

THE WORD OF TRUTH

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"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"—Jno. 8:32.

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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

WHO ARE THE HEATHEN?

Part of growing in the "grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 3:18), is learning to express ourselves in "words which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (I Cor. 2:13). This, of course, necessitates a familiarity with the Word of God - the "Scriptures", which are "given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine . . . for instruction in righteousness" (II Tim. 3:16). I am more and more convinced that one of the "good works" for which the Scriptures "prepare" us (II Tim. 3:17), is that of communicating the truth of God accurately and effectually. If we speak of the things of God in words which "man's wisdom teacheth", we have only wrought confusion in the minds of men; the truth has not been conveyed, and thus bondage of some sort is inevitable. Having made these general remarks, permit me to take up the subject at hand.

The church-world has done many things to garble the understanding of men, but not the least of its evil contributions is its concept of "missions," together with the attendant concepts that accompany it. Often we hear of "the heathen", and almost invariably reference is being made to uncivilized tribes and peoples which are head-hunters, grunt, practice witchery, live in the jungles, etc. One special mission demonination has even saw fit to identify itself as "New Tribes", with the emphasis of reaching the unreached - of bringing the Gospel to peoples that are in gross darkness, who have not been subjected to any form of the proclamation of the truth. This type of people according to these zealots bears the appellation of "heathen". But is that proper? Have we been guilty of once again perverting the truth of God and fostering concepts in the hearts of men that are incorrect? It should be borne in mind that the word "heathen" is employed by the Holy Spirit, and that it has very especial reference to a particular body of people. Therefore, it is imperative that our speech be ordered in accordance with the word of the Living God.

The Proper Concept of "Heathen"

The word "heathen" literally means "nations", and is so identified in the Word; "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the HEATHEN through faith, preached before the Gospel of Abraham, saying, In thee shall all NATIONS of the earth be blessed" (Gal. 3:8) *In this truthful sense of the word, "heathen" stands as a synonym of "Gentiles", and is employed by the Holy Spirit to identify those great masses of people that were ignorant of God. Their civilized state was not the question; their lack of conscious familiarity with the Loving God was what constituted them "heathen."* As a matter of fact, they are generally painted as a very intelligent people. These were they that assisted in the conspiracy against Christ Jesus the Lord; "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ. For of a truth against Thy Holy

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The Word of Truth

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Who Are The Heathen?

(From page 1)

Child Jesus, Whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the **Gentiles**, and the people of Israel, were gathered together" (Acts 4:25-27). In this particular text, we have a positive identification of the "heathen" made. They are, in the case of Christ's consequent death, "Herod, Pontius Pilate, and the Gentiles". Observe that the "heathen" are associated with "the people"; "Why do the **heathen** rage and the **people** imagine a vain thing?" "The people" are Israel; and they are a "people" because the Lord had chosen them and separated them from all other peoples. At that point, all others were considered "heathen", or "nations", or "Gentiles" — all are the same. God declared to Israel, "I will take you for a **PEOPLE**" (Ex. 13:11). Again, the prophet spoke of those that were "not a people" (Rom. 10:19). **The "heathen", then, are those that are "not a people" before the Lord; i.e., they are not recognized as acceptable with Him — they do not know Him, or worship Him. They are devoid of the knowledge of God, and while they may be highly technical, and have achieved great things socially, still they are not recognized by the Throne of the universe.**

Take, for example, Herod, Pontius Pilate, and the Gentiles. They were anything but uncivilized. Their society was the paragon of the day; they had the most modern conveniences, were adept in warfare and the sciences. They were known for their learning, their high philosophies, and their love for wisdom. Plato, Socrates, Bacon, etc. — these were men that arose from among the ranks of the "heathen". Let us wipe from our minds the notion that heathen are crude socially, that they are deprived of many of the niceties of life. Such is not the case at all, and the word "heathen" is nowhere — I say **NOWHERE** — used in that way in Scripture!

The heathen are, then, everyone that is ignorant of God; everyone that does not sustain a personal relationship to Him; everyone that is "not a people" before Him! Christ died to "purify unto Himself a peculiar people", (Tit. 2:14). Every person, every nation, every group of individuals that is not so peculiarized is heathen! Their education,

their social status, their philosophy of life, their physical habits, their appearance, their crudeness — all of these things have no bearing at all upon the appellation "heathen". The term was given to us of God to stand for the opposite of "people"; i.e., **it denotes all that are not in a position of having God reveal Himself to them.** All such individuals are rebuked of God; i.e., they are reproved in God's word for their failure to know Him and seek Him (Psa. 9:5). God has set Himself to "bring to nought the counsel of the heathen" (Psa. 33:10).

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SPIRITUAL HUCKSTERS

"For we are not as many, which corrupt the Word of God . . ."

"For we are not like so many (hucksters, tavern keepers, making a trade of) peddling God's Word — shortmeasuring and adulterating the Divine message"

II Cor. 2:17 — King James, and Amplified

Religion is popular these days; there is a lot of it going around. As is to be expected, there is also much preaching being done which purports to be true and sound; preaching that has allured myriads of followers and faithful adherents. That the vast majority of this preaching leaves something to be desired is not questioned by those that have seen the light. To many of us, it is rather alarming that men can build careers, pad bank accounts, and father great business enterprises through means of the proclaiming of the "Bible", as they would say. **It is to be received that the Word of God cannot be used truthfully to build financial empires and thriving business institutions.** Man LIVES "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). Further, "Every Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:16-17). **"Rightly divided"** (II Tim. 2:15), **the Word of God will produce godly men; men that have an interest in eternity and the glory of God.** It reproves, corrects, and instructs in righteousness. Contrary to much contemporary thinking, the Word of God is not a commentary on the sciences; it is not meant to interpret biological phenomenon in this temporal and mundane sphere. It is, rather, given to take the things of heaven — otherwise unknown to mortals — and transmit them to their understanding through the power and energy of the Holy Spirit.

A spiritual huckster, as I am using the term, is one that uses the Scriptures to build his own career or dream. His personal carnal interests are served by his usage of this sacred volume. Thus, we have men that have achieved resounding financial success for no other reason than their religious proclamations. However, it must be clear that they must needs "corrupt" the Word of God to achieve their aims; for the Scriptures simply do not serve that purpose when used in truth. Beloved Peter told of those who could not understand the writings of Brother Paul, and so "wrested them to their own destruction" (II Pet. 3:16). Such men are religious opportunists, and all must beware of them, lest they be ensnared by them.

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THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

When we speak of the "Old Testament" and the "New Testament", most people immediately think of the first 39 books of the Bible and the last 27 books of the Bible. Does it surprise you to know that this is not correct; that the Holy Spirit has not so employed these words. That this is a very important truth is seen in fact that much basic and weighty instruction is based upon the usage of these terms in the Scripture. Jesus talked about the "blood of the new testament" (Matt. 26:28; Mk. 14:24), the "cup of the new testament" (Lk. 22:20; I Cor. 11:25). Paul spoke of being a "minister of the new testament" (II Cor. 3:6). Christ is referred to as the "Mediator of the new testament" (Heb. 9:15). Does it sound proper to say that Jesus spoke of "The blood of the last 27 books of the Bible", or "The cup of the last 27 books of the Bible"? Was Paul a minister of "the last 27 books of the Bible"; or is Jesus the "Mediator of the last 27 books of the Bible"? When the Holy Spirit speaks of "transgressions" that were "under the old testament", does he mean that they were "under the first 39 books of the Bible"? While these questions may seem trite, they are not! **The key of understanding to the Scriptures and to God Himself, is an apprehension of the nature of the old and new testaments; what they are, how they differ, how they ministered.** It is for this reason that I once again devote a few words to the proclamation of the old and new testaments, endeavoring to clear away some of the theological rubbish that has so encumbered the hearts of honest seekers.

The subject of the old and new testament is dealt with at length in the third chapter of second Corinthians. It is there that we come into a broader understanding of the differences between the two, and the glorious superiority of the new over the old. First, let it be clear that the "old testament," the "first testament," "the law," and "Moses" are all synonymous terms. They denote God's covenant which centered about the Law, or the Ten Commandments, given to Israel "that every mouth might be stopped and all the world become guilty before God" (Gal. 3:19). A perusal of Galatians, Romans, and Hebrews, will verify this to your heart. The new testament, on the other hand, is a new covenant; a new means of approval in the eyes of God. Whereas the first testament was based upon man's achievement and fulfillment of the code of the Law, the new testament is based upon the free merit and grace of God. It is a **covenant of blessing** that is founded upon the satisfactory atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is declared in detail in Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:8-12; Hebrews 10:16-17. Its essential elements are a **changed heart, the personal knowledge of God, and the forgiveness of sins.** The only conditions of this covenant were met satisfactorily by the Lord Jesus Christ and hence it takes the form of a promise; "I will, I will. . . ." As a matter of fact, it is called "**the promise**" in Galatians 3:14, 17-19, 29.

Upon the reading of the real new testament, you will find that: 1. There are no commandments.

2. There are no conditions. 3. There are no agreements with man that are bilateral. 4. It is a revelation of the purpose of God for His people. 5. It is pictured as being thoroughly and completely effectual; "They shall be my people, and I shall be their God." These are the things in the mind of the Apostle when he wrote his wonderful letters.

The Difference In The Writing Of The Testaments

"Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart" (II Cor. 3:3). At this point there is a double reference to the writing of the Law, or the Ten Commandments; one to that awesome inscription with the finger of God in tables of stone (Ex. 31:18); one to that detailed writing of the commandments, together with their implications, by Moses in a book (Ex. 24:4). This was an **outward unchangeable writing.** It was true, but it was powerless. It could not alter a man's character; it could not make him want to do the will of God. **It was informative — nothing more.** It informed man of what he could not do, and was not intended to be a proclamation of what he could do. It was given to "stop" men's mouths, not open them; to slay his wicked works, not establish them; to uproot his confidence in himself, not to establish it. Because of this, the first testament was written outside of man; subject to his vision and his touch, and his intellectual scrutiny; but totally ineffectual as concerned the needful alteration of his character and nature. **It was not an appeal to man to change, but a revelation to man of the impossibility of moral change.** Man cannot change his own nature anymore than an Ethiopian can change the color of his skin or a leopard his spots (Jer. 13:23). The Law, or old testament, simply apprized man of this fact.

But the new testament is not on this wise; it is "new"; i.e., of another order or gender. It is not at all the same as the old or first testament. Instead of being written with ink, as was the law, it is written with the Spirit of the living God; i.e., like the ink became a part of the parchment, both being fused together, so the Holy Spirit of God is fused with man's spirit. Thus is it fulfilled; "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit" (I Cor. 6:17). Man's nature, in this case, is changed — changed into the likeness of His Maker. He is, in other words, made a "partaker of the Divine Nature" (II Pet. 1:4). By saying "the Spirit of the Living God", Paul declares the truth that we are made alive, like unto God. He is basically a **Living God**; in the New Testament, we become a **living people.** That is why it may be said; "They shall all know me. . . ." (Heb. 8:8-12) — it is because they have become alive with His Life! By saying that the New Testament is written in fleshly tables of the heart, the Lord is signifying that **the ramifications and implications of the Law are actually written into our nature.** So fundamentally is our nature altered in Christ Jesus that we are brought into a veritable agreement with the Mind of God. Thus we do not need any man to teach us; i.e., to give us detailed instructions about the "do's" and the "don't's" of the Law. That same

"anointing" which we receive abides in us, and teaches us how to "abide in Him" (I Jno. 2:20, 27). What a wonderful Testament is this New Testament! Now when the Lord says "Seek ye my face", our hearts cry out; "Thy face, Lord, will I seek" (Psa. 27:8).

There is, then, a basic difference in the writing of the testaments; the Old was written both with ink and within tablets of stone. The New is inscribed in our nature by the Spirit of God; its scope becoming an integral part of our very natures. Any testament which does not have this glorious distinction is not "New" but "Old" in the purest sense of the word.

The Difference In The Thing Ministered By The Testaments

"Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (II Cor. 3:6). We learn here that the new testament is "ministered", or administered to us. It is not an agreement, but a wonderful provision that is administered to our spirits. A change of heart, a personal knowledge of and acquaintance with God, and the forgiveness of sins are not earned or procured with diligent achievement; they are ministered to us. The thing that is ministered, too, is so different in its constitution. Moses ministered the first testament or covenant; It amounted to this: he told the people what God had said. He ministered "the letter." The "letter" was the "code" that was declared in the Law; the outline of those things that were permissible and those things that were not. However, the administration of this "letter" brought death. As it is written; "The letter killeth." This is no fault of the Law. The Law is just and good and holy (Rom. 7:12). The fact was, however, that **the nature that was reflected in the Law did not at all agree with the nature of the recipients of the Law.** It only pointed out to them their sinful inclinations and proclivities; it revealed that they were basically and fundamentally at variance with the Almighty. They did not agree with Him, think like Him, love Him, seek Him, or desire Him. In fact, they had "come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23), being altogether unlike Him. **Therefore, when the "letter" was ministered, it condemned and slew them, because it declared with wide mouth that they were at enmity with God, and "how can two walk together except they be agreed" (Amos 3:3).**

The New Testament, on the other hand, does not kill, but makes alive, for it is not a ministration of the "letter", but rather of the "spirit." **Rather than being merely informative, it is really an achievement; an achievement whereby God remakes man in the likeness of His only begotten Son,** (Rom. 8:29-30). In this case, the Lord takes the essential elements of the New Testament: 1. "I will put my laws in their minds." 2. "I will write them on their hearts." 3. "I will be to them a God." 4. "They shall be to me a people." 5. "They shall all know me, from the least to the greatest." 6. "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. 8:10-12). Taking these, through the Holy Spirit, **He ministers them to His people.** In

other words, He actually does **put** His laws in the mind, **write** them on the heart, **become** their God, they **become** His people, they **come** to know Him, and their sins are remembered **no more** — I say, that is really **achieved** in the ministration of the New Testament. It is not a matter of God informing us what must be done, then rewarding us for the doing of it. Oh no! In the New Testament we become a veritable work of God, for "we are **His workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10). In short, we are made alive by the ministration of the New Testament, whereas the ministration of the Old Testament accomplished our death within.

Now, there is a very wonderful difference in which we must all rejoice. God has made us alive through the ministration of the New Testament. Praise God!

The Difference In The Glory Attending The Ministration Of The Testaments

"But if the ministration of death . . . was glorious . . . how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. . . . For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious" (II Cor. 3:7-11). Observe, the Old Testament is referred to as the "ministration of death" in comparison with "the ministration of the spirit" (the New Testament). The Law killed, the "Promise" gave life! Observe, too, that the Old Testament is referred to as "the ministration of condemnation", while the New Testament is called "the ministration of righteousness." The Law, then, condemned and judged man unworthy of the fellowship of God, while the Promise declares man to be righteous and worthy of God's fellowship because of the merits and achievements of the Lord Jesus Christ; the "Lamb of God which **taketh** away the sin of the world."

Now, it is here declared that the first testament was attended with glory and splendor; so much so that Moses had to place a veil over his face when reappearing to the people after conversing with God (Ex. 34:33-35). That was a phenomenon such as had never been seen before; a man's face glowing beyond the brightness of the sun; so much that men could not even behold it. The "children of Israel" could not "stedfastly look" at the splendor which attended the giving of the Law, or the Old Testament. It was a great glory because it was a great Testament! It was a great glory because it was a great ministration! But the new testament is greater, and therefore it is attended with greater splendor and glory. Oh, it is not a physical glory that now attends the new testament and its ministration! Israel could not stedfastly look upon the face of the minister of the old testament. But oh how different is the new testament. **We make look with "open face"** (II Cor. 3:18) upon "**the glory of the Lord**" **without any fear of blinding.** Christ, Who is the "express Image of the Person" of God (Heb. 1:3) does not veil His face for our beholding. Rather, we are encouraged to behold Him; yea, God hath "commanded" 'the light to shine' in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of

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COMMENTARY ON PHILIPPIANS

By Richard Ebler

Chapter Three (cont.)

(v. 11, 12) "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."

At first sight verse eleven appears to be an exceedingly strange expression. Why does Paul speak of **attaining** unto the resurrection of the dead? Will not **all** of the dead be raised **unconditionally**? Both saints and sinners? Whether they like it or not? The answer, of course, is a resounding "Amen!" Jesus said "Marvel not at this: for the **hour** is coming, in the which **all** that are in the graves shall hear his (Christ's) voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the **resurrection of life**; and they that have done evil, unto the **resurrection of damnation**." All men will be raised in the **same hour**, but not all will be raised in the same condition nor will they all be raised to the same destiny. Paul is here speaking of his aspiration to attain unto the "resurrection of life." In another place our Lord said, "they which shall be **accounted worthy to obtain** that world, and the **resurrection from the dead**, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection" (Luke 20:35, 36).

As it commonly happens, the view which we have just drawn from several plain passages in the King James Version is also confirmed by those who are experts in the technicalities of the original Greek manuscripts. Lightfoot and many others take the view that our verse here in Philippians is better translated "the resurrection **from** the dead" rather than "the resurrection **of** the dead," and that when it is so used, the reference is invariably to the resurrection of the **blessed** dead. (See Luke 20:35 quoted above, and Acts 4:2). Therefore, Paul was looking forward to the end when he would be "perfect" (v. 12), having a glorified body, forever with the Lord.

"The verb 'attain' means to arrive at the end of a journey. It presents the figure of a pilgrimage." The way is long and the difficulties are many, but Paul is humbly determined "by any means" whatsoever to arrive safely at the resurrection from the dead and to stand before the Son of Man.

Nevertheless, Paul's main purpose here is not to comment on the resurrection itself, but rather to express his own dissatisfaction with his present state and his striving after perfection in hopes of exhorting the Philippians to do the same. Their spiritual pride was doubtless at the root of their divisions (see ch. 1:27, 2:2-4, 3:16, 4:2). Here Paul gently rebukes them by setting forth his own humble confession of imperfection and determination to press on. Surely if the great apostle felt a need to shun complacency and strive for perfection, how much more ought the Philippians to do so. They were far behind **him**. But the most advanced Christian is always the humblest. Thus Paul is also quick to acknowledge that Christ **first** laid hold of **him** at his conversion when he was "ap-

prehended" on the Damascus road and made **able** to strive to apprehend Christ, i.e., "win Christ" (v. 8).

Paul teaches here that apprehending Christ involves the effort of a lifetime. For this reason he uses the word "if" here and in other places as well, election notwithstanding: "If ye continue in the faith" (Col. 1:23); "if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end" (Heb. 3:14). The truth of grace does not do away with the necessity for striving to believe. We are now engaged in the "fight of faith." Let us demonstrate our faith to men and angels. Let us not sit back and **assume** we have it. We must show our faith by our works (James 2:17-26).

The truth of election, then, does not negate the fact of man's responsibility. In fact, we find that often when the apostles spoke of God's choosing some to salvation, they used it as an argument for energetic striving after holiness. Note II Peter 1:10, Col. 3:12, I Peter 1:2, II Tim. 2:19, Eph. 1:4, II Thess. 2:13-15.

It is interesting to notice the train of thought Paul follows in this verse and preceding verses. In verse seven he refers to his calling or conversion when he "counted" (past tense) his gain to be loss for Christ. In verse nine he speaks of his **justification** when he expounds the righteousness which is of God by faith. In verse ten he speaks of his **sanctification** when he mentions his fellowship of Christ's sufferings, the power of His resurrection, and of being made conformable to His death. Now he comes to **glorification**: "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." These topics are all in their proper order. We see how Paul's mind was carefully reasoning along bedrock principles here. Let us follow his example by staying close to the great foundational truths of Scripture in our meditations and ministrations!

WANTED

Those that are in quest of the Living God, who are not content with the traditional teachings that rob the spirit and leave the heart empty; those that desire and crave more than the sensual, more than the merely external, more than mere excitation. Such as this are our brethren, and we crave their fellowship and companionship. It may be that some of our readers have these same feelings. If this is the case with you, contact us at: 7903 Hendricks Place, Merrillville, Indiana. Telephone 219-1-769-5935.

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A NOTE FROM A DISGRUNTLED READER

From time to time we receive correspondence from those that are very much dissatisfied with THE WORD OF TRUTH publication. Such letters are highly illustrative of the spiritual ignorance that pervades religious circles. It is because of this that we offer such to our readers.

"Dear Sir: Please remove me from your mailing list for THE WORD OF TRUTH and THE BANNER. I would prefer that you preach and teach personal evangelism and eliminate the mental gymnastics."

Yours Because of Christ
John Miles Baker
San Clemente, Calif. 92672

I believe it is in order to comment on this letter, not because of any maliciousness in the heart, but because of the nature of its contents. Here is abundant evidence of the staggering influence of false religion upon the heart. You will observe that there is a preference for the **preaching** of "personal evangelism." To begin with, we are not altogether sure what the brother means by that phrase. It is not Scriptural at all; further, there is no similar terminology to be found in the Scriptures. When we read of "preaching" in the Word of God, the subject matter differs widely from the request given in the above letter. "The word of faith which we **preach**" (Rom. 10:8); "We **PREACH** Christ, and Him crucified" (I Cor. 1:23); "the Gospel, which I **PREACH**" (Gal. 2:2); "**PREACH** the word . . ." (II Tim. 4:2); "Philip **PREACHED** Christ to Samaria" (Acts 8:5); "He **PREACHED** Jesus to the eunuch" (Acts 8:25). We are, however, at a loss to find reference to **preaching** "personal evangelism"; and for that reason, we simply do not preach it. We have found in the Lord Jesus and His Father greater Subjects, more worthy of our attention and emphasis.

There are, of course, those that wonder why we speak so frequently against false emphases. It is because they militate against the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and we are set against such falsity. We are admonished to speak against sin, encourage righteousness, instruct in righteousness — but never to preach "personal evangelism." The reason; this is too conducive to flesh and the expression of flesh. It lends itself to institutionalism, pride, and unholy ambitions. But the crucifixion of sin within your members, the perfection of holiness in the fear of the Lord, the exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the proclamation of the good news that we have been reconciled to God (II Cor. 5:18ff) makes only for the glory of God. It cannot be exploited or turned into carnal advantages. We thank God for that, and therefore have set ourselves to emphasize only what God has emphasized in His Word: that emphasis being in ultimate subordination to the Lord of lords and King of kings.

A MEDITATION

So many times I rise and fall
like ocean wave sore tossed
Amidst the tumult of earth-life
all often seems but lost.
Yet still a light doth glimmer forth
by faith 'tis still perceived

WHICH CHURCH IS THE RIGHT CHURCH?

"Which church is the right church?" "With all of the confusion, I do not know where to go to church". "Is one church as good as another? Isn't there only one church? Which one of the many is it?" These, and similar questions, are often asked. Are they valid questions? Is there any answer to them? I suggest to you that **they are not valid questions!** They are not the sort of inquiries to which the Lord gives answers. In fact, they are the wrong questions! **The real question concerns God and His Christ, not churches!** Note the language of the Apostle, and the general tenor of his speech; ". . . we know an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many), but to us there is but one God, the Father, of Whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom are all things, and we by Him" (I Cor. 8:4-6). In contemporary circles, this would have stated something like this: "We know that every church is not good, as a matter of fact, one church is not as good as another. In the world there are many churches — many different denominations, and yet they are not all right. We of the true church know that there is but one church (even though there are many that call themselves churches in the world, whether of Roman or Protestant origin). Yet to us, there is but one church, one official external organism which is the custodian of the truth. All things come from that church, and she is the supreme good, and recipient of all gifts and graces."

You see, this is only a subtle diversion of Satan. **The issue is not the church, the restoration of the church, etc. The issue is God and Christ; that is the supreme theme, the supreme Truth upon which every soul must hang. The problem is divers gods, not divers churches; untrue gods, not untrue churches.** I would suppose that no one is more cognizant of the spiritual debauchery in the religion world than myself (having been a partaker of that systematic tower of confusion). I am discontent with organized religion as a whole; I find it to be thoroughly deficient, utterly abominable, and worthy only of ruin. **And yet, the issue is not religion, but the god of religion. Men are imperfect in their hearts' affections simply because the god that they have embraced is imperfect.** How much could we say on these things? The diverse sects have diverse gods, which is very illustrable. For instance, Catholicism worships not a God whose Grace is the only source of salvation, nor does the Christ that they profess to worship profess to have had earthly brothers and sisters. Rigid Calvinists cannot worship a God that calls for personal and rigorous responsibility, while placid Armenians cannot worship a God that elects men unto salvation and calls them in spite of their base nature and aside from their own merits. **You see, it is the god embraced that causes the difficulty.** If, therefore, all men were to embrace with their hearts the true and Living God, and the one and only Lord Jesus Christ, they should at once be "one", for God is one.

Salvation nearer by God's grace
than when I first believed.

FOOLISH MEN SOMETIMES SAY GOOD THINGS

From time to time, cultists and sectaries will say things that are good of themselves. Those that are easily deceived are often taken in by such words, and ultimately become participators in organizations that are actually in opposition to God and "the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus". I have noticed that many Christians are naive concerning false religion. When told that they often speak truth, they stand back in amazement. Lest their amazement, however, call upon them to reevaluate their view of false religion, and possibly even begin to condone it, let it be said that no religious body can be judged upon the basis of a single declaration. The whole scope of their emphasis must be weighed in the balances. Below are some quotations that will reveal the nature of the things of which I speak.

"We need to examine, not only what we personally believe, but also what is taught by any religious organization with which we may be associated. Are its teachings in full harmony with God's Word, or are they based on the traditions of men? If we are lovers of the truth, there is nothing to fear from such an examination. It should be the sincere desire of every one of us to learn what God's will is for us, and then to do it. —John 8:32". . . "Along with the doctrines of the 'Trinity', the immortality of the human soul, and a hellfire of torment, any other teaching or practice that goes contrary to God's inspired Word makes a religion as false and labels it as part of Babylon the Great." (Taken from "The Truth That Leads To Eternal Life", published by Watchtower Jehovah's Witnesses).

"At last the moment had come when the King took possession of the only Kingdom He would ever have upon this earth—the royal Kingdom of the Cross. Crowned not with the gold of Magi but with the thorns of a yet impenitent nature, He begins the royal procession to an empire which was no wider than a beam of wood, but from which to a dying thief He could promise a Kingdom which was His even before the foundations of the earth were laid. . . . And what did they think of the Man Whom they sat and watched? As the shadow of the cross fell upon their dice they joked, gossiped, and gambled the hours away; they engrossed themselves in their own favorite topics of conversation, in mutual banter, and trifling little games. Now and then they glanced up with curious interest. Once they looked up at Him as He promised pardon to a thief — but it was only a passing glance. Once again they gazed at Mary and wondered how anyone could have such a beautiful Mother, and then how the crucified could be even more beautiful than His Mother — but it was only a passing glance." — (From "The Eternal Galilee", by Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, Roman Catholic).

"To keep the commandments of our Master and follow His example is our proper debt to Him, and the only worthy evidence of our gratitude for all that He has done. Outward worship is not of itself sufficient to express loyal and heartfelt gratitude, since He has said, 'If ye love me, keep my commandments. . . . The individual must become an avid student of the Bible in conjunction with the writings of Mrs. Eddy.'" (Taken from Christian Science Sentinel).

Spiritual Hucksters

(From page 2)

Marks of the Corrupter

One that corrupts the Word of God is not "sincere" (single-hearted) Godward. He serves **other** interests. He has a position, a tradition, a creed to defend. His primary purpose in proclaiming the "Bible" is not to make the truth known, but to support a dogma, a doctrine or teaching, a creed, that he has embraced. Thus men turn to the Scriptures to support premillennialism, "once saved, always saved", "infant baptism", "healing", "tongues", etc. **The Scriptures are resorted to as proof of the position in the assumption that the position is truth.** However, any position that has not been embraced because, and only because, of its proclamation in the Word of God, must never be foisted off as truth — even though it may be. If I attempt to stuff the Word of God into a preconceived mold, I will surely "corrupt it"! If I have more devotion to a system, a doctrine, a church, a position, than I do to the God of heaven and earth, I will surely "corrupt" the Word of the living God! Many doctrines have sweet and melodious sounds to the ear; they seem true enough, and are heartily embraced for their logical presentation. However, the children of the King must "try the spirits . . ." (I John 4:1)! **The Scriptures are to be used for "doctrine" and if the "doctrine" embraced cannot be found clearly and evidently in the Scriptures, then it ought not be embraced; else the Scriptures will soon be "corrupted."**

There is always an ulterior motive in the heart of the "corruptor." He is building a church, a school, an educational system, a hospital, etc. — something other than souls for eternity. Earth always takes the precedence; earth in some form; matters of health, finances, education, etc., are basic, and spirituals are secondary. The seen is of great importance, and the unseen is seen as something other than fundamental. There is a great interest in personalities. Frequent references are made to personal achievements; attention is drawn to the proclaimer rather than the living Christ. Those that embrace the teaching of the corruptor are heard to speak infinitely more of him than of Christ Jesus the Lord. There is generally a lop-sided emphasis, thus ignoring the plain proclamation of the Spirit that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable . . ." Only those segments of the Word are used as are conducive to the propagation of the system. Thus we have one emphasizing soul-winning, another church buildings, another financial prosperity, another health of body, etc.

What I am saying is this; **that if the emphasis which we embrace is something other than that which is found in the Word of God itself, we shall ultimately be found corrupting the Scriptures.** We must remain free in our faith, free in our embracement of the Word, free to be jarred loose from false emphases. **We must hold to the Word of God tightly, and cling to personal observations concerning the Word lightly.** God nor His Word, nor His Blessed Son have been given to serve our personal purposes and aims. We have, rather, been created to serve and honor Him, and Him alone.

men's eyes; the glory of the new testament transforms men's hearts.

The Effects Of The Testaments

The old testament, because it proclaimed obligations that were contrary to man's nature, actually brought its recipients into hard bondage. It bound them to an order and system of spiritual ethics that was impossible for them to pull. They were yoked irrevocably to a Law with which they could not possibly agree within their hearts—and there is no harder bondage than this.

The new testament, on the other hand, sets man free from his carnal nature, bringing him to a place where he is no longer "debtor to the flesh, to live after the flesh" (Rom. 8:12). Being transformed within, there is now a liberty to do the will of God "from the heart" (Rom. 6:17). The commandments of God are no longer "grievous", praise the Lord! (I Jno. 5:3). They are no longer contrary to the heart! Wondrous transformation, indeed! The Apostle put it this way; "Now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (II Cor. 3:17); i.e., there is a true emancipation from bondage to the "rudiments of the World." You see at once, then, the wonderful difference in the effect of the testaments; the one brought into bondage, and the other released from bondage.

Conclusion

We must learn to treasure very dearly the new testament — not merely the new testament as men define it — but as God defines it, for it is the proclamation of a new and vital relationship to the Living God. It is the fulfillment of the promise of God concerning His work within His people — a work that was prompted by Himself alone, and therefore effectual!

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Who Are The Heathen?

(From page 2)

Many of them are highly religious people, even offering "vain repetitions" to the God of heaven (Matt. 6:17).

In view of these things, we conclude that the "heathen" are not merely the deprived people of the remote segments of the earth, but the majority of churchdom, the very country in which we live, the neighbors about whom we reside, and the fellows with whom we work; **in short — everyone that does not have the knowledge of God.** If a person is looking for a mission field, there is a very large one in the contemporary church, the contemporary job, the contemporary neighborhood. Do not be deceived by the religious promoters of "missions". Everyone that is ignorant of God IS a heathen, a Gentile, "not a people." As to their condition, we have it proclaimed in the Scriptures; "Wherefore, remember that in the time past ye were Gentiles . . . without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, HAVING NO HOPE and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:11-12). That describes the heathen — all heathen.

Now, see to it that you use this word properly. It will go a great way in clearing up some of the muddy theological waters that the sophists have given men to drink!

The Old And New Testaments

(From Page 4)

God in the face of Christ Jesus" (II Cor. 4:6). **Here, in the new testament, the purpose is to see the glory of the Lord, not to obscure it.**

The greatness of the glory does not refer so much to the visible manifestation or splendor as to the Subject that is shown forth. Too, the glory that was fused into Moses' face soon faded away like the splendor of the Law which it accompanied. As it is written concerning that glory; "For if that which was **done away** was glorious. . . . And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is **abolished**" (II Cor. 3:11, 13). The giving of the Law was attended with splendor — great splendor. However, it was a secondary splendor which matched the Law or Testament which came with it. Even as the Law was temporary, so was the splendor and glory that attended it temporary. Yet, even though it was temporary, yet was it so great, so bright, that the natural man could not gaze upon it.

The New Testament, however, is not a temporal thing. **It involves the eternal transformation of man; a total change which shall consummate when he is "like" the Lord Himself** (I Jno. 3:1-3). Here, in this Testament, we are given to behold the Lord God Himself — stedfastly. Not with mortal eyes, for mortal eyes cannot see Him. But with the eye of faith, given us by the Lord God Himself, we are given to see Him as He is. We are given an appreciation for His uncompromising holiness, His unwavering faithfulness, His inscrutable wisdom, His unfathomable love, His boundless mercy and grace! His eternal "power and Godhead" are expounded to our spirits in a way transcendent to all other manifestations! We have, in the New Testament, a Mediator (Heb. 9:15) that is altogether like ourselves in nature, yet altogether like God the Father also. This "man, Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 2:5-6) is set as a Subject before us; a Subject for our scrutiny and gaze. As we behold Him, we are instructed concerning the very nature of God. For the first time in our lives, we come to realize that God "is not a man"; that His Nature is unlike ours, that He does not think or act as we do; that all of His ways are "unsearchable and past finding out" (Rom. 11:33). The glory of that vision shall never fade! God shall never diminish! Christ shall never diminish! They, like the New Testament which they minister, are altogether unlike the glory that was upon Moses' face!

I would suppose that we might summarize the difference in the glories of the two covenants by saying this: **the glory of the old testament blinded**