive under this new power of the world, who was favored to tell its head his God-given position. The wonderful image, as seen in its fourfold composition, with its complete and successive power, illustrated from the head to the feet, to continue until the world-kingsdoms should give place to the kingdom of God's own Christ.

Daniel was thus in a moment let into the secret as to entrusted power and rule under the God of heaven, together with the smiting of the image: -- an act, declaring the holy and righteous judgment on the part of the little stone" cut out without hands, the revealed means by which the present form of government should close, and the world afterwards be filled with fruit. What experience as a result of having to do with God! What wisdom, and understanding, to know the thoughts of God, and to communicate them, as to the *rise, course, and end* of the Gentile powers, designated in the New Testament as the "times of the Gentiles!" This fresh form of power would come to an end by divine judgment, though at the same time become the occasion for God's hidden resource in the Person of Christ, typified by the "little stone" to be introduced. He, alone *can*, and at the appointed hour *will*, establish and rule the earth in righteousness,

peace, and blessing, to the glory of God, and the happiness of man. In the closing Book of the scriptures (Revelation) it is recorded in the first chapter that the last of the apostles was banished to the Isle of Patmos for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ. When *there*, it was that the apostle John is said to have been in the Spirit, a state suited to receive divine communications which concerned the rights and glories of Christ, the Lamb of God. He is the One about whom God and man were at issue, man having rejected and crucified Him. But God has raised Him from the dead and exalted Him, investing Him with all power and glory for the appointed rule of the earth, and making known clearly the previous judgments to be executed upon the professing church, and the world. John was therefore let into the mind of God as to present and future things; moreover he was enjoined to shew to others things shortly to come to pass.

If John stood in a special and somewhat similar position to Daniel, all believers are of course not to be so placed as to experience or communications. Nevertheless, it is the given privilege of every saint of God, having now the complete and perfect revelation of God, and the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God (the One to make known what is written), to exercise the same unshaken confidence in God, with habitual dependence on Him. May we be in that spiritual state so as to know and communicate what is clearly written, as to man and the world, his sphere, with the relationship and place of each to the exalted Lamb of God. The same cross of Christ by which all who believe are delivered from sin, death, the world, and Satan's power, has plainly determined the moral end of man and of the world.

1 Cor. 1 states unmistakably that the flesh of man even in its best form (wisdom) is at an end, and refused by God. John 12 declares the world to be judged morally at the cross, for it is written, "Now is the judgment of this world." Moreover the apostle Paul in Acts 17, when insisting that God has commanded all men everywhere to repent, declares that God in having raised Jesus from the dead, is the witness to His judging the present habitable world in righteousness, the day for its execution being appointed. Jesus, the rejected, but exalted, and hidden Savior, is the very One who is to execute it. If the fixed judgment lingers as to its being carried out, it is because of what the apostle Peter states that the Lord is longsuffering, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

The Spirit of God speaking by the apostle Paul to the Thessalonians as to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, having cleared their minds as to what would take place when the Lord came *for* His saints, goes on to speak, in the First Epistle, of the day of the Lord, declaring the sudden and solemn judgment of

the world in connection with it, and drawing a distinct contrast between the children of darkness and night, and the children of light and day.

In speaking of the latter, it is said that they have the mind of God as to the present course of the world with its end. "For yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night," though at this very time the children of darkness will be saying "peace and safety." However golden and peaceful things may appear, and thereby deceive, the children of light are favored to know that there is no escape for the world. Hence as Daniel made known the rise and course of the world's power, so the believer can declare its end. The One who executes judgment upon the world, is the same One who died for the believer, removing all wrath and judgment, being risen for ever out of it, and lives, in view of all believers living together with Him, in that bright and eternal scene of glory.

If Daniel knew the blessedness of what it was to find his spring of joy, strength, and peace in God, the present children of light knowing the course and end of the boastful world of to-day, in relation to God, are enjoined to wear the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation; a salvation incomplete in its purpose toward the believer until found with, and like He be the Savior in glory.

To interpret the day of the Lord in its two-fold consequences is to bear testimony to the coming joy and blessedness of the children of day, but to sorrow and judgment for the unbelieving children of night. What privileges and responsibilities belong to those who are in the secret of the mind of God as to coming glory and judgment! How important for the believer to be living in the hope and power of the one, and in separation from, and testimony to, a world increasingly sleeping amid its pleasures and delusions! Nebuchadnezzar in all his greatness and glory, with every worldly advantage, was in the hour of trouble helpless, and resourceless. So alas! is the world to-day, as well as willingly ignorant of God's resource in Christ Jesus for salvation, life, and peace with the bright prospect of eternal glory.

May the Spirit of God produce and maintain in each believer an experience and intelligence consistent with the present moment by a scriptural testimony to the world as to the day of the Lord, which like the Red Sea of old will be both salvation and judgment. God hath not appointed the believer to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

How wondrous the grace and mind of God to all who believe!

G. G. *The Bible Treasury* 15:3-5.

## THE CRYSTAL GODDESS AD

### A Christmas Tree Is an Asherah

I am tired of letters from people who are offended by the crystal goddess ad. Each year, Christians everywhere bring in their own Asherah during the Christmas season and call it a Christmas tree. They need to educate themselves about this tradition which was brought down from the Asherah cult. Easter too is filled with such hand-me-downs. The Eve of All Saints Day (Halloween) is so corrupt with pagan traditions that many Christians are unaware that the holiday is Christian.

The crystal goddess advertised means as much to those who buy it as the Christmas tree does to Christians. No one expects that BAR subscribers are the type who would worship either.

Those who complain that the crystal goddess shouldn't be in their homes should also get rid of their Christmas trees. What hypocrisy lies in those who ask you to remove the splinter in your eye when they themselves have a log in their own. (Some famous man said that.)

Gary Cevin  
Lubbock, Texas

*Biblical Archaeology Review*, May/June, 1992, p. 12. Quoted by permission.

F. C. J., in "An Open Letter," wrote:

When in 1877 I first came into fellowship with those called Brethren, they were practically a unit in abstaining from all complicity with the observance of Christmas and similar abominations . . . tracts were written against it . . . But now with all those witnesses to divine truth gone, other generations have come upon the scene, and there are now few who regard with the same abhorance these heathen, aye Satanic, for who but Satan, the one great foe of our Lord, would dare to commit this climax of heinous wickedness of attaching His Name to a lie? But beloved brethren, have you not been "keeping Christmas"? Have you not been wishing each other to be "merry," even while bringing Christ into full accord with Belial? That seems to me unspeakably terrible, am I wrong my brethren?

But, you say, there are more important things to be concerned about. Really? The very refusal to practice holy separation unto the Lord regarding this idolatry is the same in character as the refusal to practice holy separation unto the Lord concerning evils that have become endemic among those of whom F. C. J. spoke. Perhaps you will explain your excuses at the judgment seat to the One Who bought you with a price? You are not your own; wherefore glorify God in your bodies.

Ed.

## **WERE YOU AWARE THAT BAPTISM DOES NOT REMOVE DIRT FROM THE BODY?**

That systematic perversion of the Word of God, called the NIV, says:

... and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also -- not the removal of dirt from the body ... (1 Pet. 3:21).

So this water does not symbolize the removal of dirt from the body! This appears to be what the translators think God is telling us. It stuns the mind.

Moreover, the translators follow the method of "dynamic equivalence." Well, the phrase, "not the removal of dirt from the flesh" is about as gross a case of 'dynamic literalism' as possible. JND reads "not a putting away of [the] filth of the flesh." It is a figurative statement, blocking the notion that baptism actually judicially changes a person's position before God -- which only the blood of Christ can do. So the translators of the NIV have removed this block and no doubt this will be acceptable to those who believe that baptism saves in a judicial sense.

The NIV is gathering under its shadow all sorts of perversion and looseness.

May I venture to suggest that if some time passes before the Lord comes, a controversy something like the fundamentalist-modernist controversy of past years may heat up. It will be a fundamentalist-new evangelical controversy, with the KJV versus the NIV (or some such version, perhaps even worse) being involved. Thank God we have such wonderful help in the translation by J. N. Darby.

Present Truth Publishers has available a paper exposing the character of the NIV -- and also a paper exposing the pagan character of Christmas.

## **CORRESPONDENCE ON GOD'S GRACE AND MAN'S RUIN**

My dear Brother,

I have lately felt somewhat perplexed how to answer the following statements, and should be glad if you will kindly tell me how scripture meets this serious question. It has been said, "God is love. He does not leave the poor heathen



without divine aid in their darkness. Though the Holy Ghost may not be in them as an indwelling Spirit, yet, as external, He deals with the conscience of *every human being*; in the case of a heathen aiding him towards right convictions and good practice, and helping him so to live that he may be saved, and this, though he may never have heard the name of Christ, and knows not the true God in Christ. Such texts as Acts 17:27; 10:35; Romans 2:7; Genesis 6:3, corroborate this view."

Ever, my dear Brother,  
Affectionately yours in Christ, J. P. B.

My dear Brother,

The doctrine you refer to is widely spread enough. Zwingle held it, all the Wesleyans hold it, and most of the national professors of Christianity. But it is founded on a want of depth and truth in the foundations, denying that we are all lost. The best answer is the very plain statements in the Epistle to the Romans, though these are confirmed by many others. But there is always a want of conviction of sin in these cases; man is not lost, not dead in trespasses and sins, and that is, *I am not*; for if *I* have deserved condemnation, it is no difficulty to think we *all* have. Hence grace, sin, and the Lord's death, all lose their import and value; and the real way of meeting it morally is to deal with the conscience of the individual. "So to live that he might be saved" at once shows ignorance of the ways of God in grace -- in fact of the gospel -- as regards Christ's work.

"Right convictions and good practice" is not gospel. Is he born again? Acts 17:27 does not say a word of the Spirit's acting, and chapter 10:35 says simply that he who is such and such is accepted. It was merely that blessing was not confined to the Jews, as is evident if the passage be read. Romans 2:7, &c., which is the strongest passage, supposes the truth of glory and resurrection known. If I found a Gentile so walking, he is as much saved as a Jew. But it is declared that every mouth is stopped, and all the world guilty before God, that there is none righteous, no, not one. The condemnation of the heathen is (Rom. 1:18-3:19) put upon a ground which negatives the idea of such a universal operation of the Spirit. They are, says the apostle, without excuse, on the double ground of having given up glorifying God when they knew Him, and testimony of creation, adding conscience: a reasoning perfectly futile, and without sense, if there was the other ground of condemnation, namely, that they have resisted the Holy Ghost. They that have sinned without law perish without law. The carnal mind is enmity against God, in me, as well as in any other one of the nations. People confound the ground of responsibility with sovereign grace in saving. Genesis 6:3 refers merely to the patience of God in Noah's

time.

Men are not saved by grace, if they are as thus stated; because, as the Spirit works alike on all (or the argument is nothing worth), the whole of salvation depends on man's acceptance of and acting on it. As I said at the beginning, our whole state, as scripture puts it, is denied. (See 2 Corinthians 5:14, where the apostle draws the conclusion from grace. Compare Eph. 2:5.) I do not believe the Gentiles more lost than I was myself. But there is no name given under heaven whereby we can be saved but the name of Jesus Christ. Romans 10:13,15 is positive as to the means. Judgment and condemnation is according to the means we have. What brings, by sovereign goodness, salvation to the lost is another thing. But, as I said, does he think himself lost? That is the real question. The source of thousands of opinions is the want of this, of conscience being before God; where it is not, the mind can have a thousand thoughts, all alike to no purpose. But I must close.

Your affectionate Brother in Christ, J. N. D., (*The Bible Treasury* 12:288).

## USEFULNESS

A question often arises about usefulness. Satan often beguiles by it. He may have suggested to John that he would be more useful if he were to compromise a little, and keep out of trouble for the sake of being free for his service to saints. Useful to whom? To God or to men? God may be able to show out more of His glory by laying men aside. The eyes of God rested on Paul a prisoner, seemingly useless (not even always allowed to write), as the field for the display of some of the greatest privileges of truth. The very point when your weakness seems to make you useless is often the very way in which God shows forth His glory. People think it strange that old Christians, useless ones, &c. &c., should be left, and young active ones taken. Do not you be trying to settle God's house for Him; do not say, "What a pity for John to get to Patmos." The Lord wanted him there to communicate something that might serve His people to the end of time. A person may be in difficult circumstances, and you may have it in your power to get him out of them in the power of human nature. And you may do it, and find out that God would have had him in them, because then he could have borne testimony; and you ought not to have measured things by your love for him and your comfort, but by the light of God. We often act on a set of thoughts of which the cord is bound to our own humanity instead of God's glory.

G. V. W., *Christian Friend* 1881, p. 55

## FELLOWSHIP AND ITS RESPONSIBILITIES

The principle of *fellowship* is one of exceeding importance to us. And if we ask what the unity or fellowship of the church is, it is I believe answered in that one word -- "the unity of the Spirit" -- "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit" (Eph. 4).

We have too much, I think, looked on unity as *our* unity, instead of the unity of the *Spirit*. The two things are very different. *Our* unity would indeed be a rope of sand, as many have supposed it to be; yet had it something durable in it, because, though not seeing, perhaps, our full strength, it was held as to God. But, as I say, we want a bond, and that bond is the Spirit.<sup>1</sup>

What then is the position -- the unity -- of the church in the world? It is "the temple, the habitation of God by the Spirit." The position of the Church as it *should* be in the world, is this, -- it is the one body of Christ animated and guided by the Spirit. The promise of Christ, in departing from His Church<sup>2</sup> was, "I will send you another Comforter [which I should be much more inclined to render "another *guardian*"] that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth." And *His* care for the Church, in guarding and guiding them, may be nicely suggested, I think, by those words "He shall guide (ὁδηγήσει) you into all the truth." "As many as are *led* by the Spirit of God, they are the children of God." This shows it is our privilege to be *led* by Him. Thus it is therefore with the whole Church (if it would *allow* it), and thus it is with every assembly gathered upon true ground, "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God;" it is, under the guardian hand, and care of the Holy Ghost, the indwelling Spirit, "the habitation of God by the Spirit."

And let me say, we shall find the benefit, the *necessity*, in these last times, of standing for the whole truth, the full truth. Let us not be deterred by the charge of presumption. We are either that, *or nothing*. Our choice is between *God's foundation* and man's expediency.

I will *resume*, by adding, in reference to what I said just above, that, if gathered upon true ground, though not *the Church*, yet are we upon the ground of the Church, and therefore in a position to act upon the principles and to receive the full blessing of the Church. "Where two or three are gathered together *in my name*, there am I in the midst of them." Alas! one has to reassert every principle

1. I take the opportunity, and beg leave to press upon attention a tract which may be familiar to some, and to others perhaps will not be so, called "Letter to the Saints in London as to the Presence of the Holy Ghost in the Church." I did not see it until writing this; but it contains a statement of that truth more full than I hitherto remember to have seen, and in a way calculated to warm and gladden the heart of every right-minded saint.

2. I use the word *prospectively*, [presenttruthpublishers.com](http://presenttruthpublishers.com)

which we once held.<sup>3</sup>

Further, I remark, I fear it is the thought and language of many now, that it is impossible to carry out the unity of the Church now. To which I reply simply, Is it *the truth*? Because if it is so, it is simply unbelief to talk of its being impossible to carry it out. It is saying, the Lord is not able to help us to carry out the truth. Let us look at it in its *undisguised form*. But I say, this is the very ark for us, that must be carried through, though it be through fire and water. I would suggest, What promise or prospect is there of security from evil and delusion apart from the unity of the body? I see (Eph. 4:4) "there is *one body*, and *one Spirit*." I believe from that passage taken in connection with ver. 3, and from other passages, that God has been pleased to connect the Spirit with the Body here on earth. And we cannot have the fullest power and guidance of the Spirit apart from the Body. This may seem delicate ground: it is so; we ought to feel it; yet it is nevertheless *true*. And let me say such will be the working of evil in these last days, that we shall find we have *nothing to spare* to meet it. "Except those days were shortened for the elect's sake, no flesh should be saved," true of Israel's remnant literally hereafter, has distinctly, I believe, its moral application for us now.

But to talk about not carrying it out now; how beautifully does the language of the Israel-remnant contrast with this in the time of their trouble, which with regard to personal suffering in one sense, will be infinitely more trying than ours. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the heart of the sea. Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake at the swelling thereof" (Ps. 46). "They shall glorify God in the fires, even the name of the Lord God of Israel." Yea, instead of being discouraged, "they shall lift up their voice, and shall sing for the *majesty* of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea."

I simply add, in conclusion, that to give up the unity of the Church, is in plain terms, in consonance with what has been said before, to give up the field to the devil.

Now, then the question arises, Why when evil comes into a body, and is not judged, *will* not be judged, why do we separate from all, why do we refuse *fellowship* to any? For this reason -- that the Spirit is grieved in the Body, yea, is sent away -- he is no longer the Animator, the RULER. For when evil is *tolerated*, there He cannot dwell. "In many things we all offend," whether individually, or collectively. But our infirmities and sins in that way are one thing, and the deliberate refusal to judge and put away our evils is *quite* a different thing. Tender truly is that Spirit, so that even corrupt communication (Paul tells us in Eph.) grieves "that holy Spirit of God, whereby we are sealed;" but as to the

---

3. [This was written in 1850. Just think of the conditions now.]

other, wilful evil, truly it is of the character spoken of in (Heb. 10); it is "doing *despite* unto the Spirit of grace."

If then, I say, the body refuse His guardianship, if it reject Him thus, what follows? Why it is no longer His fellowship, the unity of the Spirit. To the question, then, "Why do you separate from all?" I answer, Because we have no security about any. They are no longer under the care of the guardianship, the hand of the Spirit, that other Guardian -- they have refused it. We cannot own whom He does not -- those who do not own Him.

I will not dwell upon the truth, that surely the wolf will catch and scatter those who are thus defenseless -- on the truth that a little leaven leavens the *whole* lump -- *this* shows there is no security. I confine myself to the present thought -- but I add, that where the Spirit is not the animating guiding One, it is the solemn fact that Satan does get that place. He becomes the animator.

This, I think, is decidedly shown in Babylon, *i.e.* the professing Church. That is how it *ends*. "Babylon the great," says the word, "is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of very foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." That from which God goes out, Satan enters. John 13:27 may be very instructive as compared with verse 2. See also 1 Sam. 16:14; 18:9,10.

This may perhaps be slow, and imperceptible save to the really spiritual eye. But this, I think, should make the saint the more careful of meddling with it; for such a beginning yet leads surely onward, and *blinds* to its own progress.

And here let me observe, the great danger one has of letting natural feelings and thoughts come in to lead him to any such compromise or meddling. It is, I judge, the enemy's plan, when *resistance* has been successfully offered, to soften by kindness. Look at the prophet at Bethel. Jeroboam, when the testimony had been given with power, next says (1 Kings 13:7), "Come home, and *refresh* thyself, and I will give thee a *reward*." What a change! What apparent kindness! But his thought, I judge, simply was to soften the prophet's testimony, to screen *his own* conscience, to persuade himself that it would not be so bad after all as the prophet had said -- in short, to bribe God in the person of His prophet. Such very likely too was the motive of the old prophet, to bolster himself up in a false position. (Compare 2 Chron. 11:13,16).<sup>4</sup>

---

4. I would remark, in conjunction with this reference, his dwelling at Bethel, I think, would be instructive. He dwelt where *the altar* was the fixed proof of Israel's sin. He could not therefore, we judge, have had much real zeal respecting the abomination. It is no use testifying against Sodom, if one voluntarily chooses their lot there. "This one fellow *came in to sojourn*, and he will needs be a judge." They could quickly perceive that. The Lord would not, we would judge, employ this one therefore to give his testimony against the altar there. Very instructive too, perhaps, that the one is called "a man of God," whilst the other is called "an old prophet;" the latter denoting the mere official character, the other perhaps the tone of soul that accompanied his work.

I may add, by way of analogy, that I think we find the same principle shown in Israel; for when Achan sinned (Josh. 7:1), "the Lord said, *Israel* hath sinned, and they have also transgressed," etc.; "neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you." They are all called "accursed" in the 12th verse. For *unity* is always God's truth, and responsibility consequent upon unity. So also Josh. 22:31. And I will add, I suppose Joshua, with Acts 5, will give us the important thought, that the more entirely *God* is at work Himself, the more thoroughly will He have holiness amongst His people, the "fellow-laborers."

Let me suggest, in accordance with what has been now said, that it is a serious thing to acknowledge, and accredit any assembly as in *real* fellowship, where there is not thus full *liberty* for the Spirit and His rule. It may be getting to ourselves a point of weakness, "opening our side to the countries."

One word I would say as to the seven churches: I have heard it said there was evil there, and there was no command to separate. I observe any one who has had to contend much with *evil* has probably before this had to shew that a negative argument often is *no* argument. For instance, there is a positive direction (1 Cor. 5:11-13). But one may say I find evil spoken of (Phil. 3:18,19), but there is *no* command to put them away. And so forth. But I would say, the Lord says at Ephesus, where there was *no positive* evil, but the whole thing *decaying*, *love* departing (Rev. 2:4), where read "I have against thee, that thou hast left thy first love," instead of -- "Nevertheless I have *somewhat*," the Lord says, "Except thou repent, I will remove thy candlestick." I say, if, *faith* had perceived that the candlestick was removed (which however, probably, the *general* declension of the Church *together* would prevent), would it have staid there? I judge not. Surely it is the *living* God we have to do with. Though of course only in great wisdom and carefulness could such a thing have been done. It is not, let me further remark, the Lord's way to *force* things upon us. He gives enough for the willing mind to see and act upon. So constantly, when on earth, He commanded them not to *make Him known*.

I now commend these thoughts to the consideration of brethren. It may be, such like truths are being brought before us just *in time*; for abounding evil will surely characterize "the day approaching" (1 John 2:18); but there is light present and in prospect to cheer us through (Jude 24).

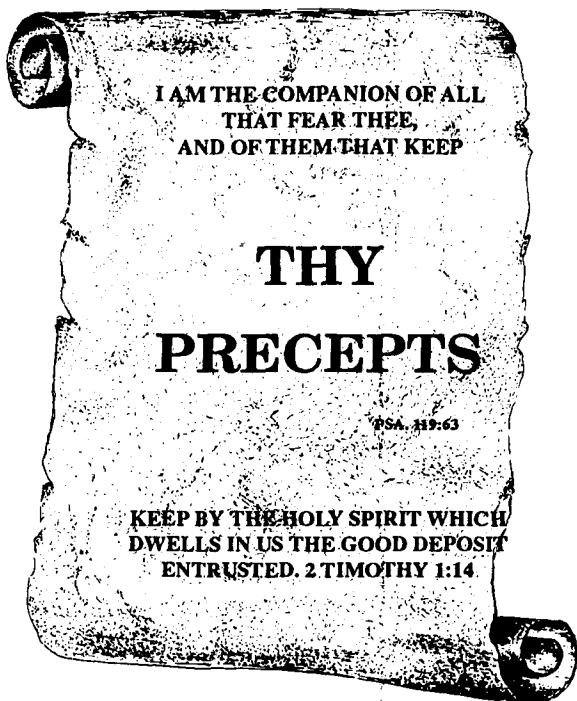
G. *The Present Testimony* 1850, pp. 154-159



**PRESENT TRUTH PUBLISHERS**  
**411 Route 79 • Morganville, NJ 07751**

[www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)





NOV / DEC 1992

Vol. 7, # 6

---

## CONTENTS

---

Could Christ Sin? Tempted: Sin Apart .....	161
Christ is the Test of Love .....	169
Asking for Commands .....	169
The Holiness of Christian Fellowship .....	170
Repentance for Evil .....	170
The Man in the Purple Robe .....	177
Elements of Dispensational Truth .....	180
Chapter 4.7: Gal. 3:26-29 .....	180
Reconstruction? .....	190
Self-esteem .....	191
Life .....	192

## **THY PRECEPTS**

### **NO SUBSCRIPTION CHARGE APPLICATION**

**Send a set of the following back issues:**

(Enclose \$6.00 per year -- \$1.50 per single issue)

(Foreign, \$7.50 per year -- \$1.75 per single issue)

- ☐ 1986      ☐ 1987      ☐ 1988      ☐ 1989  
☐ 1990      ☐ 1991      ☐ 1992

- ☐ Send **THY PRECEPTS** regularly (no charge).  
☐ Send a **PRESENT TRUTH PUBLISHERS** catalog.  
☐ Cancel my **THY PRECEPTS** subscription.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
FIRST LAST

ADDR: \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET

\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY/TOWN STATE/PROVINCE ZIP+4

**PRESENT TRUTH PUBLISHERS**

411 RT. 79 MORGANVILLE NJ 07751 USA

**If you know a Christian who would profit from receiving**

**THY PRECEPTS**

**please send in an application.**

[www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

---



---

## THE TRUTH OF CHRIST'S PERSON

---



---

### "THE SON CAN DO NOTHING OF HIMSELF SAVE WHATEVER HE SEES THE FATHER DOING"

(COULD CHRIST SIN?)

#### *Tempted: Sin Apart*

#### TEMPTED IN ALL THINGS IN LIKE MANNER, SIN APART

It is true that translators differ over whether this should read "yet without sin," or "sin apart." These two expressions change the sense. "Yet without sin" is more compatible with the notion that the Holy One could have sinned. "Sin apart" restricts the kind of temptations of Christ to only those that come from outside a person -- namely external trials. Our text is not telling us merely that Christ was tempted in every temptation wherewith a sinner is tempted, including what comes from a sinful nature but that He did not sin. That would really make Christ a sinner, too. Just that point is carefully guarded against here by the words "sin apart." Those temptations which arise from indwelling sin were *not* experienced by Christ, else He was a sinner. J. N. Darby wrote:

And this as to the fact is the express doctrine of scripture. He was in all points tempted like as we are, according to the likeness He was in, except sin. The English passage does not convey the meaning properly, specially the latter clause; for "yet" might imply that it might mean actual sin resulting; though, I admit, a simple scripture-taught mind would take the sense aright. The statement of the teachers from Newman Street is, that the latter clause is not meant to qualify the former. What then is it for? this is just the difference -- He was tempted in all points, according to the likeness [He took], except (or, apart from) sin; that is, that which is connected, or continually so in us, with temptation, was not so in Him. It is the revelation of that difference precisely: He was tempted apart from sin -- we are tempted in connection with that which has been condemned as sin, not being in Him. It is sin which is in our nature, which makes us give way.

The "yet without sin," which I translated "apart from sin," is the same word as in the passage, "He shall appear the second time without sin." As free as He then will be from it, so free was He in the temptations He went through. thus,

we have the express testimony of scripture on the point. Every trial, every sorrow, every circumstance, in which the enemy of our souls could try Him, He was tempted with καθ' ὁμοιότητα. Everything which sin had caused as an effect He bore; in His nature He was sinless. He sympathizes with us in every trial of ours as new creatures. He judges -- God has judged -- and strengthens us against the suggestions of our old man, with which he can have no sympathy, but which is all condemned, we being received because He has willingly died for us as to it all, which was the sympathy we wanted for it, and which He could not have given if He had been in any way or sort sinful Himself. He could not then have been made sin.<sup>1</sup>

Commenting on Heb. 2:18, W. Kelly wrote:

Temptation means trial; never in Christ's case, what is in fallen man's inward solicitation to evil. This is what the Holy Spirit expressly denies of Him, and what no one who believed in His person ought to have allowed for a moment. Lustful experience or sin is incompatible with the Holy One of God; and, so far from being in a single instance predicated of Him, it is wholly excluded: Χωρίς ααρτίας could be said of neither Enoch nor Elijah, nor of John and Paul, but of Him only. The blessed endurance of temptation (James 1:2,12) He knew beyond any; but what James describes in verses 13-15 of his first chapter was foreign to Him, and a blasphemous imputation, as it proves fundamental unbelief of Who and what He is. We are too familiar with the human and selfish argument that He could not sympathize with us adequately if exempt from those internal and evil workings, bemoaned in Rom. 7 and bitterly known by every soul born of God, at least in the early days of his awakening. But if we needed the Lord to be similarly harassed in order to feel fully with us, we should on that ground want Him to have yielded, as we alas! have often done, in order to sympathize with us in our sad failures. No! that ground is wretchedly and absolutely opposed to Christ....<sup>2</sup>

This matter is very important and so I will quote at length from W. Kelly concerning this issue.

Christ "was tempted in all points like as we are, *apart from sin*." He had no sin whatever. It was not only that He never sinned, but He had no sin; and this makes all the difference possible. He was the Holy One; and this was manifested, especially in the unparalleled temptations He endured. Assuredly He was all through the Holy One; but it was all apart from sin. In Him was no sin -- not sins merely, but sin. It was not only that He did not yield to sin, but there was no sin in Him to yield. His nature as man had no evil to be acted on by the devil. There was evil without. He was assailed by every possible, the most subtle, effort of Satan in a ruined and wretched world. There was all that could give pain, not only in men and the Jews, but even in disciples. There was the presenting of what was agreeable to allure at the beginning of His path; there was the endeavor to alarm at the end by what was most tremendous and overwhelming in death, and, above all, in such a death as was before Him.

---

1. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 15:31. See also 23:207.

2. *The Epistle to the Hebrews, in loco*  
[www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

But whether it was by the pleasant or the painful, at every time, under all circumstances, Christ was tempted like as we are. It is not said that He was not tempted more. "There hath no temptation befallen us but that which is common to man," *i.e.* a human one. Could one say this about Jesus? Who does not see that the Lord was tempted above all that man was ever tempted? that there was no temptation to compare with His? While, therefore, it is perfectly true that He was "tempted in all points like as we are," it is far from being true, as many ill-instructed souls assume, that we have been tempted in all points like as He was.

The wilderness was the marked scene of Christ's characteristic temptation. Have we been ever tried so? Certainly not. There may be a measure of analogy, and I have no doubt that the three well-known temptations which closed the sojourn in the wilderness are full of instruction in their principle at least. Each one of the three efforts of Satan against the Lord -- the natural temptation to make the stones loaves, the worldly temptation in the offer of the kingdoms of the world on the condition of homage, and the religious temptation in the exhortation to cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple according to the promise in Psalm 91 -- is full of the weightiest instruction and warning for our souls. But then be it remembered, that before these He had been tempted for forty days without food. Is this a trial that we have ever been subjected to? We may boldly say, I think, that it is one into which the Spirit will never lead us as Him. It was a trial altogether peculiar and suited to the Son of God, the man Christ Jesus.

While, therefore, our Lord Jesus here below was tempted like as we are in all points, He was tempted in a most important way that was altogether proper to Himself. And it was meet that it should be so; for He was not what one may call a merely natural member or natural head of the human family. Most truly a man he became, by grace made of a woman; but in His own right God, and the Son of God. And soon He was about to take the place of head of the new creation. He was to be the counterpart of the first man -- as he in sin, so the Second in righteousness and grace; and just as Adam fell in a place that was peculiar to him in his measure, so the Lord Jesus stood under incomparably more severe temptations, and is now the glorified man in resurrection, as the other brought in death for himself and his race. Thus Adam's case, here briefly sketched, helps, or ought to help, any soul that wants to know what temptation is; for the common notion that temptation supposes inward evil is a fatal mistake, and shows that there is a leaven of unsuspected heterodoxy in all who think so, and thereby fail to conceive of temptation apart from proclivity or tendency to sin. One need not do more than just ask the simple questions, Was not Adam tempted? and what was his condition when tempted? Certainly there was no sin, no inward proclivity to evil, in Adam before he fell. Sin therefore is in no way necessary to temptation in the sense of the word here meant; for the first great instance of temptation, and alas! of sin, was the case of a man who was made without sin. So here; so with the Son of God Who conquered Satan, the destined extirpator of sin, and this too not by power but by suffering, that it might be by righteousness, and thus grace have all its blessed way for and with our souls. How admirably, here on earth morally, now in fact on high, was not our Lord Jesus the counterpart of that first man, Himself the second man, and last Adam!

I affirm then, that He, absolutely without sin, was therefore the very and only One that could be a prime object for temptation on the part of Satan. The enemy's aim was to get sin in; but not even in the very close, the prince of this

world came and found nothing in Him. There was neither sin inwardly to excite, nor was there lack of dependence on God which admitted sin. It was not there, nor could it ever find entrance by independence of God. If Satan had only contrived to lead Him to use His own will, there had been sin at once, and all was ruined, every hope gone. It could not be indeed; for He was both a divine person and the dependent, obedient man. The foe was utterly foiled. And there is the great mistake -- that many reason from themselves to Him, and conceive it was a kind of virtue or merit in the Lord Jesus that He never sinned. Whereas there never was a question about His sinning, either to God or even to any man who believed in Him.

How could any one born of God entertain for one moment the thought of the Lord Jesus failing? Could such a profane dreamer be really supposed to believe that He is the Son of God? All these speculations of men which lower the glory of Jesus simply show that they do not really believe that Jesus is God while a man. They do not know what they mean by such a confession as that He is the Son of God to be honored as the Father. They do not truly believe that He is God Himself as truly as the Father or the Holy Ghost; for His becoming a man detracted nothing from it. He took manhood into union with His deity; but the incarnation in no way lowered the deity, while it raised humanity in His person into union with God. Each nature, however, preserved its own properties. There was no confusion. Each was exactly what it should be -- human nature, and divine nature, each in all its own characteristic excellence, combined, not confounded, in His person. And such was Jesus, Who came to glorify His God and Father, and deliver us from our sins to His glory by redemption through His blood.<sup>3</sup>

### THE THREE TEMPTATIONS: MATTHEW 4:1-11; LUKE 4:1-13

There is a remarkable order in connection with the Lord's temptation. he was about to enter on His public service. He was God's "holy servant Jesus" (Acts 4:27). As He came up out of the water when He was baptized, the heavens opened and the Spirit descended upon Him as a dove, and abode on Him (John 1:33; Matt. 4:16). This was His anointing for service. We receive the Spirit as washed in His blood. He needed no application of blood for He was the Holy One. But not only was He so anointed by the Spirit; out of the opened heavens came a voice saying:

**This is my beloved Son, in whom I have found my delight (Matt. 3:17).**

Thus the Spirit anointed Him as a perfect one and the Father expressed His delight in Him. Then came the testing in the wilderness. I suggest that the notion that Christ might have failed the test requires the inverse order. In that case He should have been tested first. But no; the order is consonant with the fact that the testing was put last, after the Spirit and the Father had so acknowledged Him. And then God used the devil for the acid test to show that

here was the pure gold, so to speak. And the impregnable citadel of holiness was assaulted by the devil from without; but it merely justified the Spirit's descent upon Him and the approbation of the Father.

How ridiculous to take gold to the jeweler to test if it is gold; and when it withstands the acid test, to call it a sham test because the gold cannot be dissolved by that acid.

The following sketch of the Lord's temptation <sup>4</sup> in the wilderness is by F. G. Patterson.

We are not told what passed in those "forty days and forty nights." God has drawn a veil over that solemn conflict. But we are allowed to see its close -- "*all the temptation*" being finished.

We may note the difference in the order in which the temptations are spoken of in the two Gospels. This, like everything in the word of God, is of importance, and has its significance. In the account in Matthew, the order is this: you have His obedience tested first, then His dependence. These are the two characteristics of the new man -- Christ in us -- of which He was the grand and blessed exemplar. Then to this obedient and dependent One are presented all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, and He triumphs over the enemy and all his toils.

In the gospel of Luke I think another lesson is presented to us. Here we have the trinity of evil which came in in Paradise when our first parents fell. "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life," then entered this fair scene: "when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise." This, then, is the order here. In verse 3, &c., we have the lust of the flesh; in verse 5, the lust of the eye; and in verse 9, &c., the pride of life. And at the close, we find that when the "devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him *for a season*." then, at the close of His course, He said to His disciples, at the end of John 14, on His way to the garden of Gethsemane, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." This was the second time the tempter was permitted to cross His path. At the beginning he sought to deter Him from being the Victim in making atonement at the end. This was the time when He sweat, as it were, great drops of blood in His agony, when accepting the cup from His Father's hand.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews, which unfolds the Priesthood and work of the blessed Lord, we find those two scenes alluded to separately and distinctly. In chapter 4:15, the Spirit of God specially refers to the close of the forty days' temptations at the opening of His public service, in the words, "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities: but was in all points tempted like as we, except sin (Χωρίς ἁμαρτίας);" and in chapter 5:5 we have the other scene at the close of His life: "who, in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that

he feared." In the scene of Gethsemane, in Matthew, we find those prayers, supplications, and strong crying and tears referred to in verses 39, 42, and 44. His "prayer" deepening to "supplication," and His "supplication" to "strong crying and tears," to be answered fully on the morning of resurrection, and to be dried up for ever when He entered upon His heavenly joy and glory.

But when we contrast those words which describe His sorrow with those which describe the heart of the tried saint, in Philippians 4, instead of "prayer and supplication, with strong crying and tears," as with Him, He has taken the sting out of every bitter sorrow for His own, and with them it is "prayer and supplication, with *thanksgiving*." He has borne our sins -- not one remains. He has tasted our sorrows -- not one is without His sympathy. In life and in death, and life for evermore, He is our perfect High Priest and Savior!

Over those "forty days" temptations God has drawn a veil. "Afterward [mark the word] he hungered." Note now the wisdom of the foe. We shall always find that the tempter adapts the temptation to our *present state*. With Christ it was ever perfection. He hungered; but this was not sin; there was nothing evil in being an hungered. Still, the temptation was suited to His then state by this father of lies.

Is not this the case with us? Does not the tempter know how to suit his temptation to our present state? Does he not know what is suited to move our lusts -- to seduce us out of the path of obedience? Does he not know the love of the world in our hearts? -- the ambition of another -- the pride of a third -- the vanity of another? Does he not see the covetousness of that heart -- the lust working in this? Does not the tempter know how to draw each one away of his own lust, and entice such? There is a poor man struggling with the world and his children's need. The tempter tempts him to be discontented with his lot. There is a godly woman with a bad husband. She is tempted to impatience with her life of sorrow. There is that rich man who hoards his money. He has been often deceived, he thinks, in giving it away. There is a corner of his heart over which "covetous" may be written. He gives way to the temptation to close his purse-strings, and the tempter has his victory.

I might go on in this strain; but all who read these words know well how the thing that suited the "old man, which is corrupt," within them, has been ministered to by the tempter, and how, perhaps unknown the themselves, they have fallen his prey for the moment. I say "for the moment," for I speak of those who are open to his devices -- saints of God with the flesh in them. The poor child of Adam is often left alone by the tempter; he is his sure and certain prey, and needs no special watchful care from the enemy of Christ. With him, his course seems in Satan's highway, and unless grace turns his heart there is no need; his own heart, and his own lusts, and the world around, answer well enough for him.

But Jesus "hungered." This was the will of God. Could it happen without such? Nay. "Command that these stones be made bread," suggested the tempter. "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God," had passed the lips of the Eternal Son, and now on earth He will obey. Have we never satisfied our hunger, our need, at the expense of the word of God? Look at our daily life, reader; does it not cut home deeply into every motive of our life and ways? Our needs, too, each day, are they ever satisfied independently of God? Alas, for the reply, even from the lips and hearts of the brightest saints! How "Christ" detects our souls, yet, blessed be His name, forms us after the image of Himself who thus lays us bare. Jesus



came to be the subject One, the will-less Man (though divinely entitled to have a will, surely). To "command," then, was not for Him who came to shew us how to obey. To command the winds and waves was His, when in obedience to His Father and God. To command for *self* and His need could never be, for "self" was never there! To obey was all with Him in a scene formed by man under Satan's power, independently of God. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." No word had passed His "mouth" to "make stones bread" to satisfy hunger, apart from His will. Thus was the tempter stripped of his power; obedience to the word of God left him a conquered foe, and Christ was victor by obedience over man's mighty conqueror.

We have a nature capable of being drawn aside, and an ever watchful enemy ready with his temptations. Christ had not this; but still, whether for Him or for us, obedience is victory. We never can be in a single circumstance where we cannot -- nay, are not bound -- to do the will of God, be that what it may. Thus we may ever be conquerors, as He was here. But let us ever remember that it is the state of soul in which we *are* to which the tempter presents his wile, adapting it to that which is uppermost at the moment in our heart; and each moment of each day and hour is the opportunity for his defeat or victory. If the latter, the soul may be restored, but the scar remains, telling us of a moment's defeat in us, and of a victory of the enemy.

Now mark what ensues. The skilful general does not continue to attack the point where he has been repulsed successfully, he changes his mode, and turns the flank of his foe. How rapidly, too, is this accomplished by the successful tempter. How well the human heart is known. How frequently have those who have resisted well in his attacks fallen, forgetful that they were never nearer a fall than when they had resisted well.

In the case of Jesus how sudden was the change. "*Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,*" &c. So with us: one thing is tried, and we resist, and foil the foe; the next moment we fail where we least expected to have done so. Our success was thought to be our own. We ceased to be dependent, and withdrew our eyes from Him who withdraweth not His eyes from us; and thus, and only thus, we fall. A heart distrustful of itself, which ever looks to Him; He succors with His timely help to keep us from a fall.

Will Jesus, too, be a dependent One, and teach us so? The tempter says -- using, as it were, the word of God, by which He lived, that to which He had appealed as His guide, and the director of His life -- he says, "*If thou be Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.*" The promise of God to His Messiah who dwelt in the secret of the Most High, and lodged under the shadow of Abraham's God, who had made Jehovah His refuge and fortress; His God, in whom He would trust. It was to Him this promise was made, just quoted by the enemy. But mark the word which accompanied this promise; how God, as it were, delighted to unite with His promise the dependent heart of this blessed One, which only brought out His deep perfections. "Because thou hast made the Lord my refuge, even the Most High thy habitation." This was the dependence of Jesus; this, what drew forth the promise of the Lord just quoted by the enemy. He *had* made His God His refuge and His trust: no need, then, to try would He be as good as

He had said -- no need to test One fully trusted. We put the test to those we do not fully trust, not to those we do. To do so, would be but to "tempt the Lord." Satan sought to inspire Him with confidence in the word of God in spite of disobedience. He quotes the promised security, omitting the required trust. Jesus quotes that word to Israel which made the obedience the ground of His security, and kept His blessings as the dependent Man!

Oh, my reader, have we no word in this for our own souls? Have the promises of our God been clung to, and even rejoiced in, by us when walking in disobedience? Have we never beheld this in those we love and esteem as His own? What He has done for them in salvation trusted in and enjoyed; while a disobedient pathway speaks so plainly as to need no word from us to point it out? In this, too, Jesus was the blessed Conqueror -- in this the enemy of souls was foiled.

"Again." (ver. 8.) What, "Again!" yes, my reader, and "again," and onwards to the end. No truce here in this path for us, no time here is allowed to put off the amour of God, even for a moment. "Again," then, all the glory of the world is presented to Him whose own it is, but refused by Him from any hand but from His Father's. The distant time might have been shortened, the path of suffering spared, the cross and shame avoided. But this was not to be. The Giver was valued in His gift, and the Son chose to have it alone from His Father's hand. Let the blessing come only from Him, and all would be well. The malignant foe is discomfited, and Jesus stands at the close of this conflict a Victor! "Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," closes the scene.

Satan departs from Him "for a season," and angels came and ministered unto Him. Mark this striking scene. How it reminds one of that final day of victory which ushers in the millennial glory: "The kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them" stretched out beneath His gaze; then all His own. Satan cast into the bottomless pit for the thousand years' restraint; God's unfallen creatures ministering to their true and only Lord with willing hearts and hands. It only wanted His own blood-bought ones, His church, to complete the scene. But the day is coming fast when we, too, will be there, and when Satan, as lightning, will fall from heaven, and the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of the Lord, and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever.

There is a calm for human hearts, too, which conquer in temptation even now -- a holy sense of deep dependence and of joy felt by those who have resisted, in the strength of Christ, the tempter's power. The angels who ministered to those who shall inherit salvation may thus be employed even now. But the day is approaching when every trial of our faith will come forth as gold tried in the fire, and be found unto His praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

Would not the Lord, too, as He looked across that scene of sin, and sorrow, and evil which stretched before His view, as Satan was cast down before Him -- the obedient and dependent Man -- would He not think of all who then were His; and all who would come after, for whom He had thus learned what it was to "suffer, being tempted," and how to speak a "word in season" to every weary heart? This, too, ere He descended to traverse that path which led only to His cross and shame.

But remember, dear friends, that, while the tempter thinks of your state of

soul, and suits his temptations to your desires, there is Another, too, who thinks of us, who "ever liveth to make intercession for us," One who has been in conflict and in victory, and thus has shown us how to obey, and how to conquer too. We have to do with a beaten foe, and to be sustained by his Conqueror. But this must ever be as dependent ones, who, like Himself, should "learn obedience by things which we suffer." He learned as One to whom to obey was a new thing -- new, for One who commanded all from eternity. We learn obedience, too, as a new thing as well as He, but new to us in another way; new, because God's will is now taking its place in hearts hitherto opposed in will to Him, but taking its place surely, though it may be slowly, in hearts renewed by grace, to which the deepest joy will be, that His will shall flow in unhindered blessedness in that scene of rest, from our restless wills, when God will rest in His love for ever.<sup>5</sup>

Ed.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

## CHRIST IS THE TEST OF LOVE

There is nothing to be more cordially abhorred than the pretence of love and unity being used to dishonor Him who is the center, life and sole object and title of it. There is no devil so bad as the devil who clothes himself with charity. It is the spirit of the day -- latitudinarianism. "Charity is the bond of perfectness," but Christ is the test of this, as of all else, and He makes it so. "The poor ye have always with you, and me ye have not always." Thus we must judge -- judge, I mean our own conduct . . . Local unity, founded on abandonment or indifference to the truth, is a miserable hostility (in sparing oneself) to gathering with Christ, the only true and universal unity . . . I do not know what is meant by unity, if the foundations of all unity that is worth anything are denied.

*The Girdle of Truth* 2:444 (1857).

## ASKING FOR COMMANDS

The person who asks for a *command* for everything is a person who does not want a command; and because he does not think there is one, he asks, Where is it? He who has an obedient heart does not *ask* for a command but *finds* it. Directions and motives to obedience he sees everywhere in the Word, but the power is through the Holy Ghost revealing Christ.

*The Bible Treasury* 2:143.

---

---

## *The Holiness of Christian Fellowship*

---

---

### *Chapter 2*

---

#### *Repentance for Evil*

**For I acknowledge my transgressions (Psalm 51:3).**

Evil among Christians is often treated lightly. It is considering SELF and making provision for the flesh. This shows itself in misapprehension regarding the true character of repentance. The following very helpful exposition of Psalm 51 will help us concerning this subject; it is taken from an old magazine.

#### **A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART**

##### **Psalm 51**

I have not read this psalm in view of its dispensational meaning. I suppose most of us know that it is the confession of the believing Jewish remnant before God, on the ground of having caused the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. They confess their bloodguiltiness, and thus come into blessing -- the fruit of that death in expiation.

What I wish you now to look at a little is the personal, directly personal, application and meaning of the psalm. There is a wonderful reality in it, and in its meaning too. You may say the Psalms do not apply to Christians, that the Christian state is beyond them; but here, at any rate, is a psalm that, if we will only consider it simply, will search our hearts in the reality of having to do with God. We have here the characteristics of a man after God's own heart, for David was such a man. But how was this true of him? What was there in him, and about him, in his life and ways, to entitle him to this distinction? A little study of this psalm will help us to understand, as we get light from God upon it, what it is to be in this world according to the heart of God.

First, then, we have here a man who had the knowledge of God, who knew Him for himself; a man chosen of God, anointed of God, preserved of Him and sustained by Him; a man who had personally the experience of God and of His ways, experience of His goodness, His love, and His power. In order to apprehend his position here, we cannot too closely study the previous details of David's life and ways. When a mere lad, alone with God, and in dependence upon Him, he had single-handed slain the lion and the bear. Later on he had stood up alone with God against all the power of the enemy

of His people, and had delivered them from the giant, thus putting all Israel to shame. He had refused the proffered amour that Saul trusted in, preferring to go forth in simple dependence upon a known and trusted God. All the enemies before him were but "uncircumcised Philistines" -- they were that and that only to him. He went forth with God, and God was with him. A wonderful, and yet a simple practical lesson for us!

But now that was all past, all gone by -- surely not forgotten of God who had called him. David was now on the throne, the throne of Israel, preserved by God, brought there by Him, and established by Him, as the man of His choice, to rule over His people. It is here, upon the throne, that he learns more than he had ever learned in adversity -- he learns himself, his own heart, and the evil there. You may make excuses for him, speak of the times in which he lived, the circumstances surrounding him, passions, &c., but who, that is in earnest with God, is going to make excuses for sin? Looking at these things will not help us to understand this psalm. We must look at things exactly as God presents them to us, if we are to learn of Him.

David, as we have seen, had been preserved by the hand of God; there had been nothing more wonderful for him than God's preserving power over him. And here he now was, the anointed head over God's own people -- power placed by God in his hand, and see how he used it. In the day of prosperity the lusts of his own heart get the better of him; he learns that he is not their master, but that they ruled him. This was more than he had learned in the day of adversity, when he was hunted "as a partridge upon the mountains." This is true of each one of us, if we know anything of experience. People nowadays say they do not believe in experience. For my part, I do so most fully -- indeed souls cannot be right with God until they have had experience. But it is experience that comes to an end, or, rather, that leads to a new kind of experience -- the experience of God.

2 Samuel 11 gives us the circumstances that occasioned this psalm. Led away of the lusts of his own heart, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, he falls into sin. It is a sad, an awful history; but, at the same time, it is in result beautiful and blessed. Some have said, "Oh, if I could only be like David!" Well, come and look at him now, and learn the lesson God would teach us from him. It is not only that David sins in the matter of Bathsheba, but he uses his royal, God-given power to cover up the sin. He stood before no earthly tribunal, but he has a reputation in the eyes of men, and this must be maintained at all cost. How true it is, "The way of transgressors is hard"! Lust conceives and brings forth sin; and he is hurried on by it, and by the thought of his own reputation too, to add murder to it, in the vain hope of blotting it out. He succeeds; the power is in his hand -- alas! the power God had entrusted him with, and this is the use to which he puts it.

And now he rests. Uriah dead by the enemy's hand and David's orders, Bathsheba becomes his wife, and David seeks to rest, to settle down in the state he had arranged for himself. But God is faithful, and now shows His faithfulness to him. He sends His servant to him, a special messenger from Himself, and through him he recounts in his hearing a simple record of what he had done. There is no excusing, there is no making it out worse. It is the simple record of the fact -- this one ewe lamb thou hast taken. Ah, when God speaks, how brief, how simple, how heart-searching, how straightforward it is! The message came home to David's heart and conscience. One word from God and the work is done. "Thou art the man" -- THE man, the one single offender before Him, no other such sinner on the face of the earth as David. All welled up in his heart and conscience -- the abuse of the power God had given him, the position God in grace had placed him in turned to hide his sin from the sight of men. So far he had succeeded in hiding it up; but there it still was before God -- scarlet before Him -- and there was no

hiding it up there.

And now note the effect. There is no hardening, no stiffening of the neck under this message -- this convicting message. Nathan says, "Thou art THE man." David bows his head. In spirit he says, "My God, I am THE man; I have sinned against God." Here is reality. Here I begin to learn "the man after God's own heart." He owns his sin before God. None can have a worse opinion of him than he has of himself. If you and I are children of God, it is that God has singled us out, each one especially, as special sinners, in order that He may have special mercy upon us, each one. It is not as a company, nor as with a company here, but as individuals the soul has to do with Him, and come to this: "There is no one like me for badness, and there is no one like God for love, and goodness, and grace!"

And now let us begin this psalm; and here we come to the beautiful and blessed fruit of this awful history. Ah, what a lesson for us, each one! David comes to God not on the ground of repentance, nor of his own prayers, nor of his own tears. You may repent, and it is a blessed thing if you do. You may pray, and surely it is blessed to pray. You may weep, ay, weep bitter, bitter tears, and this is well. But none of these is the ground on which forgiveness is known; none of these is the true ground of approach to God. Forgiveness does not come from Him on the ground of what we are, but on the ground of what He is. Thus David comes to God. And listen to his words: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions." I begin now indeed to learn who and what the man is that has to do with God -- the man who knows God. You may say he knows his own transgressions and his own wickedness. That is true; but he also knows the only ground on which it is possible for God to have to say to him, to do with him about them, otherwise than in judgment. Further, it is the only way in which there is, or can be, uprightness with God -- being before Him, and having to do with Him on the ground of what He is in Himself. "Thy tender mercies;" "Thy lovingkindness." Thus he can say, "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me."

Let me ask, Have you ever come to God in that way? Is that the ground upon which you stand before Him? "Thy lovingkindness," "the multitude of Thy tender mercies." Are you a child of God? Have you done wrong? You cannot say you never do wrong. But if you do wrong, what is the ground on which you come to Him? Do you come to Him as to a Father? If so, do you come saying, "I have judged the thing, repented of it, and that is how I now come?" That ground is good in its place; but it is not the ground on which you can rest in full confidence -- unfailing confidence towards Him. No; the only sure, unfailing, unchanging ground is what He is in Himself -- "Thy lovingkindness," "Thy tender mercies," "the multitude of Thy lovingkindness." There is nothing equal to them, and on that ground I seek forgiveness. He does not present a false ground to God, but the simple and plain ground on which he knows God can act towards him -- "Thou art THE man." Ah! it is in mercy and in lovingkindness He has followed me. He has called me out from this place where I had hidden myself. He is real with me, let me be real with Him.

In 1 John 1 we have the difference between confession and forgiveness. Coming to God merely to seek forgiveness may or may not be accompanied with full confession. In making confession to Him, forgiveness is not the first thought of the one who thus draws near to Him. If it is merely forgiveness that is sought, circumstances and feebleness will be pleaded as excuses, in order that a ground for forgiving may be presented other than what there is in Himself. But in true confession there is no question of the force of circumstances, nor of one's own feebleness. And with the Christian this

goes still further; for there is consciousness that grace has been left on one side, and that there has been lack of dependence upon it, and that self-will and pride have led away from Him and His grace into the commission of that which is being confessed. There is thus no question of circumstances, nor of one's own weakness; no question of the temptations or trials surrounding one. It is a question solely of "Thy grace" and my self-will. His grace would have kept me; I refused it, thought nothing of it, and did not count upon it as needful for me. His power would have kept me, but I looked to another power, and left the place of dependence. Thus I placed myself in the temptation, and fell. I allowed it, and why? If I look upon the circumstances, and shelter myself behind them, I am taking refuge behind lies; and the one that has to do with God says ever, "Away with all refuge of lies; let me be real with God; it is with Himself alone I have to do."

We now come to a verse that is a difficulty to some: "Against Thee. . . have I sinned." There is no difficulty about that. But he says, "Against Thee only." Had he not sinned against the woman? Had he not murdered the VERY man he had sinned against? How, then, could he say, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned"? We need not go very far to find the reason. He is occupied with God, and with God only. The thought of his fellow-man, would pass through his mind -- "My fellow-man! Ah, yes! I have indeed sinned against him. But what is that compared to my sin against Thee?" It is sin before God, in the sight of Him who is of purer eyes than to look upon iniquity. The man, the woman, I have sinned against, the evil I have done my fellow-man, I would not ignore nor cover up for a moment; but it is before Thee, Thou God of glory, before Thee, Thou God of all grace, whose tender mercies, whose lovingkindness, I know. Let there be no excuses, no second causes, no refuge of lies, between me and Thee. I am before Thee alone, and on Thee alone can I count.

"That Thou mightest be justified." I do not palliate the sin by speaking of the poor creature with whom I committed it, of my reputation before men that weighed so much with me, nor even of the man I destroyed in order to conceal my sin. I stand before Thee -- bare and naked as the day I was born -- in Thy sight, and now there is nought, no hope, no rest, no ground of confidence but in Thee, Thy tender mercies, Thy lovingkindnesses. Now, let me ask, is that the way you come to God? Is that the way you know Him? If so, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight," will be no difficulty, but a divine, a blessed reality to your soul. I may fail to make you understand it, but I am sure of this, until you do understand it experimentally in your own soul, you do not know what uprightness of heart before God is. Until you know the practical meaning of this, you have some reserve there, something you are not prepared to have searched out, something you are seeking to hold back in your heart. In short, you are not fully free with God.

In David we have a man without reserve; everything that would come in to hinder is for him but a refuge of lies. And this he refuses, in order that there might be no impediment in God's way, nothing to hinder in His speaking to him, and judging and putting away his sin according to the resources there are in Himself. There were circumstances; but here we get back to the old Adam -- "I have an evil nature, passions, lusts, etc., and they were too strong for me. The lusts of that nature ran away with me, and I was captive to sin." Supposing he had pleaded this to God, His reply would have been, "That is all true; but I cannot have mercy on you except on the ground of My lovingkindness. You are like Adam in the garden, saying he was led astray by the very mercies given him." But David stood on other ground, blessed be God. To him it was, "My sin is between Thyself and me. I hide nothing of the wrong I have done others. But it is all before Thee -- I, a man of Thy gifts, Thy grace, Thy counsels, Thy love -- a man who has had such experience of Thee and Thy ways. Ah, it is Thyself alone I

have sinned against! I have sinned against my knowledge of Thee, against the power Thou gavest me; and my desire is, that Thou shouldest be justified in judging it." Here are the characteristics of a man after God's own heart.

You may say, "It is easy to confess thus;" but if you have ever been through it yourself, you will never say that. If you have ever been in His presence, really before Him, about yourself and your sin, you will know it is heart-breaking, heart-searching work to be before Him on the ground of no excuse whatever. You cannot make me know your experience of it, nor can I make you know mine -- being before God without any excuse, and resting solely on what is in Him, His lovingkindness, and the multitude of His tender mercies, is a personal, an individual experience; and knowledge of Himself is incommunicable, unexplainable, but will show itself in the life and ways of the one who knows it.

But he goes on: The root of it all is in myself; "I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." With me it was sin from the commencement of my being; sin and iniquity are what characterize me. Lovingkindness and tender mercies are Thine, O my God! But "Thou desirest truth in the inward parts" -- truth, not the semblance of it, not the profession of it, but the thing itself, the reality of it. Now if there are any unconverted here this evening, let me tell you, you do not know what that means. You may make a fair outward show perhaps, you may make a profession; but until you have to do directly with God, you do not know what "truth in the inward parts" is. You may have done good actions -- what you conceive to be your duty to your neighbor, and what you conceive to be your duty to God; but these must be judged of by God, according to His estimate of them, not according to yours. You may put them all into the balances, and place upon them the very best construction you can; but the balances of the sanctuary are true, and God puts into the other scale "truth in the inward parts," and then your side is light indeed. This is what you cannot do without, if you are to have to do with Him; what He cannot do without. You cannot be at peace, you cannot be at rest, in the enjoyment of His presence without it. You cannot be "after His own heart" without it; and if you are not that, what are you? It is no use talking about believing this, or that, or the other, if we are not walking in His presence, if we are not happy before Himself, in the conscious enjoyment of His favor. The mark of the enjoyment of His favor is "truth in the inward parts." It is truth coming and searching, truth finding a lodgment; and then, on the ground of His lovingkindness and tender mercies, he can say, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

Now he says, "Hide Thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities." As I look upon that sin I am conscious that Thine eye is upon it too, and that is what makes it so terrible to me. Blot it out from Thy sight, according to Thy lovingkindness, and the multitude of Thy tender mercies, and then, and then only, will it be blotted out of mine.

In verse 10 he comes round to the root of the whole matter. It is a great thing for anyone to get really to the root of things. David here touches the very ground the Lord took in speaking to His disciples. It is not the things outside, that entering in, defile a man. It is a very awful truth for us. You may shut your eyes to it, harden your conscience against it, but there the truth stands in all its reality before you, in the very words of Jesus. And this is the truth about you -- that, as a child of Adam, there is nothing from without that entering in can make your heart worse than it is. Yes; thank God, that is the truth, an awful truth, but still THE truth; and yet how widely denied and practically ignored! Children are taught from earliest infancy a denial of it -- "Be a good child, and God will love you!" Let me ask you, Is it true to you: Is the heart so evil that nothing outside it can make it worse? If you say it is not true, not really so bad as that,



you are trusting your own heart, and Scripture says, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." You are trusting that which God says is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Let me add, as to the child of God, the natural affections of the heart will always be wrong unless regulated by the exercise of conscience. When the two go together the affections will be rightly regulated; otherwise you will make idols of the objects of your affections.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Have you got thus far, in the judgment of yourself, as to say, THAT is where the evil comes from? Do not shelter yourself behind this, "I am on Christian ground, and it would not be an intelligent thing to say." David says, "It comes from my heart; not from the beauty of the woman I gazed upon, not from the effort to sustain the tarnished reputation of the king, but from the king's own heart." It is the heart, the unclean heart, I find; and that is why I cry, "Create in me," not "Change in me," but "Create in me a clean heart." Is this the ground on which you have been in your soul with God?

Let us look for a moment at experience. If you have not had experience, may God help you to get it! It is the reality of having to do with Him. Here is a man, honest-hearted before God, owning that the root of iniquity is in himself. Thus he says, "Create in me a clean heart, O God. . . and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me." Take not from me that which brings home to heart and conscience the sense of evil before God; the exercises of a troubled soul; the exercise of heart before Him. That is what it is. We could not, it is true, as Christians, say, "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me;" for, thank God, the Holy Spirit will remain with us to the end. But there is the sense in David that he has forfeited everything -- all right and title and claim -- and that God's mercies and lovingkindnesses are the sole ground on which God maintains everything He had given him. Thus he says, "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me;" "Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation;" "Uphold me with Thy free Spirit."

Now he says, "I will teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee." See what a wonderful and blessed place is reached by him; not teaching transgressors his ways -- sad and sorrowful they had been -- but "Thy ways"; Thy ways of grace, of lovingkindness and tender mercy. He does not say "the righteous," but "sinners." No need to tell the righteous of such ways as these. It is sinners who will appreciate them, and turn to Him; therefore to them will I declare them. Those who are full of pride and satisfaction with themselves will not care to hear, but those who, like myself, know what it is to transgress, will hear, and turn to Thee. Here is a power, greater and more searching than any double-tongued lash, that drives and arouses rebellion. I will tell them of Thy love, Thy resistless love, Thy pity, Thy pardoning love, Thy never-failing grace, Thy tender mercy, the multitude of Thy compassions. The sun may stand still at noonday, but Thou canst never fail; and the result shall be that sinners shall be converted to Thee. Thou shalt have the glory. Only let me have the restoring light of Thy presence, the blessed sense of Thy present favor, and I will tell it out to those in their sins. Surely this brings afresh to us the words of our Lord Himself -- "Go ye, and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." Here in David we have the utterance of the same Holy Spirit, through a man after God's own heart, -- a man who had sinned, and who owned it fully before God. He does not say "I will teach the law," but "I will teach transgressors Thy ways, because I have learned them for myself, and in them I have learned Thee." Those who know something of the foolishness, the wickedness, of their own hearts are the ones to whom this message is to be carried.

But we must know His ways before we can teach them to others. Do you know these ways -- the ways of God with the soul? Have you learned this wonderful lesson, how

God can pass His hand over the hearts of men -- those hearts so full of sin, self-seeking, and wickedness -- and cause heavenly music to come forth from them? For it is heavenly music indeed -- praise to Himself for what He is. "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me." Man is alienated from Him by wicked works. His mind is enmity with God; but God loves man, and seeks to bring man to Himself. And, as Christians, cannot we add to this tale of God's ways, this recounting of His mercies and lovingkindnesses? He spared not His own Son, but gave Him up to die for sinners. Look at the cross, and you will see the greatest, most glorious display of that lovingkindness and of that mercy that endureth for ever. Alas! alas! for rejecters of that love, that mercy, that gift!

Verse 14 is the great confession of the remnant, as to the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. But here David himself also speaks, and he says, "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of Thy righteousness." Thy righteousness!" How wonderfully that comes in here! Not "Thy grace," but Thy righteousness." Grace, true grace, reigns through righteousness. Through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, God can be, and is, righteous in forgiving, justifying, receiving all who come to Him through that blessed One. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." He loves to restore the soul, but He only restores it on this one ground. He is faithful and just to Jesus, and therefore faithful and just to us. And it is only thus that we can stand before Him and make a clean breast of it.

Now, I would ask you, Can you, dare you, tell Him everything -- even what you would hide from your nearest friend, the one you know best, who knows you best, even from your very self? Dare you lay it all bare before God, as David does, and, indeed, in a still deeper way, because you know the love of His heart, who gave the Son to die for you? Be sure of this, that in laying it all bare before Him, you will not, cannot, change His love one hair's breadth. But if all is not thus laid bare before Him, you cannot know and enjoy that love! All the blessed fruit of His lovingkindness and tender mercies. He will have you before Himself, as if He said, "I have uncovered My heart to you, all My heart, and I have uncovered your heart too; now be real with Me; uncover your own heart; let all come out, and let there be no excuses." Making excuses, and having reserve of heart, is not having to do with the heart of God -- that heart manifested in the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, that blessed Sacrifice for sins. God says, "Here is the ground of assurance -- the love of My heart, proved in the gift of Jesus -- now let all come out." The devil says, "Don't be too sure. There must be something of yourself in it. You must at least be upright in heart. There must be uprightness in you." "Ah!" I say, "but where is the uprightness to come from?" The enemy says, "You would not be half a man if you had not some kind of pride of self about you, some kind of self-esteem." It is just this self-esteem that hinders the people of God more than anything. But when you have to do with God, you cannot talk to Him of self-esteem. You cannot speak of your own character, of yourself, when in His presence. When I see a man defending himself, I say, "There is a man who is not in the presence of God." When we know what we are before Him, and what He is for us, we can leave all that to Him. It is His heart, the sense of His love, His lovingkindness and tender mercies that make us upright with Him. That is where uprightness comes from, and nowhere else -- let the father of lies and self-sufficient man say what they will.

So he continues; "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; Thou delightest not in burnt offering." I would search the world through for sacrifices, but I cannot speak of them to Thee. Thy lovingkindness sweeps them all away. The beasts upon a thousand hills, He says, they are Mine. What then am I bringing to Him? There is no real honesty, no uprightness here, no really having to do with Him. But now One Sacrifice has been offered and accepted too. The blessed Lord was delivered for our

offenses, and raised again for our justification. Thus God has swept everything away, that we may have to do with Him, directly with Himself, each one, and on this blessed ground -- what His Son has done for Him and for His glory, and for us and for our blessing. He gave His Son to die for us, and now He calls us to come and walk with Him on this ground -- perfect openness with Him, unclouded openness, ever the unclouded light of His presence, and then you will know what true joy is.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." Here it is that we learn the value of the blood as we never learned it before. When you come to the cross as a guilty sinner, you learn the value of the blood of Christ, as applied to all that you have done; here in the light you learn the value of the blood as blotting out all that you are capable of doing. It is the same blood, but viewed in a deeper, fuller way, as blotting out all that, as a child of Adam, I am capable of doing. Thus I come to be really upright with God, real and true in His presence, and only thus. May the Lord in His mercy give us to find the reality of this. It is blessed ground to be on. Thank God there is no other upon which God can permit His people to be with Him, or that brings us near to Himself after His own heart.

P. A. H. [Humphreys]

*The Christian Friend and Instructor*, 1888, p. 202ff.

Ed.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

## THE MAN IN THE PURPLE ROBE

John (19:3) and Mark (15:17) say that our Lord had upon Him a purple robe. But Matt. (27:28) says it was scarlet while Luke (23:11) says it was beauteous. Well, which was it? Why, all three; of course, for that is what the Scripture of truth states. Have you not seen cloth that looks purple when turned one way and scarlet when turned another way? I have. And there is no difficulty in the beauteousness of it.<sup>1</sup>

I believe we may learn something from this regarding the official glories and moral beauty of the Lord Jesus. The description of the robe as found in each gospel is found in that particular gospel for a reason. It is suitable to the Spirit's presentation of Christ in the respective gospels:

---

1. It matters not, so far as the spiritual lesson is concerned, if this was a robe put on Him by Herod's soldiers rather than Pilate's soldiers.

GOSPEL	CHRIST	ROBE	OFFERING	BULLOCK
MATTHEW	the King of Israel	Scarlet	the trespass offering	
MARK	the Servant	Purple	the sin offering	Bullock
LUKE	the Man	Beauteous	the peace offering	
JOHN	the eternal Son	Purple offering	the burnt	Bullock

Not everyone relates the offerings of Lev. 1-5 to the gospels in this way. (What answers to the meal offering (Lev. 2) is found throughout all four gospels.) While it is not my purpose to state the reasons for this correlation, I just observe that the order in Lev. 1-5 is God coming out to man from that which is the highest to Himself, the burnt offering (Christ wholly given up to God and His glory); and that the order in the gospels is the inverse -- man coming in. The saint learns the truths represented by the offerings proceeding from Lev. 5 to 1, the very order of the gospels.

I intend by this chart that the eye may be drawn to Mark and John particularly; because, in both gospels the robe is said to be purple and also because the bullock of the offerings of Lev. 1-5 is found only in the offerings corresponding to these same two gospels.

Perhaps in studying the tabernacle, we might have realized that scarlet speaks of earthly glory or kingly glory. Purple is the color of universal rule. (The whore of Rev. 17 pretends to both.) Matthew presents the Lord Jesus as the King of Israel, the wearer of the scarlet. Luke, who presents Him especially in the beauteous perfection of manhood (even at 12 years of age) says that he was arrayed in a robe that was beauteous. How lovely this all is in its place in Scripture, assigned by the ultimate Author of the Gospels, the Spirit of Truth, Whose office it is to glorify Christ.

Now, why do both Mark and John say that the robe was purple; and what is the connection with the bullock? The purple is the color of universal power, the emperor's color. The bullock is a type of service, and here a type of *the* Servant of God, with Whom none can compare. And what my soul saw in meditating upon all this was the answer found in Phil. 2:5-11:

... Christ Jesus; who, subsisting in the form of God, did not esteem it an object of rapine to be on an equality with God; but emptied himself, taking a bondman's form, taking his place in [the] likeness of men; and having been found in figure as a man, humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, and [that the] death of [the] cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and granted him a name, that which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of heavenly and earthly and infernal [beings], and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ [is] Lord to God [the] Father's glory.

It is John's gospel that particularly and emphatically presents the One Who subsists in the form of God. It is Mark's gospel that particularly presents that One in the form of the Servant of God. In Phil. 2:6-8 we have Him brought before us in these two ways.<sup>2</sup> He took the Servant's (the bullock) place.

Notice the "wherefore" in v. 9. It is because of what is stated in vv. 6-8, that He is exalted to be the wearer of the purple, so to speak. Universal dominion is His, though He is yet to take to Himself all this in a coming time. It is His by moral right, for whosoever humbles himself shall be exalted.

It is *forever* that He will bear the human nature He took in incarnation. It has been well said that He will administer the coming millennial kingdom as man; indeed, as a Servant. And having perfectly administered it, He will "give up the kingdom to him [who is] God and Father; when he shall have annulled all rule and all authority and power" (1 Cor. 15:24). He need not have it taken away from Him since there will be not even one failure in administration.

There never was one human act of the Lord Jesus performed apart from what He is as God. He is not two persons as if He is a "they," a human person and a divine person. The eternal Son united humanity to Himself: one Person, two natures. His every human act had a divine spring in it because of that union. And though that Man will universally reign, it is God and man in one Person. He Who is God and man in one Person will be invested in purple -- yea, and scarlet and beauty unspeakable. When the One Who is God and the Servant at the same time is invested with the purple, there will, as always since the incarnation, be the perfect expression of the Godhood and manhood in Him.

Ed.

---

2. Subsistence in the form of God is a personal glory. Servanthood is an office and human station that He assumed. The first three gospels present Christ in some human office and station while John emphasizes the fact that He is God and the eternal Son.

---

## ELEMENTS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

---

### CHAPTER 4.7: GAL. 3:26-29

#### VERSES 26-29.

For ye, as many as have been baptized unto Christ, have put on Christ. There is no Jew nor Greek; there is no bondman nor freeman; there is no male and female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus: but if ye [are] of Christ, then ye are Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise (Gal. 3:26-29).

The connection of baptism <sup>1</sup> with what has been before us in Gal. 3 is that baptism means death:

Are you ignorant that we, as many as have been baptized unto Christ Jesus, have been baptized unto his death (Rom. 6:3).

The law had to do with the first man, man in his Adamic standing and responsibility. In the death of Christ the first man is judged and ended. Hence Paul could write to the Galatians, who were being influenced by representatives of the tutor (the law):

For I, through law, have died to law, that I may live to God. I am crucified with Christ, and no longer live, I, but Christ lives in me; but [in] that I now live in flesh, I live by faith, the [faith] of the Son of God, who has loved me and given himself for me (Gal. 2:21,22).

The law did not die, but the Christian is dead and the law does not apply to him. See also Gal. 3:1; 5:24 and 6:14 where Paul brings crucifixion before them. He did so with the carnal Corinthians also because they were indulging the flesh; but the Galatians were going to perfect the flesh with the law. The first man has been set aside in the crucifixion.

... knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with [him], that the body of sin might be annulled, that we should no longer serve sin. For he that has died is justified from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him, knowing that Christ having been raised up from among [the] dead dies no more: death has dominion over him no more. For in that he has died, he has died to sin once for all; but in that he lives, he lives to God. So also

---

1. See A. C. Brown, *Baptism*, available from Present Truth Publishers.  
[www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

ye, reckon yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body to obey its lusts. Neither yield your members instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but yield yourselves to God as alive from among [the] dead, and your members instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not have dominion over *you*, for ye are not under law but under grace (Romans 6:6-14).

Gal. 3:26 refers to water baptism. Whenever the baptism in the Spirit is meant the Scripture says so. The baptism in the Spirit formed the body of Christ and was a once-for-all thing.

J.N. Darby somewhere remarked:

As to 1 Corinthians 12:12,13, it is aorist . . . and therefore says nothing of continuity. . . .<sup>2</sup>

The first point is that the Galatians did not experience the baptism in the Spirit, which only took place at Pentecost, nor did the Romans. Water baptism is *unto* (*eis*) Christ's death (Rom. 6) identification with His death. In Gal. 3:27 baptism is *unto* (*eis*) Christ. This does not mean *into* Christ<sup>3</sup> any more than the Israelites were baptized into Moses (1 Cor. 10:2).

The second point is that the baptism in the Spirit is *in* the Spirit; i.e., in the power of the Spirit. That does not mean *into* the Spirit. Christ is the Baptizer (Matt. 3:11). What He baptized *into* was into one body, in the power of one Spirit:

For also in [the power of] one Spirit *we* have all been baptized into one body (1 Cor. 12:13).

Water baptism means death; and we are identified with Christ in His death, in baptism. The law is not for a dead man. Of course, I do not mean that every one who is baptized has faith and is Christ's. We are considering the meaning and it signifies death in connection with the removal of the first man from before God. A baptized person ought not to be seeking anything from the law which addressed the first man -- who now has no standing before God. This is why baptism is introduced here in Gal. 3:26. In baptism we are not identified with the law again in some form -- such as "the rule of life." It was the rule of life for the first man.<sup>4</sup> "Have put on Christ" means identification with Him --

2. See chapter 1 in my book *The Word of God Versus the "Charismatic Renewal,"* obtainable from Present Truth Publishers.

3. The Acts 13 ultradispensationalist, E. R. Campbell, *Galatians*, Silverton: Canonview Press, 1981, p. 89 translates, "baptized into Christ." Wanting to get rid of water baptism for Christians, that is not surprising.

4. But the flesh being what it is (Rom. 8:7), the law turned out to be a rule of death.

in an external way, of course, for vital, eternal connection with Him is only through faith. And that brings us to verse 28 which speaks of being "in Christ" a position that has nothing to do with circumcision, but rather new creation (Gal. 6:15).

The so-called Christian feminists seem to like Gal. 3:28 more than most of Scripture, to pit it against other scriptures. This is not the place to enquire into this<sup>5</sup> other than to note the caliber of the reasoning upon it. A young Christian of eleven years of age may say that since there is neither male nor female in Christ, then there is no child and parent in Christ; and then reason that a child does not have to submit to a parent!

The Second Man (1 Cor. 15:47) is the head of the new creation (and the beginning of it -- Rev. 3:14), begun with His rising from the dead. We are in this new creation as our position before God, in Christ. This does not set aside earthly relationships as parent and child, husband and wife, master and servant, etc. which have their proper conduct according to God's Word. Gal. 3:28 is not brought in here to support feminism but just the opposite. Feminism is just that very flesh which was judged by God on the cross. Feminism is that same flesh which was under trial under the law. A person who is in Christ ought to know that the flesh has been judged and set aside by Christ and judge its activity in oneself. Gal. 3:28 is brought in here so that we clearly see that our position before God, *in Christ*, is one with which the law has nothing to do. The new creation is a sphere of no distinctions in the flesh, neither national, social nor natural. Our acceptance in Christ does not depend on any distinction in the flesh. On the other hand, our bodies are not yet in the new creation.

We are Christ's. A baptized Christian "has put on Christ" and if he is "in Christ" then he is Abraham's seed. The point the apostle has been making is that blessing is entirely apart from the law. We are one with Christ, the Seed, in Whom all the promises of God are yea and amen (2 Cor. 1:20), and so we are the seed of Abraham since He is the Seed of Abraham (v. 16). The blessing of

---

5. F.F. Bruce, (Open-Brethren), *Commentary on Galatians*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, p. 191 (1982), wrote:

If in ordinary life existence in Christ is manifested openly in church fellowship, then, if a Gentile may exercise spiritual leadership in church as freely as a Jew, or a slave as freely as a citizen, why not a woman as freely as a man?

See my *Deportment of a Christian Woman*, now in a second, enlarged edition, obtainable from Present Truth Publishers. [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)



being the seed of Abraham is not the highest. Among other helpful articles<sup>6</sup> and comments<sup>7</sup> is this:

## WHAT THE CHURCH CONSISTS OF

If certain views as to what "the church" consists of are asked to be clearly stated, I cannot better fulfil this request than by giving the following extracts from a writer deeply versed in these subjects: --

The Word of God presents to us a church formed on earth by the power of the Holy Ghost come down from heaven when the Son of God sat down there in glory, having accomplished the work of redemption. This church is one with its Head; it is the body whereof Christ, ascended on high and seated on the right hand of God, is the Head. (Eph. 1:20-23; 2:14-22; 3:5-6; 4:4-6; 1 Cor. 12:12,13; John 12:32, 11:52.) . . . The same Spirit, who, by the means of those whom God chose, had called sinners and communicated life to them, has also united them in one body, whose Head is the glorified Christ, and of which the Spirit Himself is the bond with Christ, and in which He serves as the bond between the members one with another . . . the church, then, is a body subsisting in unity here below, formed by the power of God, who gathers His children in union with Christ its Head; a body which derives its existence and unity from the work and presence of the Holy Ghost come down from heaven as the consequence of the ascension of Jesus . . . What is described in Ephesians, and defined as the church, is a state of things impossible to exist before the death and resurrection of Christ as its basis, and the presence of the Holy Ghost as its formative and maintaining power. Any definition we could give of it, according to Ephesians, supposes these two things. The Spirit of God, there, treats Jews and Gentiles as alike children of wrath, speaks of the middle wall of partition broken down by the cross of Jesus, the actual exaltation of Jesus above all principality and power, and us raised and exalted with Him; and both Jew and Gentile reconciled in one new man, in one body by the cross, and builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit; so that there is one body and one Spirit. It is declared, consequently, that "now unto principalities and powers in heavenly places is made known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God." . . . There are two great truths dependent on this doctrine: the church united to Christ in glory accomplished hereafter; and meanwhile, as far as existing or developed on earth, the habitation of God through the Spirit. This is its calling, of which it is to walk worthy; a calling clearly impossible from its very nature, till the descent of the Holy Ghost made it such an habitation.

That the saints will all be gathered into everlasting blessedness as partaking of Christ as their life, and redeemed by His blood, according to the counsels of

6. "God's Promises to Abraham, and His grace to the Church," *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 8:343-345, 359-361; "The Israel of God, and Abraham's Seed," *The Bible Treasury* 12:366-368.

7. W. Kelly, *Lectures on the Second Coming and Kingdom* . . ., London: Broom, pp. 153, 154, (1865) for comments on the seed of Abraham and the olive tree (Rom. 11), as W. Trotter, *Plain Papers on Prophetic and other Subjects*, London: Morrish, revised ed., p. 150; "What is the Church? Do Old Testament Saints Form Part of it?" *The Bible Treasury* 2:231-235.

God, and conformed to the image of His Son, is owned. They are all redeemed by blood, and all quickened by divine life. But the doctrine insisted on is this: that, Christ having broken down the middle wall of partition by His death, and ascended up on high, and sat down on the right hand of God, and thus presented the full efficacy of His work in the presence of God, the Holy Ghost has come down and united believers in one body, thus united to Christ as one body; which body is in Scripture designated the Church, or assembly of God, and is His habitation through the Spirit. In this, as founded on the risen and exalted Savior and united to Him, as seen on high, by the Holy Ghost, there is neither Jew nor Greek. Christ, as exalted, is entirely above these distinctions; Jew or Greek are alike brought nigh, as having been children of wrath, by the blood of that cross by which the middle wall of partition has been broken down. Hitherto God had saved souls. At Pentecost He gathered His children into the assembly on earth; He added daily to the Church such as should be saved. It is no longer salvation merely, nor even the kingdom. God begins to form His Church here below (Acts 2).

To make the Church a company of believing Jews, with Gentiles added to them, and Abraham's seed their proper definition, entirely shuts out this divine teaching, because the position given to the Church in Ephesians entirely precludes their being looked at as Jews; and the character of "Abraham's seed" comes in merely to show they are true heirs of promise, because they are Christ's, who is the seed of Abraham and Heir of the promises. But, most clearly, this is altogether the lower ground on which to speak of Christ, in comparison with His glorious exaltation at the right hand of God, on which the Church as such is founded . . . No one can read the Ephesians attentively without seeing that the Church, as one body existing on earth, though heavenly in privilege and character, takes its place consequent on the work of the cross, the exaltation of Jesus to the right hand of God, and the coming down of the Holy Ghost. Hence to give any definition of the Church which implies its existence (other than in the counsels of God), which speaks of its existence on earth (*e.g.*) during the life of Christ on earth, or previous to His exaltation and the descent of the Holy Ghost), denies its nature, and sets aside its character . . . Those who compose the Church have other relationships besides. They are children of Abraham . . . But these latter characters do not weaken what has been stated, much less do they annul it . . . 1 Cor. 12 describes the Church. . . as one body on earth. So Eph. 1:4; Col. 1:2 . . . While then one would sympathize with the godly dread some may feel at anything which seems to affect the salvation of all saints from the beginning, and the electing love of God in respect of them, it is well, on the other hand, to call things by their right, *i.e.* scriptural, names. The Spirit of God is infinitely wiser than man, and our business is to see, follow, and admire His wisdom, as in other matters, so here. He has restricted the title "Church of God," in a New Testament sense, to those who are baptized with the Holy Ghost.

Such is a brief exposition of the views in question, which, to my mind, carry scriptural proof along with them. But what I contend is, that the view which makes the church of God embrace believers in all dispensations is wholly devoid of such proof. It is in vain to reason, against the plainest and fullest testimony of God's word, that "all saints are equally and similarly justified by faith . . . alike called saints . . . the names of all written in one book, the Book of Life." These similarities, which are not denied, are by no means inconsistent with the place of the church as the body and bride of Christ. But when it is pronounced

that "the new Covenant Church" (a term not found in Scripture) "has no higher place assigned it than participating in the blessings of faithful Abraham," the entire teaching of Scripture, above referred to (in Eph., Col., etc.) is set aside. It really then becomes a question of spiritual intelligence, if not worse. This objection is ignorance of or opposition to Scripture.

As to Heb. 12:22,23, we must adopt not only with some of the best critics, but with the most ancient versions, as the Syriac, Vulgate, etc., the punctuation *καὶ ὑριασιν, ἀγγέλων πανυγυρεῖ, καὶ ἐκκλησία, πρ. κ. τ. λ.* [sic] It is confessedly required by the structure of the whole portion of which every paragraph is commenced by *καὶ*. So that the attempt to make this passage show "the general assembly" and "the church" as identical is a failure. No doubt we read of "the church in the wilderness." But *ἐκκλησία* simply means an "assembly" or "congregation." In Acts 19:32,39,41, the confused meeting of the Ephesians cannot mean the church of God, yet it is called *ἡ ἐκκλησία*. So "the church in the wilderness" ought rather to have been "the assembly" there. It means, unquestionably, not the church of God, but the congregation of Israel, almost all of whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, and to whom God swore that they should not enter into His rest. It is said again: "Besides, He was slain from the foundation of the world." A comparison of this passage (Rev. 13:8) with Rev. 17:8, where the same persons and circumstances are referred to, makes it evident that "from the foundation of the world" should be connected, not with "the Lamb slain," but with "the names written in the book of life." It is thus plain that the arguments, whether of one adversary or of another, have no weight when examined. And yet they are among the principal ones against the view which, in my opinion, Scripture so plainly sets forth, viz. that the body of believers, gathered from the day of Pentecost until the time when Christ shall come to take His heavenly people to Himself, has, while sharing many fundamental blessings with all the redeemed, a distinct calling and privileges of its own, and alone has the title assigned to it of "the church of God" or Christ's body.\*

## ABRAHAM'S SEED

H. N. Ridderbos, an amillennialist, wrote:

Paul called the believers the seed of Abraham (verses 7-9) to whom the promises were spoken (verse 16). Now he can postulate this with even more force, now that he has spoken of being one with, and belonging to, Christ of *all* believers. If so, they also belong to the seed of Abraham, and consequently are heirs according to the promise. According to the promise: that is, according to the nature of it, not by works of the law, but by the gracious and effectual word of God. *Heirs*, originally thought of in connection with the right to the land of Canaan given to the seed of Abraham, and now comprehensive of the history of salvation in general. With this last link in the chain, it becomes clear in what sense Christ could be called the seed of Abraham (verse 16): in a corporative sense, that is, as Head of the body and of the new covenant. Always and again this one thing is reconfirmed: that belonging to the seed of Abraham is not determined by physical descent, but by faith. Essentially, in principle, the seed

of Abraham is spiritual seed.<sup>9</sup>

There are most important errors here among a few true statements, errors flowing from the notion that the church is the spiritual Israel.

1. Christ is not the seed of Abraham in the corporate sense of being Head of the body. That body was formed 50 days after Christ's resurrection. It was not at that point in time that He became the Seed of Abraham, but rather by incarnation. However, we cannot be one with Him in incarnation but only through His death and resurrection.

I am not aware that there is an express Scripture which states that "there were spiritual seed of Abraham before Christ died and rose again," but I suggest that there were spiritual seed.

Not however as though the word of God had failed; for not all [are] Israel which [are] of Israel; nor because they are seed of Abraham [are] all children: but, in Isaac shall a seed be called to thee. That is, [they that are] the children of the flesh, these [are] not the children of God; but the children of the promise are reckoned as seed. For this word [is] of promise, According to this time I will come, and there shall be a son to Sarah (Rom. 9:6-9).

Finally, in seeking to show that the true seed of Abraham existed before Christ came, consider this:

For [it was] not by law that the promise was to Abraham, or to his seed, that he should be heir of [the] world, but by righteousness of faith. For if they which [are] of law be heirs, faith is made vain, and the promise made of no effect. For law works wrath; but where no law is neither [is there] transgression. Therefore [it is] on the principle of faith, that [it might be] according to grace, in order to the promise being sure to all the seed, not to that only which [is] of the law, but to that also which [is] of Abraham's faith, who is father of us all . . . (Rom. 4:13-16).

Merely because one was a Jew under law (v. 14) did not constitute one an heir. But "the promise being sure to all the seed" (v. 16) is a phrase that applies to those who had faith.

Is this not telling us that Isaac is seed of Abraham and that Isaac was a child of God? Not all the seed of Abraham (those who are physically sprung from him) are children of God.<sup>10</sup> But Isaac was so; and he was one of "the children of promise."

While I would certainly strongly object to calling the Son of God a child

---

9. *The Epistles of Paul to the Churches of Galatia*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, p. 150 (1953).

10. Cf. John 8:39.

of God <sup>11</sup> (a designation indicating the effect of the new birth), He is called the Seed of Abraham, the promised One, and was so in incarnation, not as a result of His glorification. He is also the seed of David (Rom. 1:3; John 7:42; 2 Tim. 2:8). May we not rightly connect His being the seed of David and the seed of Abraham with Matt. 1:1? However, we are in the line of blessing consequent upon His death, resurrection, glorification and His sending the Holy Spirit of promise. My point is that one may be the seed of Abraham apart from the indwelling of the Spirit and union with Christ via the seal of the Spirit, as Isaac was (and others <sup>12</sup>) as will be Israel in the millennium.

2. It is true that "Essentially, in principle, the seed of Abraham is spiritual seed." No doubt this is so worded because it is undeniable that the Jews *were* the seed of Abraham physically. But he wrote, "belonging to the seed of Abraham is not determined by physical descent, but by faith": this is a statement meant to also say that there is no future for national Israel as understood by taking the O. T. prophecies literally.

The well-known amillennialist, O. T. Allis, in his polemic against dispensational truth, stated this:

The Old Testament prophecies if literally interpreted cannot be regarded as having been fulfilled or as being capable of fulfillment in this present age. <sup>13</sup>

What here concerns us is the phrase "thy people." From the Old Testament standpoint this passage like Jeremiah's [Jer. 30:7] might be regarded as referring exclusively to Israel. But we have seen that the New Testament gives a larger meaning and scope to Old Testament prophecies which seem to be restricted to Israel . . . . <sup>14</sup>

The Old Testament Jew had no other way to interpret the prophets than literally. So the Old Testament prophecies could, as a matter of fact, be "literally interpreted." The godly Jew really had no other choice. It is the New Testament which allegedly gives a larger meaning and scope. Old Testament prophecies might be regarded as referring exclusively to Israel. And how was the godly Jew to know that it only *seems* that way and there was going to be a New Testament that would give a "larger meaning and scope"? If the meaning and scope were enlarged, what was the meaning and scope in the Old Testament before it was enlarged in the New Testament? What was Daniel to understand

11. Acts 4:27, 30 should read "servant."

12. Perhaps Luke 13:16 and 19:9 implies something deeper than merely physical seed.

13. *Prophecy and the Church*, p. 238.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 209.

by "thy people" (Dan. 9:24) before this term was allegedly enlarged? This raises the question -- was God deceiving Daniel and the Jews? So, after all, God did tell the Old Testament Jews that there would be a literal kingdom, and the expectation of it was right.

A. A. Hoekema takes a similar tack to reach his particular results:

When, in the light of this New Testament expansion of Old Testament thought  
...<sup>15</sup>

The New Testament widens these concepts.<sup>16</sup>

"Might be regarded," "seems to be restricted," "gives a larger meaning," "expansion," "widens," etc. are the trade in stock expressions of spiritual alchemy that wants to claim that the O.T. prophesied of the church (in direct defiance of Rom. 16:25,26, Col. 1:26 and Eph. 3:9), and yet cover all texts with these expressions where they happen to feel that a matter was not exactly, say, actually prophesied. Such methods can prove any end result desired. It is on such processes that antidispenationalism rests.

The express statement of Scripture is that Israel *will* have a future place:

For I do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, of this mystery, that ye may not be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the nations be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved. According as it is written, The deliverer shall come out of Zion; he shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. And this is the covenant from me to them, when I shall have taken away their sins. As regards the glad tidings, [they are] enemies on your account; but as regards election, beloved on account of the fathers. For the gifts and the calling of God [are] not subject to repentance. For as indeed ye [also] once have not believed in God, but now have been objects of mercy through the unbelief of *these*; so these also have now not believed in your mercy, in order that *they* also may be objects of mercy (Rom. 11:25-31).

Israel will yet be the object of mercy (cf. Luke 1:32,33,55, Rom. 15:8-12). The calling of the nations is not subject to repentance. It is, of course, true that they shall be both a physical and a spiritual seed; but it is essential for their national adoption or sonship that they be Paul's kinsmen *according to flesh*, thus Abraham's physical seed:

... my brethren, my kinsmen, according to flesh; who are Israelites; whose [is] the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the law-giving, and the service, and the promises; whose [are] the fathers; and of whom, as according to flesh, [is] the Christ, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen (Rom. 1:3-5).

---

15. *The Bible and the Future*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, p. 279 (1979).

16. *Ibid.*, p. 211. [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

So in the millennium the nation will be composed of true Jews,<sup>17</sup> all the Israel of God, all the seed of Abraham, necessarily both physically and spiritually the seed of Abraham. We are seed of Abraham via connection with Christ, apart from being physical seed. Moreover, they will be *heirs* of the land as both the physical and spiritual seed of Abraham.

We close this chapter with the following from W. Kelly, once again reminding ourselves that there is a great distinction between the inheritance of promise (being the seed of Abraham) and the mystery:

The Epistle to the Galatians never takes up the standing of the Church properly, not going beyond the inheritance of promise. There are certain privileges that we share in common with every saint. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. We too believe and are justified. Substantially, faith has so far the same blessings at all times. We are children of promise, entering into the portion of faith as past saints have done before us; and this is what we find in Galatians, though with a certain advance of blessing for us. But if you look at Ephesians, the great point there is that God is bringing out wholly new and heavenly privileges. This is in no respect what is taken up in Galatians. There we are on the common ground of promises. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." But in Ephesians there are certain distinct and superadded privileges that Abraham never thought nor heard of: I mean the formation of the Church of God, Christ's body, the truth that Jews and Gentiles were to be taken out of earthly places, and made one with Christ in heaven. This was the mystery concerning Christ and the Church, hidden from ages and generations, but now revealed through the Holy Ghost. So that, in order to have a right view of the full blessing of the Christian, we must take the Ephesian blessing along with the Galatian. The special time is while Christ is on the right hand of God. Even as to the millennial saints, do you think they will enjoy all that we have now? Far from it. They will possess much that we do not, such as the manifested glory of Christ, exemption from sorrow and suffering, &c. But our calling is totally different and contrasted. It is to love Him whom we have *not* seen; to rejoice in the midst of tribulation and shame. If a man were to form his thoughts of Christianity from Galatians only, he might confound the saints now with those of the Old Testament, always remembering the difference that we find here, that the heir as long as he is under age differs nothing from a servant; whereas we are brought into the full possession of our privileges. But there are other and higher things in Ephesians, called, or at least flowing from, the eternal purpose of God. So that it is well to distinguish this double truth -- the community of blessing through all dispensations, and the specialty of privilege that attaches to those who are being called now by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.<sup>18</sup>

Ed.

(To be continued, if the Lord will)

---

17. The meaning of a true Jew was discussed in a previous article (Vol. 6, #6, p. 188-192). Paul uses "seed of Abraham" to describe himself (2 Cor. 11:22) in that sense -- both the physical and spiritual seed.

18. *Lectures on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians*, London: Morrish, pp. 116, 117, n.d., reprint. [www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)

## RECONSTRUCTION?

**Ques.** Suppose a child of God recognizes what the church of God is, and its ruined condition, is he to labor and pray for its restoration; or what course is he to pursue?

J. N. D. Well, if it is so (ruined) the conscience cannot be satisfied with it. If the church of God is responsible in walk and affection and everything to God, the conscience acknowledging the ruin, what is it to do? It cannot be satisfied for it cannot rest in a sinful state. Now the Lord remembers the kind of relationship in which we know ourselves to be, as in Jeremiah 2, "Go, speak in the ears of Jerusalem, I remember thee, the love of thine espousals" -- not God's love to Israel, unailing as this proved to be, but Israel's love to God, when they thought God worth following for Himself, when they had nothing else beside. Then Jehovah asks, "What iniquity have your fathers found in me?" Have *I* failed towards you in goodness? Their being in the wilderness, in a land of deserts and pits, and being brought safe through, was the very proof that God was with them. They went on badly enough, they went back in heart to Egypt, and Dathan and Abiram despised Him; still, their being there in the wilderness proved that they cared for the Lord so as to follow Him, and the Lord here complains that no one said, "Where is the Lord that brought us up out of the land of Egypt"? that no heart referred to that time? Now Gideon *did* plead in this manner; his faith was in the Lord that brought them out of Egypt, and herein was the secret of his strength, for God said to him, "Go, in this thy might." It is impossible, if the word has reached our ears, that we should be contented where we are, for there cannot be contentedness where there is a sense of failure. As regards what I look for, and it is the one sole object before my soul, it is Christ's coming. If I have the spirit of the bride I shall desire the Bridegroom, because He is the Bridegroom. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." There may be much ignorance as to what to do, but let the relationship, the affection to Christ be seen.

I should feel disappointment at the thought of reconstruction; if I have the Spirit of Christ I shall be sensible of the loss of suitability in the bride to Him, and the sense of unfaithfulness will be accompanied with the wish to become fitted for Him. "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." That is the principle; the bride that is looking for the bridegroom will seek to be purified for Him; to be prepared and ready for him through "the washing of water by the word." Spiritual energy will seek that the church be ready for Christ. The Lord, spiritually, has brought us into a land of blessing,



but we have lost the consciousness that we are *for* Him, and have become occupied with one thing and another, and are not sensible that we are *for Him and for Him alone*. It would be immeasurable happy for our souls if we knew nothing whatever of all that is passing around us, save as God Himself brings it before us, and had the light of that truth in full power on our souls, that *we are for Him* -- the whole soul should be *His*, and *His alone*. Reconstruction is not the object of pursuit. Whenever a man from desire is in God's service, if he has not *entirely* God's object, he will *succeed* because he will be setting up *something* instead -- some other object looking like it, but *quite another thing*. Paul did not succeed, for the end with him was "all seek their own." When a man has God's object, and is thoroughly working for God, he must be a man of sorrows. Paul never got the faith of his fellow laborers nor the church up to his own. The true notion as to the church now is -- a people *made ready in spirit* for their Lord; not as *adorned*, because that is *resurrection glory*, but kept ready in spirit by the "washing of water by the word." I believe the sole object in all ministry, even in evangelizing, is to present the church to God as Christ's bride -- wholly separated unto Him as *a bride ought to be*. Ministry and reconstruction of the church are quite different things. I am ministering tonight, but not *reconstructing*. Many may be confused in their minds on this point. Now I do not doubt that ministry comes in as "washing of water by the word" in order to "make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Now I must guard against any thought that I undervalue order. Subjection to the Spirit of God is shown in subjection to what the Spirit of God gives; but I am not pursuing *that* as an object, but looking for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Still, I do not doubt but that all my service to the saints down here will come in as ministry.

(J. N. Darby, *Miscellaneous Writings* 4:173-177).

## SELF-ESTEEM

There are evangelical teachers that have climbed aboard the self-esteem bandwagon, telling Christians that the Bible teaches them to love themselves. But the Word does not, of course, teach that one should love himself. The Word assumes that, recognizes that, persons love themselves. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" recognizes that men love themselves. If you think that a person's problem is "low self-esteem," bring *Christ* before the person; bring the Christian's place before God, as in Christ, before the person. The Word

teaches occupation with Christ, not with self, except as self-judgment is necessary. Just think of the Apostle Paul, or John, bringing self-esteem before persons! 'He must increase but I must decrease.'

In the Summer issue of *Psychoheresy Update*, p. 3,<sup>19</sup> we read:

### **The Curse of Self-Esteem**

"The curse [of self-esteem] helped breed the now ubiquitous cult of the victim, wormed its way into our legal system, where criminals argue they shouldn't be held responsible for their crimes because low self-esteem made 'em do it, and spawned book after tedious book on how to become more self-absorbed," writes John Rosemond of the Knight Ridder Tribune. He complained that today's mother listens to the experts and does all she can to raise her children's self-esteem. Rosemond says, "By contrast, previous generations of American parents concentrated on making sure children developed respect, responsibility and resourcefulness."

Even the world is beginning to see problems with emphasizing self-esteem. (See *Newsweek*, February 17, 1992). How long will it be before Christians will realize that self-esteem teachings did not come from the Bible and hop off the self-esteem band wagon?

### **Self-Esteem Fellowship**

What do Larry Crabb, Robert McGee (Rapha Ministries), James Dobson, and Neil Anderson have in common? They all stress the great importance of self-worth, self-esteem, and significance. They have all been influenced by humanistic psychology. And, their popularity continues to expand.

Ed.

## **LIFE**

You may take up many of the publications of the day, and find, on one page, a little bit of religion, and a little bit of morality; and, on another page some absurd love story, or a piece of nonsensical romance, calculated to falsify a child's idea of human life and character. This is really a very serious matter and lies heavily on the heart.

*Things New and Old* 10:221 (1867).



**PRESENT TRUTH PUBLISHERS**  
**411 Route 79 • Morganville, NJ 07751**

[www.presenttruthpublishers.com](http://www.presenttruthpublishers.com)