

THE WORD OF TRUTH

Published Monthly

WRITTEN MESSAGE OF VOICE OF TRUTH RADIO BROADCAST

Volume 8

JULY, 1964

Number 6

"Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (James 1:18).

SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL

"He That is Spiritual"

"But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man" (1 Cor. 2:15). An undiscerning heart is a cause for alarm, for it is a token of the lack of spirituality! Those who have been given the spirit of discernment, and are enabled to judge or prove all things are indeed a happy people! They are verily blessed of the Lord. Hallelujah! The subject of spirituality is a greatly misunderstood one. Many times an individual's spirituality is viewed from the standpoint of mere fleshly and outward appearances. However much the outward man is affected by spirituality, actions are not the contributing factor, nor are we to be deceived by judging according to appearance. Let us judge properly, in the Holy Spirit, for "he that is spiritual judgeth all things. But, who is "he that is spiritual" but he that is "led by the Spirit of God" (Rom. 8:14), even he in whom the Spirit of God dwells (Rom. 8:11). It is that same Holy Spirit that "bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God " (Rom. 8:16). The spiritual man is that one in whom the Spirit of God dwells, and to whom the Holy Spirit reveals God-ordained sonship. It is he that he cognizant of his connection with the source of life, for "He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit" (1 Cor. 6:17). This is an inward identity with an inward conviction. It is a matter of God's identification of Himself with a chosen vessel, with Jesus Christ becoming the Author and Finisher of the individual's faith, and sending forth the "unction" whereby he knows all things" (1 John 2:20-27). The spiritual man is Spirit filled, Spirit led and Spirit-confirmed! He is "not in the flesh, but in the Spirit" (Rom. 8:9), and acknowledges that in him, that is in his flesh, "dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:18). This is the one who knows God dwells in him because of the "Spirit which He hath given us" (1 John 3:24). He may not have perfectly ordered all aspects of his outward life (although there is no excuse for slothfulness in this area - we are to be "wholly sanctified, body, soul and spirit", 1 Thess. 5:23), but he is responsive to the Lord, and his heart is open for instruction. When the Lord speaks, he listens, and when the

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In This Issue . . .

"CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED"

The Word of Truth

Published monthly by The Voice of Truth Publishing Association, Inc. Business Office, 7903 Hendricks Pl., Crown Point, Indiana.

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Sent free, upon request, to all interested persons. Address all correspondence to: Box 1684, Highland, Indiana.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO SERVE THE LORD

The subject of serving the Lord is one of the utmost preeminence in religious circles today. With institutions that specialize in training "servants of the Lord" (this is their claim) the subject has gained widespread notoriety. To hear some ministers and religious leaders speak, you would think that this was actually the way that the Scriptures speak, emphasizing the matter of "serving the Lord." It might come as somewhat of a surprise to know that this is not a Scriptural emphasis at all. This is another cunning tool of Satan used to focalize the attention upon man's activity instead of upon the Lord's. This is not to say that man is to be idle in the vineyard of the Lord, but it becomes increasingly difficult for me to conceive, I must confess, of the Lord of the vineyard admitting lazy oafs into it and permitting them to occupy positions and places designed by Himself to bring glory to Himself. The problem does not appear to be that of "serving the Lord", but of being in the Lord in the first place. "Wherefore, if **any man** be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17). All born again people are in Christ's vineyard; it is not a special place for a reserved few in the kingdom. Failure to comprehend this brings no end of confusion, and can be used of Satan to spread a wave of discouragement over the souls of honest people.

I remember several years ago visiting some brethren in the Ohio area. Among them was a good brother that was engaged in ministering the Word of God to a local congregation. His wife expressed her concern to me about "winning souls for Christ." She was dissatisfied as a wife, and thought that she could really not serve the Lord unless she was teaching a Sunday School class or knocking on doors. This is a most grievous error! It comes because of an almost total misapprehension of the real nature of the Kingdom of God. Serving the Lord is not a matter of occupying some special place of prominence where attention may be attracted toward your achievements. This seems to be a prevalent conception among churches. Unless it is an officially recognized work, it is not a matter of serving the Lord. Away with this Devilish doctrine, for it originated in the very pit of hell, and was promulgated to the sons of men under the administration of demons! Serving the Lord is simply a matter of bringing glory to His name in whatever capacity

you are in. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, and it applies to all of us; "Let every man abide in the same calling where in he was called. Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be free, be it rather. For he that is called in the Lord is the Lord's freeman; likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men. Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God" (I Cor. 7:20-24). Here is one of the most important lessons that you will ever be able to learn, that of serving the Lord where you are at. In what capacity were you called? a housewife? a laborer? a traveler? a servant? a master? Do not be discouraged! Do not think that this will limit your service for the Lord. Abide in that calling; yea, abide with God! Perform your work, whatever it may be, with a single heart unto the Lord! There is no disgrace in serving the Lord for instance as a housewife. I use this as an example because in these United States this has come to be an almost contemptible role of life. And, may I add, it has had its untold effect upon the youth of this generation. We should not expect the people of the world to see the significance of what we have said, but many times those that are professing the name of Christ actually are more dilatory in this respect than folk that do not even know the Lord. Housewives, if you cannot bring glory to the Lord in your present capacity, it is utter folly to suppose that you could in any other sphere. Devote yourselves wholeheartedly to the task which God has been pleased to give you. Men, whatever your capacity is, do not look for another phase of operation - serve the Lord where you are at. Do not be deluded by the shallow teachers about you! Abide with God! There is a peace and a joy which will accompany your activity which you will find a rich treasure indeed. Pray for grace to fulfill your domestic function to the glory of God! Oh, the church lacks so sorely in this sort of thing, pray fervently that God will touch the hearts of people to live unto the Lord in the calling wherein they were called.

The Scriptures

To some people the Scriptures are just a library of categorized proof texts to be used in the substantiating of their sectarian dogmas and that is the only way that they ever view them. But to us that love the Lord and have in truth been committed to the "Word of His grace", the Scriptures are food for the soul, without which we should most certainly succumb in this barren and strange land. These words of Scripture are precious and are as a balm to the soul. They are "more to be desired than necessary food" (Job 23:12). With David we say, "Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counsellors" (Psa. 119:24). They speak to us of what we are and what we need; their testimony is that of Jesus (Rev. 19:10). This is not dry material to us, nor is it a pasture for frolicing, or a library of proof texts. Here is where we come to be fed, to be succoured, to be nourished. We will not do violence to them by using them to serve our own avarice! These are able to build us up (Acts 20:32)!

“CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED”

“For I am determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified”

—I Corinthians 2:2

The death of Christ is the root from which springs all vital doctrine. It is the centre point and post of the temple of Truth. Remove this blessed fact, and the entire superstructure of the work of God shall have been nullified. Christ's death is divinely situated between man and God, and is the only effectual means of establishing unity between the creation and the Creator. We dare not, brethren, minimize the truth of Christ's death, and it is not possible to overemphasize it! There is no truth in Scripture that is not rooted in the death of our Lord, in which it finds its true significance to the believer. **This is the revealed touchstone for all doctrine.** Thus Paul declared his determination not to know anything but Christ and Him crucified. This was long a difficult verse for me to comprehend, for I sought after it in earthly wisdom and with a worldly pursuit. Praise God, He has revealed it to me in a vital way now, and I understand why Christ's death holds the position of centrality in God's dealings with man. There can be no doubt that myriads of religious adherents have never really developed through grace a spiritual appreciation for the death of Christ. Somehow, the whole matter is completely divorced from men's persons, and viewed abstractly it loses its pungency to the individual life. Christ's death, when personally understood, becomes a source of unending sustenance to the child of God. His determination will become like Paul's and his growth shall increase mightily. Those who do not feel a close affection for the death of our Lord will find their growth slow and retarded, if there is any at all. Enamored with abstract doctrines (of which the death of Christ is but one of many to them and organizational affiliations, they miss the real source of vitality in the Christian bloodstream. Our determination must be in the direction of Jesus Christ and His vicarious death. A nominal religious acquaintance with this truth will do nothing more for you that virtually immune you to the renovating power of it. Look at Christ's death closely and prayerfully. Here is the inner-sanctorium of revelation! At this point darkness and light are separated; mourning and joy, sadness and gladness! It is here that the veil between God and man is rent in twain, and the things of this world grow dim in the vision.

Fundamentally, the death of Christ may be summarized in five words; “CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS . . .” (I Cor. 15:3). Herein is seen the condition of man and the compassion of God; the wages of sin and the gift of God; the ignorance of man and the wisdom of God; the weakness of flesh and the power of the Spirit: it is all here! Man has “sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23): as old as that may seem, we need to be in continual remembrance of it, lest Satan should get an advantage of us. While man is a sinner, yet “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us” (I

John 3:16). This single act manifests, when viewed in the mind of the Spirit, what man is by nature, and what the God of Heaven is by nature. Man - so vile that the very life of God must be laid down before he can live and be fit to dwell in the Lord's presence, where there is fullness of joy. Man's problem is not traced to mere social maladjustment, or some temporary influential phenomenon! He is unclean, sinful, and corrupt in every fiber of his being and constitution. All of his righteousnesses are as “filthy rags” (Isa. 64:6), and there are no exceptions! The death of Christ Jesus for our sins shows the unquestionable immensity of our iniquity! It is “more than we can bear.” On the other hand, we obtain a revelation of God in Christ's death. Here we see the utter hatred and contempt for sin that He possesses. Taking upon Himself the “iniquities of us all”, Jesus actually was “smitten of God” (Isa. 53:4), struck as the mighty Rock of our salvation, through whom we obtain the stream of everlasting life; even “that eternal life which was with the Father from the beginning” (I John 1:1), 2.) Sin is so heinous that the very Son of God, “full of grace and truth” (John 1:17), and who “counted it not robbery to be on equality with God” (Phil 1.2:6), could not Himself abide in the presence of God when bearing **our** sins. Oh, the magnitude of it all; peer past the mind of the flesh and see God at the cross! See in the death of Christ God's utter hatred for sin and transgression. No one, not even the Eternal Son, can stand before the God of heaven with the influence of sin upon his person . . . he cannot even do it vicariously! But, do not fail to see here the “great love wherewith He hath loved us” (Eph. 2:4), even when we were “dead in trespasses and sins” (Eph. 2:1). How unfathomable this is; it surely knows no equal! Rebellious man who had lifted up his heel against God, and spit in his face, shaking his fist defiantly in the fact of Jehovah, disputing with Him by disagreeing with the Law; seeking to justify himself by denying his guilt of sin. And yet, in that condition, the Lord had mercy upon him, and sent Jesus Christ to be the “propitiation through faith in His blood” (Rom. 3:25). God “SO LOVED the world” (John 3:16) - loved it as it had never been loved before. You see God's mercy in Christ's death, for He did not deal with us “after our iniquities” (Ezra 9:13 Psa. 103:10) -that is mercy! He saved us “according to His mercy” (Titus 3:5), Christ's death being the chief demonstration of this unalterable truth! See God's truth, too, in Christ's death, for He is the “Lord God of truth” (Psa. 31:5). He did not seek to hide the fact of sin, or gloss it over, but openly displayed it, its effect, and its remedy in the death of His only begotten Son. Many more are the manifestations of God in the death of the King. His justice is seen in the punishment meted out on Calvary (Rom. 3:24-26); His power seen in the absolute condemnation of sin in the flesh of His Son (Rom. 8:3); His wisdom in instigating and accomplishing a sacrifice in which He was well pleased (Eph. 5:2; Heb. 10:5-10). Truly, it is all seen in the death of Jesus! “CHRIST DIED!”

But, it is written “Christ died for our SINS” - an expiation for sin He was, and I praise and

thank the name of God for that! He was the "scapegoat" taken by the hands of a fit man into the wilderness after that all the sins of God's people had been confessed upon Him (Leviticus 16:7-22), and He was also the sacrificial goat, slain for the sin of the people. It was through Christ's death and the promised covenant was fulfilled; "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Jer. 31:34). They were, in Jesus, "Blotted out as a thick cloud" (Isa. 44:22, 23); made "white as snow" though they were "as crimson" (Isa. 1:18); "cast behind His back" (Isa. 38:17; and "cast into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:19). Jesus died to make us fit to stand before God; to make us "holy and unblameable and unreprieveable IN HIS SIGHT" (Col. 1:21, 22). Praise the Lord! This was no small accomplishment! Our complete debt was eradicated by Jesus through the body of His death! Our iniquities were "laid upon Him" (Isa. 53:1-12) and He was "made to be sin for us who knew no sin" (II Cor. 5:21). Remember that the "wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23), and Jesus paid YOUR penalty - "**CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS!**" Amen!

Let us devote some attention right here to the all-sufficiency of Christ's death. There is not a doctrine which may not find real and lasting significance in connection with the death of Jesus. There is, for instance, the matter of God being satisfied. Countless people are engaging in constant and incessant efforts to satisfy God. They seek to walk well pleasing unto Him; and there is certainly every reason to esteem such a desire. However, no amount of "walking" will ever satisfy God in relation to the wandering which we have done. It is in the death of Jesus Christ that we see God satisfied; "He shall see the travail of His soul and be satisfied . . . yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him" (Isa. 53:10-11). No amount of penance can pacify God! There is no action performed by man that can atone for sin, or cover up the fact that "all have sinned!" Away with such heterogenous doctrines! Tithing, church going, philanthropy; none of these can ever satisfy God. In "sacrifice, and offering and burnt offering and offering for sin God would not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law" (Heb. 10:4-18). If ever God is to satisfied concerning you, you must of neces-

TWO TESTS

I have found that there are at least two tests that may be applied in the determination of an individual's growth in grace. These are evidences of the work of the Spirit of God in the sanctifying of the human heart. First, his hunger for and familiarity with the Word of God; he shall be a student of the Scriptures. Second, his love for and communication with the holy brethren. There is no such thing as a child of God who never studies the Scriptures nor fellowships the brethren. The Word is hid in the heart that he might not sin against God, and "hereby know we that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

sity be identified unquestionably with the death of Christ! Here alone is true satisfaction to be found; for with the Son, "He is well pleased!" If you wish to speak of merit, achievement, work or anything else that will satisfy God, you are thrown back to the dying Christ, for here it was that God was satisfied in relation to man and his sin! Praise the Lord for such a wonderful provision. There is also the matter of freedom. Everyone seeks to obtain some similitude of freedom and there have been countless wars and disagreements brought about in quest for such a dream. However, few really comprehend the nature of freedom or of the bondage which true freedom abrogates. "Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought into bondage" (II Pet. 2:19). True freedom consists of the liberation of the mind from the tyranny of evil thoughts and imaginations; of the bringing in of the ability to worship God in spirit and in truth without the encumbrances of the divided mind and the doubtful spirit. All other freedoms are but rudimentary! A man is not free if he is still enslaved to his own passions and lusts. Now, Jesus came to liberate men truly, that they might enjoy freedom never before experienced. When we speak of this freedom, we are called back to the cross, where our true liberty was accomplished; "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water" (Zech. 9:11). It is the blood of Jesus Christ that is the "blood of the covenant" (Matt. 26:28); and it is that blood which procured for us our freedom, praise the Lord! We were prisoners in the pit of lusts and concupiscence; deceiving and being deceived, hateful and hating one another; without God and without hope in this present world; dead in trespasses and sins (Titus 3:3; Eph. 2:1-4, 12). In that pit, there was no water; no means of sustenance. We were in a perpetual death. There was no hope, no way out, no means of escape—until Jesus died. He was truly sent to "proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound" (Isa. 61:1-2). When His life was laid down, the prisoners were released! The sin that held them captive, and into which they were sold unto bondage, was taken away and buried in the depths of the sea. The Devil and his emissaries which held them captive were defeated and made a show of openly, Christ triumphing over them in the cross. Talk about liberty - it began for us at the cross of Jesus Christ, for it is written "cursed is everyone that hangeth upon a tree" (Gal. 3:13). Now, the Son has made us free through His blood, and "If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). Can we ever forget the matter of life? Praise God, we are alive in Christ Jesus, and now possess "life more abundant" (John 10:10). But, this life finds real meaning in Christ's death; "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread which I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (John 6:51). For man to live, Christ must die, and before one can ever become truly cognizant of life, he must first become intimately

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GOD AND TROUBLE

Trouble is a common thing among the sons of men. Many have been the souls that have buckled in the time of trouble, not knowing the proper refuge in which may be found sure strength and security. If you are such a person, we bring to you glad tidings of joy, for we serve a God that is a refuge and stronghold in the time of trouble. Trouble speaks of trying influences, of circumstances and conditions that wrest the spirit from its lethargy, and brings it to the stark reality of its weakness and incompetence. It turns our minds earthward and away from the Lord, or at least, this is the design behind it when instigated by Satan. He knows that we are so constituted that when our personal weakness is highlighted, and we confront a time of vexation which we feel little equipped to meet, that our spirits naturally drag, and we grow weary within our heart. This speaks of the inward anxiety of the spirit of man, when the pressing of the world and things takes effect upon him. I have experienced trouble, and it is not a pleasant experience, but it is a necessary one, and will invariably work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. Troubled hearts are not always openly manifested. Some have mastered the art of concealing their troubled hearts under the guise of an outward appearance. We would have all such know that the Lord knows the troubled heart, and has made provision to relieve it. Praise the Lord!

It is recorded in Scripture that man is "born unto trouble" (Job 5:7), and surely he is. He comes into a troubled domain and he is susceptible to that trouble. He cannot escape it! It is in these troublous times that the Lord many times seems distant, as though He is no longer within the proximity of our call. David made this known in one of his pleas to the Lord. His heart is torn open and we see a common conception among the Lord's children; "Why standest Thou afar off, O Lord? why hidest Thou Thyself in times of trouble" (Psa. 10:1). You know, brethren, if you have experienced this sort of thing, you will admit with David that when trouble strikes there are many times occasions when the Lord does seem very distant, and it appears that He has hidden Himself during the time when you needed Him most. This indicates to us that trouble is surely good for us. We would be weak and insipid creatures were it not for the trial that comes through trouble! It causes the elect to realize their utter dependency upon the Lord. During easy times, when there is peace all around us, a weak faith fails to realize that the Lord is essential unto His children at all times, that there are no times for which the Lord was not made. We must have Him lest we die! It is in that time of trouble that we become acutely aware that there is no one else that can help us; "Be not far from me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help" (Psa. 22:11). "NONE TO HELP", what a truth is that. Sometimes the Lord releases a trouble upon us that we might come to know this truth, for it will always drive you to the Lord. Here is what you want to see, that trouble drives you to the Lord. It is veritably a provision made by the Lord Himself to

cause His children to continually lean upon Him and not become immeshed in the world, depending upon their vanity for help. Man's help is vain in trouble (Psa. 60:11), but God's is not, praise His Holy name! Even the gods of the world, (and there are many - I Cor. 8:5, 6), are of no help in the time of trouble: "But where are the gods that thou hast made thee? let them arise, if they can save thee in the time of THY trouble . . ." (Jer. 2:28); ". . . cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense: but they shall not save them at all in the time of THEIR trouble" (Psa. 11:12b). Yes, during the time of trouble when "they reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunk man, and are at their wits end. ." (Psa. 107:27) the cheap gods of men's inventions are of no avail for deliverance! Mister, when you are troubled, show your trouble to the Lord like David; "I poured out my complaint before Him; I showed before Him my trouble" (Psa. 142:2). The Lord may be found in the time of trouble!

Satan will try to deceive you, and make you suppose that because He seems distant, it is hopeless to call upon Him, but this is not so! Speaking of Israel, the prophet wrote; "But when they in their trouble did turn unto the Lord God of Israel, and sought Him, HE WAS FOUND OF THEM" (II Chron. 15:4). I praise the Lord for such knowledge as that, for it gives me assurance that God answers the cry of the humble and contrite heart; the spirit that has been broken by trouble! When men leave the Lord out of their thoughts and actions He will "deliver them into the hands of their enemies, who vexed them." However, this does not mean that the case is hopeless, it is but a demonstration of the mercy of the Lord who so devises means that His banished me not expelled from Him (II Sam. 14:14), for it is written; "and in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto Thee, Thou heardest them out of heaven; and according to THY MANIFOLD MERCIES THOU GAVEST THEM SAVIORS, WHO SAVED THEM OUT OF THE HAND OF THEIR ENEMIES" (Neh. 9:27). What a beautiful picture of the unsearchable wisdom of God. He actually delivers men into trouble that they might call unto Him out of the midst of that trouble. God desires for His children to cry night and day unto Him. It is far better, my brother and sister, to cry unto the Lord during the time of prosperity, and receive an abundance of grace. But, if you will not do that, then the Lord will deliver you into the hands of your enemies who will trouble you and literally cause you to depend upon the Lord, which thing He desires in all His Righteous character. It is declared by the Holy Spirit that "The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble" (Psa. 9:9). Again; "for in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me up upon a rock" (Psa. 27:5). Praise the Lord for such a consolation as this! There is no end to the comfort that may be found here unto "man that is born unto (into) trouble, for "When my mother and my father forsake me, then the LORD will take me up" (Psa. 27:10). God will "consider my trouble" (Psa. 31:7), and for this I shall forever be thankful and rejoice! What is

"HE THAT IS SPIRITUAL"

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Spirit communicates wisdom, he receives. The Holy Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (I Cor. 2:10) and it is He who reveals to us "the things that are freely given us of God" (I Cor. 2:12). Rule out the Holy Spirit and you rule out instruction, for it is "that anointing" which teacheth us (I John 2:27). Rule out instruction, and you in turn rule out discernment, for there can be no discernment unless we have first been taught to discern; which ministry belongs to the blessed Holy Spirit. Praise the Lord! He that is spiritual sees that underlying issues, weighs the facts, considers the issues, sees the principles, understands the outcome sees the working force and power behind things. Filled with the Holy Spirit of God, He becomes endowed with "the mind of Christ" (I Cor. 2:16), able to search out, under the Spirit's able administration, the meaning of those things which may be known! Yet, he is known of no man; that is, no one can peer into his heart and see this Spirit and His teaching. No one is able to categorize him, classify him, or fit and understand him according to earthly standards. He is a living confoundment to the world, for they are not able to see what is possessed, why he possesses it, or how he obtained it. They may not exploit him for they cannot exploit what they do not understand. They may not upset him, topple him, or wrestle him to the ground, for he has risen above that plain, and wrestles with the forces that control them, "pulling down strongholds" (II Cor. 10:4). He is "thoroughly equipped unto every good work" and is given discernment (relative to work) that others possess not! Praise God for spiritual men, discerning men - the work of God's Holy Spirit!

man - yea, what am I - that God should so be mindful, and yet, in His infinite mercy, He is! I shall say with David to My God, "THOU ART MY HIDING PLACE; Thou shalt preserve me from trouble; Thou shalt compass me about with the songs of deliverance" (Psa. 32:7). What about you? This is the important question! Have you been compassed about with the songs of deliverance? Has the Lord Himself been your hiding place. I tell you the way out of trouble is by means of Holy deliverance! This comes by hiding in the Lord through the Lord Jesus Christ (Col. 3:3). When trouble comes, the Lord shall be my strength (Psa. 37:39). One of the greatest mistakes that is ever made is that of meeting trouble in your own strength! You shall fail (and I now speak from experience) to overcome vexation and heartache in your own strength (The Lord must be your strength - yea, He shall be the strength of His people! He is a "very present help in the time of trouble" (Psa. 46:1). This is the statement of fact, which faith gives us to see! The flesh, and our entire nature cries within us, "Why art Thou far from me?"; yet faith replies, "He is a very present help in the time of trouble!" Did not the Lord say Himself; "Thou callest in trouble, and I delivered thee . ." (Psa. 81:7); "He shall call upon me, and I will answer Him: I will be with Him in trouble; I will deliver Him, and HE SHALL HONOR ME" (Psa. 91:15). What a graphic demonstration of the truth that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called of God according to His pur-

pose" (Rom. 8:28). **Trouble comes, man calls, God delivers, man gives honor to God.** "Oh, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out" (Rom. 11:33).

Certainly this is not given to encourage us to seek trouble; none but a fool would do that. Trouble shall come, you do not have to seek it. However, these words are given that when the time of trouble comes you might "look to the hills from whence cometh your help." Do not be ignorant of Satan's devices! He will attempt to lure you earthward, and cause you to look at the trouble as a man and actually battle it with a strength that you do not possess. Seek the Lord in the time of trouble. Cry out unto Him, and He shall deliver you, and you shall give honor to Him. Praise the Lord!

Christ and Him Crucified

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associated and truly familiar with the death of Jesus. We are "buried with Him by baptism into DEATH that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, so also we should rise to walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). Bless the Lord, ye saints of His, for life; the kind of life that could only be obtained and experienced through the death of Jesus Christ. I have found that a real touchstone concerning the spiritual life of any individual is his appreciation and love for Christ yielding up His precious life. If there is no joy in the heart because of Christ Jesus laying down His life, there is certainly no life in the soul; for **as Christ was resurrected to life after death, so do men become alive after conformity to His death.**

We could not forget the matter of our protection. We are but sheep, defenseless apart from Jesus Christ; and yet we have a fierce adversary that walks about "as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8, 9). He is ready to pounce upon the weak sheep and lambs, and take their life from them in a merciless way. As he stalked the sheepfold, our great Shepherd stood "in the gap" and yielded up His life for the sheep. It is in the death of our Lord that we see the extent to which God went to protect the sheep; "I am the good Shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). He graciously permitted the whole host of the enemy pounce upon Him, and He voluntarily yielded up His life into their hands. If this had not been done the sheep should have been left to the "lion" who stalked them as his own prey. Praise the Lord for the Shepherd. Here, in His death, is demonstrated the length to which our Father in heaven was determined to go to spare the sheep, and if this were the case when we were strangers from the commonwealth of Israel, and when we were "yet sinners", then how much more shall He care for and protect us now that we are in the Beloved (Romans 5:8-9). We have nothing to fear from the enemy now, brethren: "For, if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be

saved by His life" (Rom. 5:10). Look, then, to Christ's death, and there obtain great hope and consolation! God shall not suffer you to fall into the hands of the enemy without remedy, as was graphically demonstrated in the dying Christ! Protection - how wonderful, for now He has personally become our "Shield."

Today, there is much talk about unity, and some men have devoted their entire life to the propagation of unity among supposed believers. I suppose that this is a worthy aim, but it seems in most cases to me to be an effort to unite corpses into the same cemetery lot. There has already been a great work performed that is thoroughly sufficient to unite all of the people of God into one - yea, it has already done just that. When Jesus was upon earth, there was an occasion when Caiaphas, the High Priest of that year, spake forth a prophecy concerning our Lord's death. It is recorded in John 11:49-52; "And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also **HE SHOULD GATHER TOGETHER IN ONE THE CHILDREN OF GOD THAT WERE SCATTERED ABROAD!**" Hallelujah! All of the children of the Lord are gathered together upon the basis of the death of Jesus Christ. They do not unite upon doctrines, or upon methods, or upon goals! But they are commonly together because they have died and risen with Jesus Christ. We refuse - yea we could not if we wanted to - truly unite with anyone that has not been fused into the death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. You see, this is the real basis for unity! Jesus died for this purpose; and Praise God if you are a part of it! See how this great death illuminates the subject of unity? Together with this theme goes that of the increase of the brethren. Here is a point of concern among many people. Constantly they expend their efforts in an attempt to increase the body of Christ. "Evangelism" and "missions" become their bywords, and yet their efforts are pitifully inadequate so far as accomplishment is concerned. They lack something very vital; and it is a true conception of the death of Jesus Christ. Here is the place of instruction, here is where we come to begin our theology afresh and on the right basis. Jesus Himself uttered this principle in John 12:24; "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Jesus, had not died, would have remained alone in the high esteem of the Father. But, by dying, He made possible great increase, for when He arose from the dead, He arose not alone, but within His loins was the entire spiritual seed of Abraham. He was the "Firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29). Now, unless Jesus Christ and Him crucified is proclaimed and fellowshiped in an actual experience, the increase of the body of Christ numerically, or any other way, is made virtually impossible. **True increase comes from an effectual unity with the death of Christ.** This is the thing

FINALLY, BRETHREN, PRAY FOR US

Brethren, we covet your prayers in the Holy Ghost. Our work is enlarging by God's good grace, and souls are being quickened. Our ministry has brought us into contact with several that are wrestling with large problems and are in need of prayer. We lay these before you, asking that you be prayer partners with us in their behalf. Also, pray for the Word of Truth ministry, that it may continue to receive an anointing from God. Pray for the author, that his mind might be impregnated with spiritual truth and that he might possess by grace the ability to convey the truth.

that we must be given of Christ and the Holy Spirit to see; that unity does not consist in mere fellowship with one another, but in a mutual fellowship and participation in Jesus Christ, the "only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." We are not attempting to bring people into our fellowship, but into the fellowship of Jesus Christ through a participation in His efficacious death. When, and only when, this is done, we may have fellowship with one another; All attempts to establish unity on other bases are false and presumptory!

We could not leave this subject without considering one of the favorite themes of many religious devotees; that of the church, its organization and operational activities. To many a "pastor" this is the key theme; to bring to church to a proper local autonomous basis, with properly functioning officers and members. This certainly seems to be a worthy ambition, and there are several Scriptures, which viewed from the standpoint of the flesh, seem to support such an emphasis. But, alas, these sophists "know nothing at all." It is in the death of Christ that we find the true doctrine concerning the church, all of its activities and aspects. Paul, speaking to the elders of Ephesus, whom the Holy Ghost had made "overseers" (Acts 20:28), reminded them that they were to "feed the church of God **WHICH HE HATH PURCHASED WITH HIS OWN BLOOD**" (Acts 20:28b). This forever divests man of any hand in the arbitrary government of the church. The church is not a democracy; it is a dictatorship, under the absolute rule of Jesus Christ, who purchased it with His own blood. There is no activity of the church which may be properly engaged in without the Head operating upon the membership (Col. 2:19). Christ died, and in so doing, He purchased the church. There is far too much "haggling" concerning the operation of the church, which is no longer the affair of men, but of the Head, Jesus Christ; praise His holy name! Matters are to be taken to the Head, and He is to confer the consciousness of needs and ministries upon the brethren. It is the Head that gives messages to the speakers, ministries to the deacons, and other areas of activities to those endowed with spiritual gifts. Unless we understand Christ's death in relation to the ownership of the church, we shall find ourselves in constant turmoil over considerations of autonomy, leadership, activity,

etc. I have known men in my lifetime that have sought to organize the church and operate it on the same principle as that of big business; which action completely divested the Head of His authority. These men had little, if any, true understanding of the death of our Lord.

There are many other phases of spiritual truth which are opened up by a proper consideration of the death of Christ. We could consider the flesh, and the true comprehension of its nature as seen in the death of Christ; "For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh; God sending His own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). Whatever men may think of flesh, it is adequately portrayed in Christ's death. It is that vessel in which the God of Heaven chose to condemn sin; what a commentary upon the nature of flesh. It is called "sinful flesh", and while our Lord did not sin, He came in its likeness. **There can be no vindication of flesh;** Christ's death proves that. With Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and in full cognizance of the real meaning of Christ's death, we declare, "I know that in me, that is in my FLESH, dwelleth no good thing" (Romans 7:18). Together with these go the subjects of deliverance (Gal. 1:4); the Law and its destruction (Gal. 3:13; Eph. 2:13); reconciliation (Col. 3:3; 1:21-23); and sanctification (Heb. 10:10; 13:11-13), all brought to light through an apprehension of the nature of Jesus' death! No matter what you seek to illuminate, there is a place for the death of Christ in that illumination. One who is "determined not to know anything . . . but Christ and Him crucified" has truly been brought by grace to the place where he can properly understand all things. This truth is laden with spiritual honey, which drops all around it. Pray God to set your determination in this direction, and you will see a noticeable change come into your life; one that will effect every part of your being. I speak from experience when I say that then your comprehension of the Scriptures and their true meaning will increase in bountiful measure when you find your heart set upon understanding the crucified Christ. As Christ, from this point on, took upon Himself the greater ministry, that of interceding for fallen and redemned man, so you from this point on will begin your more fruitful and effective ministry. I urge you by the authority of Christ to expend endless efforts in this direction. Lay hold of the true Christ and Him crucified. Abandone all other emphases for this one true emphasis. May the Lord direct all of your paths until you shall have apprehended that for which you are apprehended. Amen.

Any theology that places the work of salvation in the hands of man is to be rejected as false. "Salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9), and He Himself is "our salvation" (Psa. 27:9). As such, He does not merely plan salvation, but originates and accomplishes it from start to finish. Our Savior is both the "Author and the Finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:1-2); "First and Last." He performs it (Phil. 1:6).

OLD TIMERS

I find in my personal reading that, generally speaking, writings originating less than 100 years ago are of a somewhat lesser caliber, both in secular and religious fields. It appears that with all of the cultural advancement that has been made in modern times, the impact of it upon the productivity of men's minds leaves something to be desired! Writings directed to the populus are pitched on an extremely sensual level, while scholastic contributions are saturated with theories and speculations instead of vital observations and factual conclusions. It is tragic that the same prevalency is evident in religious works. Modern commentaries are remarkably shallow, as a rule, evidencing that modern theologians (if they may even be called such) are for the most part ignorant of the Scriptures and the power of God! "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and the absence of this factor is sure to evidence itself in intellectual and spiritual shallowness and erroneous observation. The benefits given to those older champions of the faith are also available to us through the Holy Spirit; "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things" (I John 2:20, 27). Some have laid hold of this availability through grace and are feeding the remnant that has been spared in Babylon! They have suffered a degree of reproach and derision from the "simple", but their works have manifested themselves in **the true comforting** of the hearts of the elect. Like those of Revelation, "their works shall follow them", even as they have those older brothers. May God give us more of such men, whose reliance is wholly upon the Lord. You may maintain an extremely valuable, and indispensable, ministry in praying fervently for such a blessing!

THE VOICE OF TRUTH PUBLISHING ASSN.

P. O. Box 1684

Highland, Ind. 46322

Non-profit Org.
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Hammond, Indiana
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