

# THE WORD OF TRUTH

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*"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

### The Protection of God

Those that are in covenant relationship with God through Jesus Christ are assured of His Divine and omnipotent protection. They are comforted in Scripture by these words: ". . . neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers nor things present nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus OUR Lord" (Rom. 8:38-39). Sheltered in the hand of Omnipotence, we are assured that "no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand"; simply because "He is greater than all" (John 10:27-29). Our deliverance encompasses the whole of our existence; "Who delivered us from so great a death, and DOTH deliver; in whom we trust that He will YET deliver us" (II Cor. 1:10). The providence of God moves in behalf of the adopted children, thus making "all things work together for the good to them that love the Lord, who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28). None are so able to accuse them, condemn them, assail them, or separate them (Rom. 8:28-39). Their cares are taken to the Lord and cast at His feet, for "He careth for them" (I Pet. 5:7). He has veritably pledged Himself to the support of His people, to maintain their cause, and to fight their battles. Emboldened with this knowledge "we may boldly say; the Lord is my helper; I shall not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb. 13:5). Such comfort this is to those who are bereft of any natural strength, who "commit their cause" unto the Lord (Job 5:8).

Satan, our adversary, walks about, however, as a "roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (I Pet. 5:8). While the Lord is pledged upon His own word to "maintain their cause" (Psa. 140:12), yet fear doth enter their hearts often and they almost despair while realizing their own weakness and frailty, while at the same time considering the greatness of the power of their foe. It is good, therefore, that words of comfort be ministered in this area often, assuring the sheep that "he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and THAT WICKED ONE TOUCHETH HIM NOT" (I John 5:18). There are at least three areas of attack that Satan utilizes; each of which is sufficient in its own right to discourage the young and feeble. He, the great "accuser of the brethren" will attempt to assail you, as he did Job, before the throne of God. Likewise, he will assail your own heart, heaping upon

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**In This Issue . . .**

**"ACCORDING TO" OR DIVINE CAUSES  
SACRIFICE COSTS**

# The Word of Truth

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## Speaking Together of the Lord— Needful

Carnality appears to be most prevalent among those who frequently absent themselves from mutual fellowship with the brethren. The reasoning processes, relative to spiritual things, slowly deteriorate, and gross misapprehensions multiply at alarming rates when fellowship becomes infrequent. A critical eye grows in relation to "the brotherhood", whom we are to love (I Pet. 2:17), and disgust about irrelevant things intensifies. Love grows cold, and sins pull and tug at the soul becomes virtually irresistible. It is an error of the foulest sort which states that one can live unto the Lord as well alone as with the brethren. "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together" (Heb. 10:25) is not merely an exhortation to boost church attendance; **it is a gracious provision of the Lord whereby the soul may stay alive and receptive to eternal things.** In Malachi's day, "They that feared the Lord spake often one with another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name" (Mal. 3:16). If the Lord thinks so highly of those who frequently gather together to muse upon the things of the Lord, and to think upon His very name, then what is to be said of those who disdain such a fellowship. They are "gone aside; the wind hath carried them away." They have followed their own course, and it shall lead them to destruction. We have no patience with those who rebel against the fellowship that the Lord enjoys. They are not wiser than the Lord; and yet the land is filled with them. Pious religious people, who feel that they have risen above the plain of fellowship with brothers in the Lord. Their own lives are characterized by slothfulness and retardedness in the Kingdom of God, which is sufficient evidence that they are "of their father the Devil."

## Approved Ministers

The Apostle Paul, chosen of the Lord as the "preacher and teacher of the Gentiles" (II Tim. 1:11; Gal. 2:2) revealed to the Corinthians seven areas in which his ministry was approved of God. These are spheres in which men of God must seek approval today also. I list them for you, showing that to stand for the Lord requires approval that does not come easy, but rather by

the "reason of use" of those spiritual faculties (which have been graciously granted, to equip you for God's work) even amidst the most trying circumstances. May the Lord place such laborers in His vineyard in our time.

These are listed in II Cor. 6:4-10.

(1) **Experience:** much patience, affliction, necessities, distresses, stripes, imprisonments, tumults. (2) **Activity:** Labors, watchings, fastings. (3) **Character:** pureness, knowledge, longsuffering, kindness, Holy Ghost, love unfeigned. (4) **Connection with God:** Word of Truth, power of God, armour of righteousness. (5) **Reputation:** Honor, dishonor, evil report, good report. (6) **Attitudes Toward His Ministry:** Deceivers, yet true; unknown, yet known. (7) **Personal Aspect:** Dying, yet alive; chastened, but not killed; sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, yet possessing all things.

All of these things, of course, do not have to be experienced to fit one for the ministry of God. The emphasis Paul is making, is that His conduct and faith in all of these areas were manifested to be from the Lord; thus approving his ministry. Whatever the circumstances were, whether comfortable or adverse, the apostle's demeanor portrayed the work of grace within his heart. His response to these things—workings from within and without—showed him to be a fit and blessed minister. Such ought to be the area in which churches today seek qualification for their ministers and servants. Degrees of learning, polished personalities, abilities—these did not even merit the mentioning of the apostle. Surely a truth to see here!

## Spiritual Affinity with God

The effectual fusion of the spirit of man with the Spirit of God is portrayed many places in Scripture. Truly, we are "of His bone and of His flesh" (Eph. 5:30), and "joined to the Lord", we become with Him "one spirit" (I Cor. 6:17). It is then that we speak of the Lord as being associated with us personally, and of the benefits we are deriving from such a wonderful and intimate fellowship. The 23rd Psalm affords a very prolific view of this truth. Extracting all words save those bearing reference to the Person of God and the recipient of grace, we get a lovely picture of the fusion of God and man through grace. Here is how it reads: "..... Lord ..... my ..... I ..... He ..... me ..... He ..... me ..... He ..... my ..... He ..... I ..... I ..... Thou ..... Me ..... Thy ..... Thy ..... me ..... Thou ..... me ..... my ..... Thou ..... my ..... my ..... me ..... my ..... I ..... Lord."

It is a marvelous token of God's grace that man may so speak of his Lord in such intimate association with himself. We bid you in Jesus' name to avail yourself of this spiritual affinity with our Father that has been accomplished by Christ. You too may speak of His work in your behalf; of His leading, succouring, provision, strength, comfort, joy, goodness and mercy in your behalf. Christ has made the way, through His death and resurrection, for you to experience joyfully the reality of being "joined to the Lord."

## “ACCORDING TO” or DIVINE CAUSES

Behind all effects there are causes! The effect may not be viewed as abstract from the cause without the loss of understanding, and the obscuring of reason. In the natural sphere the law of cause and effect may be viewed with some degree of profit; but to transfer such vision into the spiritual sphere far exceeds achievements that may be attained in the realm of the seen. Much faulty theology may be corrected when guided by the Omnipotent hand through the counsels of eternity and through the depth of God's Word, thus enabled to see the cause for our salvation and all things pertaining thereunto. It is here that we touch upon the exercise of God's Sovereignty in the behalf of those things "pertaining to life and godliness" (II Pet. 1:3). When viewed aright, the shackles of tradition weaken and fall off as we begin to be brought by grace to ascribe "salvation, and glory, and honor and power, unto the Lord our God" (Rev. 19:1). **What effects there are in the scope of redemption have been brought about by the Lord.** Man's feeble efforts have been obviated in respect to the appropriation of "eternal salvation" (Heb. 5:9). The redemption that we have "obtained" is "eternal" (Heb. 9:12), and therefore must be **completely** wrought out by Him who alone is capable of working anything eternal. When man is pictured as working, it is because he has been "ordained unto good works before, that he should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10). **Rather than the activities of man being the cause of God's beneficence toward him, they are the effect of that same beneficence channeled to us through that one Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.** Because of an almost total misapprehension of the case, there have arisen endless harangues concerning the place of man's efforts in the matter of salvation. Much of the "dickering" that takes place over this subject is done among those who themselves are woefully ignorant of "the righteousness of God", and consequently have "gone about to establish a righteousness of their own" (Rom. 10:3). Such are they that have followed "deceitful lusts" (Eph. 4:22), and "not having submitted themselves to the righteousness of God" stand before Him in their own miserable and "filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6), contaminated at their very hearts and minds, which have not been "created in the likeness of Him who created them in all true righteousness and holiness" (Eph. 4:24). Bereft of the "mind of Christ" (I Cor. 2:16) these stand as "enemies of the cross of Christ" (Phil. 3:18), not having been "crucified with Christ" (Gal. 2:20). They have not "crucified the flesh together with the lusts thereof" (Gal. 5:24), and consequently have no recourse but to vaunt the efforts of man, and the supposed achievements of mortals. Not being acquainted personally with the God who has declared "righteousness is of me, saith the Lord" (Isa. 54:17), they have "gone about to establish their own righteousness"; i.e., seeking to ascribe the cause of God's moving to the stimulating and achievements of man. Thus they speak often

of doing, but are actually found doing very little. They love to climb on Mount Sinai, and get them to their prince Legality; but somehow they have, as it were, robbed themselves of the blessing. They have not wrestled with the Lord until He blessed them (Gen. 32:24-26), but rather have sought with diligent effort to bless the Lord with their own doing. Such benighted people need desperately to know the cause behind the effectual uniting of God and man (I Cor. 6:17). The preparation for, initiation into, and participation in the work of God, is conditioned upon what God does - not what you do. **Your actions are an effect, not a cause.** Once this matter is clearly seen, a way will be made for the spirit of rejoicing in your heart.

I seek to deal here with a single phrase in Scripture which is used to denote cause; "ACCORDING TO". This is a preposition denoting motion or diffusion or direction from higher to lower; through, on account of. When, then, the word is used, it stands between two thoughts (1) the effect which is under consideration; (2) the cause which brought the given effect about. I will deal with this matter from a three-fold point of view showing that our entire salvation, past, present and future, is due to the Divine work, and not our own; that we have been initiated into, and continue in, this "eternal redemption" proffered through and maintained by Jesus Christ, only by the free grace and action of Almighty God; that all glory and honor for the achievements of new lives must be ascribed unto the Lord, and that no flesh can possibly glory in His sight.

### The Preparation and Prelude to Participation

By this I mean that certain preparation was made in order that we might fellowship with the Lord, and that the enticement of our own persons to consider that fellowship was wholly of the Lord. No man or group of men may be credited with such wonderful work. There was a certain preparation made, in the which we were "chosen". The Scriptures declare; "Having predestinated us into the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, ACCORDING TO the good pleasure of His will" (Eph. 1:5). The word "predestinate" literally means to "predetermine, decide beforehand" (Thayer). The object of this predetermined choice was "US", not a plan; "US", not a mode; "US", not a method! He pre-selected the redeemed - specifically - to be adopted unto His children by Christ Jesus. The cause behind this was not His foresight of their acceptance of the Lord, but rather it was made in accordance with 'HIS WILL.' Pleased, as it were, with His own choice and will, He proceeded in accordance with that, irrespective of other circumstances. Our God hath "done whatsoever He hath pleased in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places" (Psa. 135:5,6). It is not difficult for the Lord to facilitate the accomplishment of His own desires. If He confronts stubborn will, then we are to understand that "thy people shall be WILLING IN THE DAY OF THY POWER" (Psa. 110:3). It is a small thing with the Lord to "allure them into the wilder-

ness that He may speak comfortably to them" (Hosea 2:14), thereby "drawing them with the bands of love and the cords of a man" (Hosea 11:4). The question is posed in Scripture, and veritably answered by its own assertion; "Who hath resisted the will of God" (Rom. 9:19).

An example of this pre-selection of God, stimulated by His own good pleasure and will, is to be found in the selection of Jacob over Esau, although contrary to the very tradition established by God Himself. As it is written, "Jacob have I love, and Esau have I hated" (Rom. 9:13). The choice of Jacob was manifested to his mother Rebecca before his birth or that of his twin and older brother, Esau. No works had been wrought, and both stood on an equal level so far as merit was concerned; accept for one factor, and that was the cause of all choices in the Kingdom of God—the "ELECTION" of God; "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, THAT THE PURPOSE OF GOD ACCORDING TO ELECTION MIGHT STAND, not of works, but of Him that calleth" (Rom. 9:11). God's purpose and will, then, were the sole causes for Jacob's choice. To attribute it to any other factor is to fly squarely in the face of the Almighty, and that is to place oneself in a position where only eternal death can ensue. The cause was "ELECTION"—"according to election." That obviates the choice, achievement, and merit of man! This same truth may be seen, furthermore, in connection with the nation of Israel, which still retains a remnant of people before God, thus preserving that nation like salt before the God that called them. That remnant is called "a remnant ACCORDING TO the election of grace" (Rom. 11:5). Their choice of God, and their present sustenance by Him, and maintenance within the net of the Kingdom, is in accord with God's election. **That is the preparation which causes men to be acceptable in the sight of God.** The "Election of grace"; i.e., the arbitrary choice of God made aside from any meritorious achievement on the part of the recipient. Do not fight that truth; to do so is to fight against the Lord! His own election, His choice—yea arbitrary choice—is the cause of the retention of the remnant; not their achievement, not their merit, not their works, not their desire, not earthly efforts expended by others in their behalf; but **THE ELECTION OF GRACE!** Ah, blessed truth! It exalts the Lord and abases man; that is why the sophists fight against it. But they flail at this truth with but paper wings which shall be beat into dust and scattered over the mouth of hell together with all other dogmas and teachings which deprive God of His own Sovereign right to "do with His own whatsoever He would" (Matt. 20:15). I ask you that are honest before the Lord; "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the SAME LUMP to make one vessel unto honor, and another to dishonor?" (Rom. 9:21). Indeed, and what does compel Him to make them thus but His own will and good pleasure. He "works all things ACCORDING TO the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will" (Eph. 1:11). **God was not motivated by your choice; your choice was motivated by God's**

**election!** Praise His holy name. "Blessed is that man WHOM THE LORD CHOOSETH AND CAUSETH TO APPROACH UNTO HIM" (Psa. 65:4). The preparation, then, for our participation, was made in accordance with the pure will, purpose, and good pleasure of the Lord. He was prompted by nothing but this, and to make anything else the case is to extract the "teeth" right out of our redemption, and make it a but feeble effort, left in the hands of the very creature who bartered his soul away for a morsel of fruit.

But the glorious prelude to that participation—our CALLING—was also prompted by God's own will; "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, who are THE CALLED ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE" (Rom. 8:28). There is no meritorious achievement, then, that prompted God to issue that effectual call to us, whereby we were enabled to see salvation accomplished and offered in the Person of Jesus Christ! The call wasn't predicated by qualification, but by God's own determination! Praise His name! God purposed it, and therefore called us! "God, who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our own works, BUT ACCORDING TO HIS OWN PURPOSE AND GRACE, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (II Tim. 1:9). The cause was God's purpose, the means was His grace; thus making a way for the "elect" (Matt. 24:22; Mk. 13:20,22,27; Lk. 18:7; Rom. 8:33; Col. 3:12; Tit. 1:1; I Pet. 1:2), apart from achievement, apart from merit, apart from inherent goodliness, to be saved! Both the purpose and grace originate with God, "The Beginning" (Rev. 1:8)—"purpose" and "grace", glorious sisters in redemption! **Our involvement, then, in the matter of Salvation, is an effect of itself.** The cause behind it is to be found "from the beginning" in the secret council chambers of God. Blessed, holy truth! Praise be to God, who hath facilitated nought but His own good pleasure and will, and whose "gifts and callings are without repentance" (Rom. 11:29).

#### The Participation Initiated

But, there is the matter of our conversion, rebirth, recreation, unto sanctification and fellowship with our Father who is in heaven. This,

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## NEW SERIES OF TRACTS

We are happy to announce that a new series of tracts will soon be available to our readers. Written to introduce the truths relative to God and man, to the unbeliever, you will find this series of four tracts beneficial in your personal work. They will come in a small packet of four tracts under the heading "God and Man." The subjects under development are: "What Is Man." "Who Is God?"; "God's Gift To Man"; and "God and Man Together." We urge you to send for your sample promptly. If several are desired, please specify the number. Because only a limited supply will be available, we will honor your requests on a first-come, first-serve basis. Because we are contemplating entering more fully into this type of ministry, we urge the prayers of all the brethren for the work, that it will bring glory and honor to God.

## Dumb Dogs

of course, all began with a personal knowledge of God's will concerning salvation; a providential acquaintance with the work of Christ, effectual to "all them that believe" (Rom. 3:22). This knowledge, or introduction to the good pleasure and will of God, was brought about in accordance with His own will—again the cause! "Having MADE KNOWN UNTO US THE MYSTERY OF HIS WILL, ACCORDING TO His good pleasure, WHICH HE HATH PURPOSE IN HIMSELF" (Eph. 1:9). Is that not a marvelous thing, that God willed at all to introduce us to the very counsel of His own will? Praise His holy name, and may we ascribe "salvation...to our God, and to the Lamb that is on the Throne." **Your knowledge of redemption, if you possess it, is God-caused!** Again, salvation itself, was experienced in accord with the Sovereign will of God; "Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins that He might deliver us from this present evil world, ACCORDING TO the will of God and our Father" (Gal. 1:4). Again, the grace, or mercy of God enters into the matter of our salvation, being an effectual cause; "God...not by works of righteousness which we have done, but ACCORDING TO His own mercy He saved us..." (Titus 3:5). Were we, then, saved because we did something? God forbid, it was because God willed it! We were "born, not of blood, nor of the WILL of the flesh, nor of the WILL of man, BUT OF GOD" (John 1:13). **The responses that we had, the subjection to ordinances given by the Lord, were are continue to be holy, because they were effects of God's own will and work.** We are drawn into submission to the will of God by the will of God itself. Like a mighty magnet it tugs at the soul of the elect, bringing them into the full purpose and will of God, and mysteriously bringing them to such a point as their heart is bent toward God, **willing and ready to submit to those instructive ordinances which He Himself has ordained to display lessons of grace!** Hallelujah! You see, the begetting, or conception by the Spirit (we are "born of the water and the SPIRIT"—Jno. 3:5) is according to God's mercy; not our works; not our responses; not our efforts; but in accordance with God's mercy - it was the cause; "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which ACCORDING TO HIS ABUNDANT MERCY hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (I Pet. 1:3). **Mercy overlooks what man is;** therefore there is no qualification inherently in man, else there would be no need to overlook his merit. The cause of your begetting is MERCY! Praise God for it, and be not forgetful! Our very acceptance before the Lord has been in accordance with Divine mercy and grace; "to the praise of His grace wherein He hath MADE us accepted in the Beloved, in Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, ACCORDING to the riches of His grace" (Eph. 1:6,7). The very thought of "rich grace" is exhilarating to the soul! It speaks of grace that will abound more than sin hath abounded (Rom. 5:20). Our initiation into the purpose of God, therefore, was caused by God, not us!

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The prophet Isaiah very vividly paints the picture of Israel's despicable situation before the Lord. As the Holy Spirit moved him, he indicated the entire nation with being "faint, from the sole of their foot even unto the head; there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither molified with ointment" (Isa. 1:5-6). Included in the illumined spectrum of the prophet was a denunciation of those proclaiming to be God's spokesmen. He declared them to be "...blind; they are ignorant, they are ALL dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand; they all look for their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter" (Isa. 56:10-11). He so categorized them as useless baggage; blind, ignorant dogs; **dumb dogs**, that could not bark!

We cannot but observe that the same situation is prevalent today among those porporting to be God's messengers. They too are "dumb dogs that cannot bark." They neither warn nor plead, answer nor question. Like despicable dogs, they gather in packs and browse for sheep which may be devoured. They do not engage in the dissemination of the Gospel, nor do they engage in combat against the hosts of spiritual wickedness and spiritual powers which continue to harass and aggravate the "sheep." Their pratings are largely the parroting of other dog's barkings. Brethren, a man is not a spokesman for God unless he stands in the gap and speaks none other things than that which he hath both seen and heard! Myriads of people sit weekly (and weakly) under the miserable tutelage of these "dumb dogs!" Their lives are not lived in victory through faith in Christ Jesus (I Cor. 2:14; I Jno. 5:4-5); and they have not the "full assurance of understanding" (Col. 2:1-2). Well do these sheep know about the dog's utter failure to bark. We urge the sheep to rally together and to call upon the "dumb dogs" to either bark or be herded out. The sheep need to be fed. May the Lord send laborers into His harvest that will "bark" when He says "bark!" that will stand and "preach the Word instant in season and out of season" (II Tim. 4:1-2). Let us pray that their "ears might be Circumcised" (Jer. 6:10), that they may hear the Lord and be prompted to "bark;" yea, we must do this! If this seems harsh, we mean for it to be so, for reproach has been brought upon the name of our precious Lord who hath taught us to "speak these words." We cannot but be indignant with those pretenders who "know nothing at all" (Jno. 11:49). The Lord continues to indict all such as claim to feed the sheep, yet have nothing in their hand to give! The Lord rebuke them all!

There are no contests with God! He is "Lord over all", and as such is never pictured as having a contest with any being or force. He who would rest in God rests in Omnipotence and has nothing to fear, either in this life or that which is to come.

## Pungent Points

Regeneration is generation all over again with a new and fresh principle of workmanship. It is the act of being born again; of being regenerated by the Spirit of God. It results in being born into a new family with new relationships. Man is made completely new—so much so that “old things pass away, behold all things become new” (II Cor. 5:14). Regeneration is not a mere overt act; it is a Divine process whereby God forms us spiritually into His own image.

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In scripture, the word “abomination” is generally applied to an empty and meaningless religious exercise (Ex. 8:26; Lev. 7:18; 11:41; Duet. 7:25; 24:4). A religious exercise that is only overt, with no heart-participation is abominable to the Lord of Heaven. The sacrifices of God are a humble and a contrite spirit (Psa. 51:17). Our services, if not impregnated with heartfelt worship and joy in the adoration of the Lord shall only incur His wrath. With so much current emphasis upon form and ritual, it is important to remember this truth.

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The less you fellowship with the brethren, the more critical you shall become of them. I find that the greatest causes of dissension come from those who frequent the fellowship the least. By all reason (human) it appears to be the other way around. The philosophy of the world teaches us the familiarity breeds criticism; but in the spiritual economy, this is not so! One's own lethargy and indifference will be sought to be excused and justified by drawing attention to the supposed failings of those that have not adopted the same course. We must incessantly pray for deliverance from such earthly wisdom and ways!

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If we do not begin the day with the Lord, I fear we shall find it a most difficult thing indeed to end it with Him.

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The schools of men would have us believe that they can prepare a person sufficiently for what they call “Christian service.” This is based upon the presumption that they are endowed by God for the fulfillment of this ministry—a conclusion that seems almost wholly unwarranted.

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Rather than attempting to fit Scripture into what we believe, let us be busy in fitting what we believe into the Scripture. If it does not fit, let us abandon any course that would force it in, and simply disregard and discard with godly courage that belief. It is of Satan.

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Unless our faith rises high on eagles wings into the heavenlies and views this world from afar off, it shall stick fast in the mud of earth.

## Sacrifice Costs

In II Sam. 24, the Lord became incensed against Israel, and seeking an occasion against them moved upon David to number Israel; “And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah.” Immediately David called Joab, captain of the hosts, and gave orders to bring back a count of the warriors (II Sam. 25:2). Joab, attempting to restrain David from doing this deed, recounted to him that God would double their number; “Now, the Lord thy God add unto the people how many soever they be, an hundred fold, and that the eyes of my Lord the king may see it...” (II Sam. 24:3). He queried, “Why doth the king delight in this thing?” Notwithstanding, the “king's word prevailed against Joab, and against the captains of the hosts,” his mind firmly set to do this thing. A period of over nine months was employed for the counting, and when Joab returned, he had found 800,000 men that drew the sword in Israel, and 500,000 in Judah; almost one and one-third million fighting men; valiant men. Immediately, David's heart “smote him” and he realized that he had “sinned greatly” (II Sam. 24:10). Earnestly he cried unto the Lord for forgiveness, though this whole thing was actually of the Lord. His heart was stricken because he had moved out on his own lack of faith. How wise is our Lord, that He chose such a way to seek occasion against the rebellious houses of Israel and Judah! Eventually Gad, a prophet, was sent of God to David to offer him three choices of punishment. (1. Seven years of famine; (2. Flee three months from before the enemy; (3. Three days of pestilence (II Sam. 24:13). David threw himself and the people upon the mercy of the Lord; “Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord; for His mercies are great; and let me not fall into the hand of man” (24:14). The Lord acted promptly and sent a pestilence from the morning “even to the appointed time”. From Dan to Beersheba 70,000 men fell, and when the angel of the Lord stood over Jerusalem to slay it at once, stayed his hand. There David acknowledged his sin again, though it was used to implement God's purpose (unknown to him personally); “Lo I have sinned, and I have done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house” (24:17). Shortly thereafter, Gad appeared to David again and told him to go and “rear an altar unto the Lord in the threshing floor of Araunah the Jubusite” (24:18). When David approached the place, the very place where the Lord had stayed the hand of that destroying angel, and owner met him. Bowing before the king, and hearing that he had come to buy this threshing floor, Araunah quickly offered it, together with the vessels, freely to David, without price. Nobly David exhibited his faith in replying; “Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which cost me nothing” (24:24).

Here is enunciated one of the very basic principles of sacrifice—the cost of self. God will not

accept costless spiritual sacrifices; i.e., He demands that we lose some of our natural self in these sacrifices; that we become "living sacrifices, wholly, acceptable unto God" (Rom. 12: 1-2). Self is to be consumed upon the altar; and if we dare to offer that which deprives not us of glory and honor, we shall be met with God's rebuke. How prone are we to offer sacrifices which cost us nothing; whereby we may retain our old nature and character; our old tendencies, carnal natures, base desires; selfish motives. God will have no such sacrifice! He will not permit you to cling to that old nature! Nor will He delight in you maintaining your personal uncrucified affection. We ought, with Davidic determination, to assert that we too will offer nothing unto the Lord that is devoid of cost to self! This is "self denial"; "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and **make no provision for the flesh**, to fulfill the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:14); "**Mortify, therefore, your members** that are upon the earth" (Col. 3:5); "But what things were gain to me, I **counted loss for Christ**" (Phil. 3:7); "If any man will come after me, let him **deny himself**, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Matt. 16:24). Without this, we cannot be Christ's disciples! Our interests, our natural affections, our fleshly inclinations—true sacrifice to God costs us these things. Mark it well that Satan will try and give you something void of cost to offer unto the Lord. **But if it costs nothing, it is a bane to offer it to the Lord!** If your religion permits you to cling to self, it is an abomination in the eyes of God. We offer "spiritual sacrifices" (I Pet. 2:5) at the expense of ourselves and our evil propensities. We credit the Lord, and so take credit from ourselves; we praise the Lord, and so take praise from ourselves, thus admitting our own unworthiness; we supplicate the Lord, pleading for grace to help in time of need, so acknowledging our own emptiness and inability to provide what we so sorely need. When we give to God, we are to take from self; from our natural wealth. We are to be "poor in spirit" if we are to gain the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:3). Sacrifice will cost you your ambition, your goals, your life; but these mingled with sacrifices are like unfit leaven, and make it unacceptable before God. May God give you grace to offer unto Him acceptable sacrifice, devoid of self; costly!

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I find that my most meditative days come when my mind is saturated with the Word of God and joyful praises. Surely to hide this Word in our hearts is a token of grace and a key to victory.

\* \* \*

When you become acutely aware of the filthiness of the world that lies about you, by faith the new man rejoices the more in anticipation of the glory of God.

\* \* \*

God does not always ask reasonable things; but when He does not, He always supplies the faith for us to rise above reason and see as He sees, also empowering us to perform His will.

## "According to" or Divine Causes

(From page 5)

### The Participation Continued

Here is the glory of it all; we continue to participate in the purpose and will of the Lord, even said to "stand" in it (Col. 4:12). **The spiritual blessings which you derive now are but the projection of that eternal purpose of God into your very life.** The cause behind it all is the choice that God made "before the foundation of the world"; "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, ACCORDING as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Eph. 1:3,4). Where, then, is merit? Where is boasting? Verily, "it is excluded" (Rom. 3:27). If you would know why you are experiencing the spiritual blessings of God, high on this "mount Zion, the city of the living God" (Heb. 12:22-25), then the Lord would point you back through time before the foundation of the world was laid; before there was a sea, or land, or a firmament of the heavens; before there was man or beast; before there was sun or moon—and there, before it all, He shows you the choice that He made in accordance with His own "good pleasure". There He says; "Here is why I bless you; here is why I care for you, succour you, feed you, strengthen you, uphold you, teach you: it is because I have chosen you as my signet and have "set my love upon you. You are an elected person; thousands about you have been subjected to the same truths as you, yet have not come to 'a knowledge of the truth' because they have not been chosen; consequently, they are not blessed. But you, weary pilgrim, you I have chosen for Myself, to set you before me holy and pure, and without blame in my only begotten Son, full of grace and truth. I bless you for that reason, because you're mine; I have purchased you with my blood, and you are not your own. Therefore, glorify thou me!"

Is it need that you now consider? We all have needs, and they are met and supplied by the Lord. Hear the cause behind their remedy: "And my God shall supply all of your needs ACCORDING to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19). The cause is the riches of God's glory; i.e., **the fulness of God's personal manifestation, which shall bring with it a rich supply of all that you need!** To know God, and to behold Him "in the face of Christ Jesus" (II Cor. 4:6) is to have that more abundant life, yea, eternal life" (John 17:3). Those things that "pertain unto life and godliness are all supplied by the Lord, His power being the cause behind their introduction to us; "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord. ACCORDING as His DIVINE POWER hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (II Pet. 1:2,3). Whatever you need, in whatever area of life it be, whether temporal needs, or things that apply unto the great sphere of godliness, the cause

# The Protection of God

(From page 1)

it condemnation for misdemeanors that you have unwillingly committed through weakness. Too, there are a thousand outside forces that he will press upon you, designed to slowly sap you of your spiritual strength and cause you to settle down in complacency in this world, and cease to wage a war against the rulers of the darkness of this world (Eph. 6:12). Now, the Lord has provided, through His grace, protection in all three areas; and how we praise and thank His name for that provision.

Before the Throne of God, there is protection; "If any man sin, we have an Advocate WITH THE FATHER; Jesus Christ the Righteous (One..)" (I John 2:1). Comforting that is, for it assures us that no one can "lay anything to the charge of God's elect; it is Christ that died!" (Rom. 8:31-33). Jesus is there to plead for the sheep, to apply the efficacy of His sacrifice in their behalf, and so thwarts Satan before the throne when he comes to "present himself with the sons of God" (Job 1). Secondly, the Lord provides protection against the assaults within; He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ hath the witness in himself" (I John 3:10): "And the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8:16). When Satan tears at your heart with vicious tugs of self condemnation, and it condemns you, you are assured "God is greater than your heart" (I Jno. 3:20-21). He is able, through the Spirit, to override the condemning

heart, overcome with Satan's sure testimony of the insipid, yet powerful, evil proclivities of the old man whom you thought dead, yet who lives at those inopportune times. Satan cannot, therefore, gain the ascendancy of power in the throne of the heart protected by the testimony of the Holy Spirit. Thirdly, those outside forces (evil angels, spiritual wickedness in high places; circumstances designed to take your life, etc.) are not sufficient to arrest your salvation and wrest you from the hand of your Savior. He has provided protection in this area also; "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, AND DELIVERETH HIM" (Psa. 34:7). These are "ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for they who are the heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1:13). They are greater in power than men, and can overthrow evil powers of the highest order (Dan. 4). Many have been the deliverances that they have wrought in your behalf which have been unnoticed, unseen, yet true and effectual. Only eternity will testify completely of the ten thousands of deliverances that have been wrought in our behalf; before the Throne, within ourselves, and from without. Nought shall separate the sheep; they are safe, and "underneath are the Everlasting arms" (Duet. 33:27). Take heart then brother, sister; "look to the hills from whence cometh your help." The Lord is on the Throne, and He is reigning. All is well with thy salvation. Commit thy soul in faithfulness to Him, and in all thy ways acknowledge Him; He shall direct thy paths (Prov. 3:6). Praise God!

which enables the possession of them is the Divine power! **You may not, therefore, muster up your own resources;** you are to appropriate them by faith from the God of Heaven through Jesus Christ. The inheritance that we possess has been secured in accordance with God's purpose; "In whom (Jesus Christ) we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated ACCORDING TO the purpose of Him that worketh all things after the counsel of His OWN WILL" (Eph. 1:11). When the inheritance is secured in reality, and we are made to dwell in the presence of God forever, we shall find that the eternal cause behind our appropriation of that inheritance was the purpose of God. **Our faithfulness, diligent efforts, and lack of weariness in well doing shall be but a manifestation of God's purpose. The cause moves upon us to conform to the will of God, and were it not for that mighty display of God's power, we should be found outside of the will of God as for eternity, never able to approach unto Him whom no man hath seen, nor can see!**

These are Divine causes! They reveal unto us the way in which the Lord works—in accordance

with His own will. He never violates it, and it is always the cause for personal participation in redemption. **It is God's work that establishes us, and not our own;** "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, WORKING IN YOU THAT WHICH IS WELL PLEASING IN HIS SIGHT, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen" (Heb. 13:20-21). May the Lord give you the eyes of understanding, that you may be able to see His own will and purpose, and that this purpose might compel you to trust with all your heart unto Him with whom you have to do. You shall stand before this God in the end, and He shall judge you in the Son righteously. May God give you to see that only those that have been caught by Him according to His own good pleasure, in His will, shall be at last given that "salvation which shall be revealed" (I Pet. 1:5). Do not look to yourself for the stimulus, but look to the Lord—and be saved, all ye ends of the earth (Isa. 45:22).

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