

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

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING

There is a diversity of opinion abroad as to what is the most important thing; what constitutes the most vital aspect of "the faith." Many proclaim that "winning souls" is the most important thing, and therefore devote the burden of their intellectual and physical energies to this work. Others say that being filled with the Holy Spirit is the most important thing, and therefore direct their activities to this end (in both of these cases there is a preconceived notions of the definition of the aim - they are not measured by the Word of God.) Still others claim centralities like morality, social renovation, governmental structure, church autonomy, education, separation, service, etc. That there are great degrees of importance attached to all of these matters, we cannot honestly deny; but that they are central and the most vital we can deny - yea, emphatically deny! If we are going to emphasize anything, it must be the right thing and the most important thing!! *Everything* must revolve around that! I am speaking now of the involvement and activity of the saints in relation to importance. It is necessary to make this distinction because *it is only from our perspective that the terms important and unimportant have any relevance or significance at all. In the higher realm, where Deity sits enthroned, there are no such mundane distinctions. If we speak of important things, we speak from our vantage point, not God's.* It is our labors, our efforts, our expended energy with which we now concern and occupy ourselves.

Our Lord adjusted our senses and gave us proper perspective in His sentence to Martha of old, who had complained about the absence of her younger sister from the kitchen (Luke 10:40). "ONE THING IS NEEDFUL", declared our Lord (Luke 10:42). It was the "better part" which would not be taken away from those that preferred it to the occupations of earth! What activity was the Lord defending? That occupation is described in the following words; "And she had a sister called Mary, which also *sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word*" (Luke 10:39). She was being oriented for heaven, suited for glory, fitted for that city which hath foundations! She was involved with eternal things. Like Jesus, when but a lad, she was "about" her "Father's business" (Luke 2:49). This, Jesus declared, was the "one needful thing"; that without which no man can do! *The steady graduation of the spirit "from glory to glory" (II Cor. 3:18) - that is the most important thing!* Nothing actually counts but this. If I have not, at the end of my life, been oriented for heaven, if my spirit has not been adequately prepared to imbibe the presence of the Lord, my life has been futile and vain. There have actually in such a case, been no *real* accomplishments.

Speaking of these things David wrote; "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of

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The Word of Truth

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my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple" (Psa. 27:4). Things were forfeited, hardships were endured, new values obtained, earth denounced, and incessant inner conflicts experienced in the quest of that hope. Nothing was important but this - to dwell in the house of the Lord "all the days" of his life. What about you, reader? What is your quest; where are your values? Is heaven or earth in your eye? Can you take up the same refrain that the beloved brother Paul did; **This one thing I do**, forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14). The things that he lost he counted but "dung" (Phil. 2:8), nothing more than refuse in comparison to the glory that was set before him.

O that men would get involved with this glorious pursuit in our day! Occupied with a quest for glory; determined to be among the number that stand upon the sea of glass with "the harps of God" (Rev. 15:2). Purity, holiness, steadfastness, fervency, diligence, honesty of heart - all proceed from this single aim, elsewhere called a "single eye" (Matt. 6:22). Did not our Lord state that we should "seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matt. 6:33)? Admittedly, you cannot build a religious organization on such activity, but what matter is that! It is your personal conformity to the image of God's Son (Rom. 8:29) that counts - nothing else! Any efforts that are conducive to that end are proper and profitable, and any that are not are secondary, to say the very least.

Most people involved in church activities are sadly ignorant of these things, and thus their lives are lived in virtual alienation from God, although they are characterized by much religious motion. Somehow, however, the routine matters of their lives are never really affected, never enlivened, never altered, never impregnated with a consciousness of the Lord's Presence. The continued emphasis, for instance, of "fundamentalism" is **output** - yet there is no provision made for real input'. People are constantly attempting to supply

from a dry well; to give out of an empty heart. The result is that great swelling numbers are being tabulated on earth, while the roster in heaven fails to reflect the same figures. Little of God's thoughts are being imbibed, and Divine insight is not being enjoyed. Men continue to think as men, act as men, contemplate as men, and move as men - they do not talk by faith! So what is the purpose of their religion. It has not changed the course of their life heavenward. O, to be sure, the course has been changed. They do talk different, act different, go different places, and do different things. But in their hearts they are still rooted to the earth - they are unable to claim "the mind of Christ" (I Cor. 2:16), and can only be guided by detailed instructions, having not "the manner of the kingdom" in their hearts. **The very results that these activities have yielded - that of puny, skinny spirits - is indicative of their basic ungodliness.** If it is countered that men are to speak for God, we readily acknowledge and confess it! **But he who lives in the bosom of God cannot keep his mouth shut; he will find a "fire in his bones" burning so incessantly that he will not be able to contain and must speak to be refreshed** (Psa. 39:3; Job 32:20).

As you read the words of our Lord and His Apostles and prophets, there will be no doubt as to what is to be your sphere of activity - the main objective of your life. Jesus spoke of "seeking", "asking", "knocking", "abiding", "building", and "praying." Faith, hope, love, obedience - these are urged upon us with great fervency - **INPUT!** We admonished to aspire to have heaven in our hearts, God in our thoughts, and glory in our eye. As for the apostles of the Lamb, they urged personal piety and holiness, higher aspirations, the crucifying and mortification of the flesh together with its affections and lusts "running with patience the race that is set before us," enduring hardness as a good soldier, etc. (Jno. 15:1-3; Matt. 7:7; Matt. 7:24-25; Luke 18:1ff; II Cor. 7:1; Heb. 12:14; Col. 3:1-3; Gal. 5:24; Col. 3:5; Heb. 12:1-2; II Tim. 2:3). It is personal, brother - personal. **You are the one to whom the Scriptures are directed; the exhortations, the summons, the wooings, the admonitions!** Make these matters for another person and you miss the point of the witness! As the Holy Spirit put it elsewhere; "Take heed unto **thyself** and unto the doctrine, and **continue** in them, for in so doing thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee" (I Tim. 4:16). In a word, the sum and substance of the Word of God is that we "Seek the Lord, if haply we might find Him" (Acts 17:27). That, dear reader, is the "bounds of our habitation" (Acts 17:26) which have been set by Jehovah God Himself. Occupy them eagerly, and be not deterred by those who speak of things that they know not!

—o—
I wonder how much anguish we cause the Lord simply because we do not know the Scriptures.

—o—
It is difficult to preach to a people that are as much a part of their church as the cornerstone, and as hard.

Jesus Christ—Creator, Sustainer, And End

“Who is the Image of the Invisible God, the Firstborn of every creature; for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist” - Colossians 1:15-17

To understand Christ; that is the chief aim of the intellect or mind. To apprehend Christ; that is the chief aim of the heart! To rely implicitly upon Christ; that is the chief aim of our strength. Therefore “the doctrine of Christ” (II Jno. 9) is the fundamental doctrine; the expounding of His Person, purpose, and mind - that is to be the substance of preaching and teaching. **Nothing may properly be divorced from Him, nor is any aspect of created things to be viewed in separation from Him.** Actually, nothing is of any true significance that is not seen as originating, maintained, and working toward the glory of, Jesus Christ. Further, the purpose of the “doctrine of Christ” of which we speak, is many-fold: (1. To properly instruct us concerning the nature of God. (2. To lift our minds away from ourselves. (3. To comfort the hearts of strivers-for-glory. (4. To urge upon us a holy emulation of His Person and attributes. It is to be lamented that so little real emphasis is put upon Christ today. The church-world, or worldly church, has been caught up in things and teachings that are expressly designed and perpetrated for the development and maintenance of denominational lines and fences. The tents of the sect are sought to be enlarged, and therefore the Person of Christ has no real place in the program. But, blessed be God, He still reigns over all, and blessed are those that see it and proclaim it!

The Image Of The Invisible God

It is a most remarkable condensation of grace that an invisible God would permit us to have an “Image” of Himself. Jesus is elsewhere called the “express image of God” (Heb. 1:2). **Apart from Christ, therefore, God is thoroughly invisible; not only materially, but intellectually and spiritually.** There is no possible way to comprehend God the Father apart from a personal confrontation and fusion with the Lord Jesus Christ, His “only begotten, full of grace and truth” (Jno. 1:14-17). **He that would truly see God must fasten his eyes upon the manhood of Christ Jesus,** for therein is God the Father revealed. This is the “mystery of godliness” that is so profound; that “God was manifest in the flesh” (I Tim. 3:16). God, then, made manifest His nature and character in “the man Christ Jesus” (I Tim. 2:5). It did please the Father “that in Him should all fulness dwell” (Col. 1:19); yea, “the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in Him bodily” (Col. 2:9). **In Jesus, God expounded Himself expressly and in detail.** Our Lord’s life on earth demonstrated the mind, the purpose, and the will of God. His reaction to the problems of life, the Law, the views of men, the attacks of

Satan, the turmoil of society, the temptations of faith, etc., all displayed the Divine Mind. His reactions were the reactions of Deity! As we study them in the Spirit and come to comprehend them by faith, we appropriate the knowledge of God - and that is the intent of their communication from above. Because Jesus is “the image of God” (II Cor. 4:4), it is His work to declare, in that image, the Father’s Name or nature. Therefore did He pray on the eve of His sacrifice; “O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee; but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent me. **And I have declared unto them Thy Name, and WILL declare it:** that the love wherewith Thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them” (John 17:25-26). The clear teaching of this text is that **apart from the instruction of the Lord Jesus we are neither possessors of God’s love or of Christ.** Men cannot even aspire to the knowledge of God on their own, to say nothing of acquiring it. As the beloved brother John put it; “We know that the Son of God is come and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life” (I John 5:20). As the “Image of God”, therefore, not only does the Lord Jesus bear the responsibility and peculiar ministry of giving an understanding of God, but all who are untaught by Him neither know God nor have eternal life. **We therefore conclude that all who remain basically ignorant of God, His nature and His purpose, and who are unaware of the glory of eternal life, have not really witnessed “the image of the invisible God”, neither, indeed, have been “taught by Him” (Eph. 4:20-21).**

The Firstborn Of Every Creature

In the identification “Firstborn of every creature (or “creation”)”, we receive a lesson in perspective - one that is incalculable in its effect upon the spirit. Many, stumbling at this verse, have concluded that Christ was a created being, and really not “one” with God the Father. But this is a blasphemous conclusion, for Christ, before entering the “body” that was “prepared” for Him (Heb. 10), “counted it not robbery to be on equality with God” (Phil. 2:6) - i.e., thought it not a thing to be grasped at. He is further called God’s “First-begotten” in Hebrews 1:6; not from the standpoint of history; but from the Divine standpoint. Man is so prone to be an historian, to think of things in terms of time, that he must be constantly apprised of the fact that God does not so think. With the Lord “one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (II Pet. 3:8). **As the “Firstborn of every creature”, our Lord stands as the “Inheritor of all things” (Isa. 65:9);** He fills the position of rightful Steward of all - praise the Lord. But, this is viewed from the beginning, not from the end. When men receive the birthright, they do so because it already exists, and they have been born into a position to receive what already is. But this is not so with our Savior. He is “the **Beginning** of the creation of God” (Rev. 3:14). He stood eternally as the Inheritor of what was to be—not of what was already! This, therefore, does not teach us that Christ is a part

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of God's creation - God forbid. It rather sets before our minds, in lowly language, that before God had ever conceived, so to speak, of a creation, He had conceived of the expression of His Person — "the Word", which was "in the beginning" (John 1:1). Christ, as the "express image of God" is His expression. Our heavenly Father was set upon manifesting Himself; upon making Himself known. He is so great, so magnanimous, that He desires to project the magnitude of His Person to other intelligences. First and primary, therefore, is the "Image", or projection of His Person; after that comes the creation that will perceive it!

All creation, therefore, derives its reason for being created from "the Word" - created by Him to behold and enjoy God. Forever purge from your heart that evil conception that Christ Jesus was an afterthought in the mind of God. He was not "thought up" after men had fallen, or after that God had perceived that man would fall! He is "before all things" (Col. 1:17); before their conception, before their creation, before their recognition in the mind and purpose of the Father. The Divine order is not; world, man, Christ; rather, it is Christ, man, world. **First was Christ, the Image or revelation of God's High Person; then was man to whom the Image was to be conveyed; then was the world, set, as it were, for an arena in which the whole scheme of redemption and revelation of God was to be enacted. O, that more were given this heavenly perspective. Indeed, they would soon find the thorough inadequacy of the shallow religion of earth, and the thirst-quenching satisfaction of that Gospel which comes from above!**

By Him Were All Things Created

Observe that there is no limitation on Christ's creation - "**all things**". Whatever, therefore, is not eternal in its essence had its origin with Christ. Being made according to Divine specification "all things" function in strict accordance with the will

of God - which gave them birth in the first place. Because of this situation, there is, technically speaking, no real disorder in the universe. To put it another way, **nothing operates apart from the "eternal purpose" of God** (Eph. 3:11). While this may produce some difficulties for the theological sophisticate, it is a great source of comfort to those who "walk by faith and not by sight" (II Cor. 5:7). I find it invigorating to my spirit to acknowledge the truth of a Sovereign in control of this entire realm in which I find myself. For some time I labored under the misapprehension that there was not a common and Divine Originator of "**all things**", and under such misapprehension I found myself continually baffled by sense and time. How refreshing it is now to "know the truth" (Jno. 8:32) and thus experience freedom from that delusion. My Lord Jesus Christ is not only, therefore, the expression of God's Person, but **the whole creation was made by Him as a further projection of that otherwise invisible God.**

The truth is, then, that apart from Christ, nothing created holds any true significance. He alone created them because He alone knew the great purpose and design of Jehovah, and therefore made all things in strict conformity with that purpose. Let none doubt the fact of His creatorship; it is continually declared in the Word; "All things were made **by Him**: and without Him was not anything made that was made" (Jno. 1:3); "But to us there is . . . one Lord Jesus Christ **BY** whom are all things" (I Cor. 8:6); "And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things **by Jesus Christ**" (Eph. 3:9); ". . . His Son . . . **by whom** also He made the worlds" (Heb. 1:2). I gather then, that this is to be a primary point of our meditation; indeed, if it is, we shall constantly experience such freedom of thought and heart as is not found within the hoary walls of that revered Babylon! Here, indeed, is a fundamental - "**all things were made by Him.**" If, then, I seek to understand then, I must come into fellowship with their Maker, for He alone knows their purpose, their function, their very reason for existence. Let us not "abuse the world" (I Cor. 7:31), using it as though it were to last forever, or as though it were meant to enamor the hearts of the people who dwell upon it. Its purpose is higher and holier than that, and it must always - I say always - be seen as the offspring of our Savior, made in harmony with an eternal and unending purpose. I perceive in my spirit that the person that walks in true unity with Christ will find himself a proper steward of the world which was created by Christ; not caught up in its temporal throes, but realizing that "the fashion of this world passeth away" (I Cor. 7:31ff).

Two Orders Of Creation

Let us not be guilty of limiting the Lord - great Creator that He is! Man is so prone to view only visuals - to receive into his scope of understanding and perception only those things that are tangible. But let us once and for all have done with this fallacy - it is wrong. Here is the truth - "visible and invisible." Our Lord, then, made both the seen and the unseen; the sensible and the insensible; the tangible and the intangible. **There are two orders of created reality; the apparent and**

the unapparent, and both orders were brought into existence by the Lord Jesus Christ. But men, in contemplating this assertion, will invariably think as men. They think of visibles as things seen—wood, earth, and stones; and things unseen as atoms, protons, etc. But Paul is higher in his reasoning than that! He is not proclaiming the origin of mere impersonal phenomenon or expounding the nature of the universe. Paul is caught up in the matter of rule and authority. He speaks of “thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers”. **The reason for the Apostle dealing with this matter is because here is where most of our difficulties, if not all of them, lie.** Authorities and powers and our response to them - that is what often produces the situations of spirit which we experience.

Speaking of earthly authority, the Holy Ghost witnesses; “There is no power but of God” (Rom. 13:1). While “flesh” cannot receive it, **God alone possesses true or inherent authority.** It is only, therefore, under His auspices that any evidential authority may be exercised. This is seen in the experience that our Lord had with that wicked Pontius Pilate. You will recall that when Pilate began to speak of the authority which he possessed, our Savior replied; “Thou couldest have no power at all against me, **except it were given thee from above**” (John 19:11). The truth of the Divine manipulation of all earthly authority is proclaimed frequently in the Scripture in order to cement it to our understanding. “He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory; for the pillars of the earth are the Lord’s, and He hath set the world upon them” (I Sam. 2:8); “He changeth times and seasons: He removeth kings and setteth up kings” (Dan. 2:21); “. . . the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will, and setteth up over it the basest of men” (Dan. 4:17). Visible magistrates, then, are representatives of God’s good-pleasure, whether we are able to receive and perceive it or not. Though often their hearts are filled with iniquity, yet they do faithfully execute the counsels of the Lord although their understanding is divorced from them. As it is written; “The wrath of man shall praise Thee, and the remainder shalt Thou restrain” (Psa. 76:10). Furthermore, all levels of earthly power were created by, are sustained by, and work for the good of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our understanding may well fail to grasp this truth firmly, but that does not alter the matter one whit. See then that you are not to speak “evil of dignities” (II Pet. 2:10; Jude 8) as those apostates of old, for they are under the Lord’s control - express and minute control! Let no religious zealot drag you into the quagmire of political criticism. It is not wise, to say the least!

But the Apostle mentioned a higher form of power and authority - that which is “invisible.” There are visible thrones and invisible thrones; visible dominions and invisible dominions; visible principalities and invisible principalities; visible powers and invisible powers. **It is the invisible that rules the visible. It is true that behind every visible power and rule, there is a Divinely delegated power and rule.** The wicked segment of these powers are our real foes; “for we wrestle not

against flesh and blood, but against **principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places**” (Eph. 6:12). These unseen enemies exercise great authority over the “inhabiters of the earth” (Rev. 12:12), but **they are, nevertheless, subordinate authorities.** They cannot extend themselves one inch beyond the will and the purpose of their Omnipotent Creator. We fear them not - not because their power is not great, but because they are subject to the “Captain of our salvation” (Heb. 2:10) who has been made “the Head over all things to (for the benefit of) the church” (Eph. 1:22). On the other hand, and in contradistinction to wicked spiritual hosts, the “holy angels” (Mark 8:38), elsewhere called “elect angels” (I Tim. 5:21), are our “ministers” (Heb. 1:13-14), sent to serve those who are the “heirs of salvation”. These are our “fellow-laborers unto the Kingdom of God,” joyful servants of the most high, executing the express will and counsel of our elder brother, Christ Jesus the Lord.

Each of these “invisible” authorities exercise dominion over a specific part of God’s Kingdom - and that for a specific purpose. **Because they were “made by” Christ, they are subject to Him, whether willingly (the elect angels) or unwillingly (the fallen angels).** **The primary difference between the blessed and the cursed is, of course, in this matter of willingness.** But it is important for the child of the King to realize that whether willingly or unwillingly, **all authorities execute the will of the Lord Jesus Christ, their Creator and Head.** If one can rise high enough, by faith, **our adversaries have actually been created by the Lord to develop our strength, perception, and faith.** This is by deliberate and Sovereign creation, for **Divine purpose cannot be divorced from creation!**

By Him All Things Consist

By the Lord Jesus Christ all things “consist”, or are “held together.” Worlds would go spinning out of their course were it not for His controlling hand. Evil and wicked hosts would execute their full evil intent were it not for the government of Christ - for “the government is upon His shoulder” (Isa. 9:6ff). If our Lord Jesus was not active in the manipulation and control of the Kingdom there would be total and complete chaos. All order would collapse, and it would be as “in the beginning” - “without form and void” (Gen. 1:1ff). None would ever be saved, for it requires “power over all flesh” and “all power in heaven and earth” to “give eternal life to as many as have been given” to Christ (John 17:1-2). **With this single purpose in mind, the entire created universe or cosmos is held together and perpetuated.** “In the fullness of times” God shall “gather into one all things in Christ” both things “which are in heaven” and “things which are on earth” (Eph. 1:10). **That is the aim of the creation - to provide an arena in which this grand drama of redemption may be executed.** Because of the inherent nature of things, a Divine and Omnipotent Lord must hold things together until that full purpose is realized, for **there is no cooperation from creation without sustaining power; no purposeful contribution without this holding together by the**

(Please turn to page 12)

Commentary On Philippians

By Richard Ebler

Chapter Two (vs. 1, 2) "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind."

Paul opens this chapter with the expression, "If there be." He is referring to the certain existence of spiritual realities which every true saint has tasted of in their experience; namely, consolation in Christ, comfort of love, and fellowship of the Spirit. He holds them out as enticements to stimulate the Philippians to strive for unity, because in an atmosphere of harmony these spiritual blessings can be more easily cultivated and enjoyed. Paul knows that as long as the saints are still here below in Satan's territory, dwelling in corrupt bodies in a wicked, spiritually defiling world, their experience of God's richest spiritual blessings will merely be "in part" (I Cor. 13:9). Yet these blessings which at times produce "joy unspeakable and full of glory" are like delicious bait dangled before them, which, when striven for, will automatically bring about a glorious "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3).

This is much more than a mere fleshly agreement in a formal creed or church tradition, but is an inward apprehension of spiritual realities. Pursuit of these things evidences a wholesome "spiritual selfishness" by which our hunger is satisfied, our thirst for righteousness is quenched, and our reward is obtained. God has constructed us both spiritually and physically so that in our right mind we seek our own betterment, profit, and enjoyment. Thus Paul gave them powerful motives for seeking unity.

Some think that Paul may have been requesting that the Philippians bestow all of these blessings upon himself by their achievement of unity among themselves, so having mercy upon him who longed over them. This would fulfill his joy and be his consolation while in prison; their love would comfort him; his soul would be enabled to enjoy richer fellowship from the Spirit of God; and their compassionate mercy showed unto him in this matter would not be forgotten by the apostle.

It is a legitimate goal to strive to maintain one's spiritual joy in the Lord; in fact, it is commanded (Phil. 4:4). It was not only the goal of Paul (Phil. 2:2; Philemon 20; II Tim. 1:4), but was held forth as such by Jesus (John 15:11). Paul mentions joy so much in this epistle that he closes it with instruction on how to obtain it (Phil. 4:4-9).

Here we see how Paul's spiritual vision gave him proper values. He appears to have little concern about his own personal welfare in the flesh while shut up in prison with his life threatened, yet none of this prevented him from rejoicing wholeheartedly if he could only see that it was well with the churches. It would have been worse than cruel for the Philippians to torture the mind of this holy man of God by not ending the disagreement among themselves. The trouble in the church seemed to center around two women in the

assembly, Euodias and Syntyche (Phil. 4:2), weaker vessels who needed to learn their proper office of silence and humility. Knowing that the importance of unity cannot be over-emphasized among fellow soldiers who are battling against the world, the flesh, and the devil for their very lives, Paul tenderly exhorts them to mutually cherish harmony among themselves as the best defence against the false teachers, the concision, who were near at hand to deceive and divide (Phil. 3:2). He could have used his paternal authority to demand respect from them as his sons, but knowing that he was dealing with sensitive saints, he was ready to assume this character for their sake.

Some have rendered "consolation" to read "exhortation," as in Acts 13:15; I Thess. 2:3 and I Tim. 4:13. Then the meaning would be "If an exhortation by the authority of Christ has any weight with you, and if His inner presence has a very stimulating and exhorting influence about it, fulfill ye my joy . . ." But the best translation is probably "consolation" which is inevitably and justly given as a reward for suffering in this life. It is now received as "strong consolation" (Heb. 6:18) and will endure into eternity where it will blossom and prove to be "everlasting consolation" (II Thess. 2:16). This is that meat which perishes not but endures unto life eternal (John 6:27).

The "comfort of love" springs out of our perception of God's "everlasting love" (Jer. 31:3) which provokes us to love Him and one another, thereby producing great comfort. If it is rendered "persuasion of love" (ASV, margin), then the expression becomes a good companion to the preceding possible phrase, "exhortation in Christ."

A "fellowship of the Spirit" is a fellowship "with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ" (I John 1:3), and carries with it all the experiences and fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22, 23). It is "of," or rather, "from" the Spirit which originates and sustains it. They were partakers of a common inner life and were bound to promote it in one another. This Spirit of life is poured by the Father upon Christ the anti-type of Aaron in Psalms 133:1-3 where the ointment flowed down to the various members of the body, even to the "skirts of the garment."

"Bowels" speaks of the seat of the feelings of compassion, while "mercies" are the feelings of compassion themselves. This atmosphere in an assembly is conducive to unity.

Concerning the last four expressions, "the apostle's earnestness leads him to dwell on the idea of unity, clothing the one thought again and again in different words." The sum is this, that they be united in heart and mind, i.e., with mutual love and agreement in doctrine. The second two expressions repeat the first two, only in opposite order.

It would seem staggering that the apostle would exhort them to think alike, but such is necessary and also possible when men are humble enough to take the Scriptures as they stand without making them secondary to a preconceived church tradition of human conception which requires that

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Big Words

From time to time we hear from readers that object to the size of the words that are sometimes used in THE WORD. The objection is raised that the Bible is in plain language that all can understand, and thus the maudlin cry rises that we ought to use simple and plain speech so that all can understand. To begin with, we cannot believe that one who so speaks is altogether honest in his evaluation. It rather seems to reflect a certain laziness of mind and spirit that is quite contemptible. Furthermore, it evidences a pathetic lack of familiarity with the Scriptures themselves. Those who object to using a dictionary and other study helps from time to time to assist them in the understanding of literature, have certainly never read the Bible with much enthusiasm or regularity. For instance, the following words are in the Scriptures, and no apology is offered by the apostles for their inclusion in holy writing, neither, indeed, is an attempt made to explain them; "Lasciviousness" (Mark 7:22; II Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 4:19), "concupiscence" (Rom. 7:8; Col. 3:5; I Thess. 4:5), "rereward" (Num. 10:25; Josh. 6:9; I Sam. 28:2); "surfeiting" (Luke 21:34), "surmisings" (I Tim. 6:4), "seditions" (Gal. 5:20), "emulations" (Gal. 5:20), "schism" (I Cor. 12:25), "scrabbled" (I Sam. 21:13), "discomfiture" (I Sam. 14:20), "dissimulation" (Rom. 12:9; Gal. 2:13), "contrariwise" (II Cor. 2:7; Gal. 2:7), "artificer" (Gen. 4:22; Isa. 3:3), "necromancer" (Deut. 18:11), "augment" (Num. 32:14), "bdellium" (Gen. 2:12; Num. 11:7), "chrysoprasus" (Rev. 21:20), "deceivableness" (II Thess. 2:10), "feignedly" (Jer. 3:10), "genealogies" (I Chron. 9:1), "superfluity" (James 1:27), "impediment" (Mark 7:32), "implacable" (Rom. 1:31), "insurrection" (Ezra 4:19; Psa. 64:2; Acts 18:12), "shamefacedness" (I Tim. 2:9), etc.

Now it is evident to but the casual observer of Scripture that this is only an infinitesimally small portion of such words that may be found in the Bible. We cite them merely to show that the Holy Spirit was completely unaware of the advantage of "sixth grade words", nor do we believe that our bigoted friends find these words easy to understand. For those that are true students of God's "record" (I Jno. 5:10), these are familiar terms, but they did not become so without some effort and diligence in the matter of study and deliberate perusal. Let those that take up the Word rejoice that the Lord summons them to higher thought patterns, where thoughts may become more concise, more meditative, more meaningful. There is no virtue in stupidity or in mental laziness, nor does the heavenly Father approve of it - especially when means are at our disposal to increase our learning. Our thoughts will be as deep and profound as is our language and knowledge of words.

We, therefore, make no apologies for the nomenclature that is found in THE WORD OF TRUTH, but rather recommend to our readers those study habits that are conducive to the development of a good and sound mind. We are to seek after wisdom and knowledge, digging for it as for precious jewels. May none be discouraged in this most holy work!

Words Of Reminder

Golden gilded clouds are spun up high
above the darkness of the earth,
where men in squalor deign to live
and make their brief abode.

Up high, I say, where by the spir't of faith
I see things in the light of God
around the rainbow-circled Throne
with cherubims and saints.

Within the glory of such beauty rare
the clouds that often hang o'erhead
are gilded with a prospect bright
that all will work for good.

My steps directed by Almighty God
lead ultimately unto the place
built of the Lord for chosen ones
delivered from fierce foe.

So hope thou heart of mine cast down;
look not on hanging clouds so dark
which circle o'er your life so brief.
There's mercy yet for thee!

Think not impressions wrought on thee are right;
Not infinite art thou, but made;
an offspring now of Deity,
yet subject unto Him.

Trust God and wander not about, I say,
traverse by faith, and sight abhorred.
God's testimony thou canst trust;
in faithfulness He speaks
to cheer thee with his faithfulness
midst faithless men and beasts
whose hearts are full of grease,
who foam out their own shame.

The above words were penned during one of my fiercest trials, and I have related them in order to your comfort; that you might know that the same afflictions that you experience are "accomplished in your brethren that are in the world" (I Pet. 5:9). It must be understood by the faithful, that we have been called to a life of suffering (Phil. 1:29; I Thess. 3:4; I Pet. 2:20-21). While Babylon does not bother to tell its adherents these truths, we shall be faithful to our calling to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance (I Pet. 3:1). **We have been called into conflict with the world and the world order;** summoned, as it were, by Omnipotence to experience the struggle of the spirit-world; to taste of the victory that was wrought by our Lord Jesus Christ over all evil hosts (Col. 2:15). The opposition of the flesh, the world, and the Devil - that is the life into which we have been called! The experience of inward struggles and the gnawing lusts of the flesh, together with fears, perplexities, and pressings on every side - that is our portion, and let us not shrink from it (II Cor. 7:5; II Cor. 4:8). We are not to be confounded by these spiritual confrontations, but are to take courage in the fact that if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him (II Tim. 1:12). It is very true that often God's children are confounded because of the atrocious and unconscionable assaults that they are brought to know. **But their confoundment only comes be-**

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Arise

These are crises times in which we live - times that call for courageous hearts and increasing faith. Satan is unleashing a gigantic attack against the church, and the calculated effect is designed to cause the "love of many to wax cold" (Matt. 24:12). Social upheavals that, just ten years ago, were transcendent to the imagination are all about us. The god of science has reared its hoary head to entice myriads to the kingdom which can be shaken. Morality is on a rapid wane, plummeting to all the time lows - some even blatantly asserting that there really is no such thing as morality at all. Crime is defended and the criminal is treated as though he were a poor deprived pauper to be pitied - one that is maladjusted due to the abuses of his fellows. Youth continue to spit into the face of authority while demanding equal authority and voice with the hoary heads of the wise, whose thoughts were moulded in the crucible of decades of experience. The literary and entertainment world now dwells upon shameful matters, glorying in what the Lord has commanded to be covered, and speaking more as the inarticulate swine than one who bears the image of God. In his quest to build a contemporary tower of Babel, man has polluted the air, contaminated the water, and defiled the land. To dieters he has given drinks and foods that will not produce fat but will possibly produce cancer. For sensual couples that know not the real purpose of life, the birth control pill is offered which makes child birth impossible, but tumors probable. Sleeping pills, stimulative pills, diet pills, weight gaining pills - all offered to adapt men and women to a swift course of destruction. On top of all of this the Babylonish church offers spiritual bafoonery for reality, pseudo-tranquility for the peace of God, and organizational activities for faith. The truth is held in contempt, current events are the theme of sermonic dissertations that are presented to pacify the people and attract the disinterested. Sin is condoned, and the world's philosophy is wine and dined. What shall the end of these things be?

During these seemingly calamitous times, the people of God must exert themselves more than they ever have before - shining as lights in the midst of this crooked and perverse nation (Phil. 2:15). They must strive with all the power within them to "be steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (I Cor. 15:58), sowing incessantly to the spirit, and not to the flesh (Gal. 6:7-8), not being weary in well doing, knowing that they shall reap in due season if they faint not (Gal. 6:9). By "patient continuance in well doing", we are to seek for glory and honor and immortality (Rom. 2:7). This is no time for those that have put their "hand to the plow" to "look back" (Luke 9:62). **If Satan is intensifying his attacks, then certainly the "saints of the most High" (Dan. 7:25) ought to increase their vigilance and perseverance.** The "whole armour of God" (Eph. 6:13) - that is the need of the hour! Let all "redeem the time" seeing that "the days are intensely evil" (Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5). There is no

time for sloth and indifference, for indolence and compromise! Let those things forever be put behind us while we mortify the flesh, crucifying it together with the affections and lusts thereof (Gal. 5:24). It is those who, through times of crises as this "endure", shall at last be "saved" (Matt. 24:13; Mark 13:13); those who stand the test of persistent gnawing, insidious pressures from the world and its order.

Perhaps you are one of those spiritual sluggards that is contributing to the general deterioration of the church. Your Bible is closed, you forsake the assembling of yourself together with other saints (Heb. 10:25; Mal. 3:16-17), and live in a general aloofness from God. What can we say of you, but that you are most certainly our enemy in that condition. If your attitude is right, then we have sold ourselves for nought. If your stand prevails, we ourselves shall be cast into perdition after having suffered the greatest humiliation. Your very life militates against everything we long for, everything we fight for! If you are right in your bent of life, then God has surely lied to us, and we are of all men the most foolish! You see, being persuaded in our heart, and by the "faith of God's elect" (Titus 1:1) that "God is true and every man a liar" (Rom. 3:4), we have no recourse but to fight you and your untenable position of sloth! To wage relentless war against you, lest we ourselves are damned by being caught up in your contemptible rebellion against the most High. Your whole spectrum of values is wrong! Yet, by the grace of God, while we have your nose in the earth and the dirt of facts, we will sound the trumpet in your ear; "Awake thou that sleepest, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light" (Eph. 5:14), for "why will ye die" (Ezek. 18:31; 33:11)! Is not the Savior beckoning you, calling you, summoning you to higher spheres of thought, to more lofty realms and paths for your feet. Ought you not to obey that summons; to hearken to that inner voice that urges you to meet the challenge of this day by fighting the good fight of faith? Let your life be marked no more by unbecoming and unspiritual views and conduct!

To the rest of our brethren that are faithfully executing their labors in the vineyard of the Lord, we say: "continue to press toward the mark of the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus," and peace be upon all those that walk according to this rule (Gal. 6:16).

Words of Reminder

(From page 7)

cause of their momentary loss, as it were, of a sense of reality. Let them recover themselves from this snare of the Evil one, and they will recognize these things as the Lord perfecting us in the "furnace of affliction" (Isa. 48:10). Look up when these times come and consider the future that lies before us - **short toil, eternal rest!** Praise the Lord! "Soon He that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Heb. 10:37). Do not be carried about by your circumstances, nor ought you to be content to be **under** them. Remember that "all things are yours"; and it makes no difference whether it is life or death (Rom. 8:34ff).

BABBLINGS FROM BABYLON'S BULLETINS

The purpose of this column is to be informative; to make known unto the people of God the sort of thing that is continually being paraded before religious devotees; the type of mental garbage that is being pawned off as spiritual truth and "Christian" teaching. From this point on, we intend for this column to be a regular feature in THE WORD OF TRUTH. There will be no comments, only direct quotations. We urge you to use your mind in evaluating these; testing your judgement and perception in Christ Jesus.

Babel #1

"SOMETHING SPECIAL"

"Women Give Men Night Out"

"This will be men's night . . . Devotions will be given by Mrs. . . . The program is one of real interest to us all. Dr. . . ., a research chemist from . . . will present 'Water Pollution and the Calumet Rivers.' As part of his program he will present slides of the area rivers. . . . The program will begin at 8:00 P.M., so even if you are unable to attend the supper, please come and hear this important program."

Taken from
THE VISITOR

Contented With Her New Life In Christ

Many times I have been asked by different people, if it were possible, would I go back to sometime in my life; or they will say of themselves: "I would like to go back to" this time or that time "in my life." Well, the Lord has given me these few words, and I would like very much to pass them on to you, that in doing so the Lord may be magnified and glorified in me.

You ask me, if it were possible would I go back to sometime in my life? Is there a someplace that I would like to be again? Maybe under the watchful eyes of my mother's care, or to the time when I was free to romp through the grasses green. You ask if I would like to go back to my teens: Nay, not I, no never, never again. But you ask, "Were there not happy times to which you would return"? O yes, there were many, many happy times, but I care not to return to any of them. "But why not return to them if it were possible"?, you ask. But I ask you, Why should I return to things gone by? They hold nothing for me. If it were possible for me to return, what real joy and peace could I find there?

I say unto you, Wake up to the truth, for you shall never be able to return and live in the time that has gone by, for past times have been lived, and they shall never be lived again! Never, but never, do I dare to go back, for in sin and shame and darkness so dark is where I was living, without Christ in my life. O what loneliness there was there! To go back into the past is of no interest to me; I would lose rather than gain. Go back if you can, but do not ask me to do the same. My eyes look only forward, for each day that passes brings me that much closer to the arms of my

Father and my Savior, Jesus Christ, and to all of the heavenly hosts and dear saints that have tread this lowly earth. To go back is not even thinkable to me; only forward shall I go! Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!

And I said unto the Lord; "Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul," and O how the Lord has rejoiced my soul. Is it not wonderful that all we have to do is ask our Lord, and He will rejoice our souls and cause our hearts to sing unto Him? May the Lord ever fill you with much rejoicing.

Sister Beverly Brunner
Oakland, Illinois

Controversy May Be A Duty

"Controversy in religion is a hateful thing. It is hard enough to fight the devil, the world, and the flesh, without private differences in our own camp. But there is one thing which is even worse than controversy, and that is false doctrine tolerated, allowed and permitted without protest or molestation. It was controversy that won the battle of the Protestant Reformation. If the views that some men hold were correct, it is plain we never ought to have had any reformation at all! For the sake of peace, we ought to have gone on worshipping the Virgin, and bowing down to images and relics to this very day! Away with such trifling. There are times when controversy is not only a duty but a benefit. Give me the mighty thunderstorm rather than the pestilential malaria. The one walks in darkness and poisons as in silence, and we are never safe. The other frightens and alarms for a little season, but it is soon over and clears the air. It is a plain Scriptural duty to 'contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints' (Jude 3)."

J. C. Ryle

Commentary On Philippians

(From page 6)

every verse beyond their understanding be "harmonized" or explained away rather than simply believed. The key to agreement in doctrine is deep reverential awe before the very letter of the majestic word of God which is transcendental to our poor mortal minds. When we learn to speak in words which the Holy Ghost teaches how can division be possible? Division and heresy spring from pride and refusal to wait on God to reveal the meaning of Scripture rather than attempting to interpret it in the flesh.

Some combine the last two expressions to read "with accordant souls minding **the one thing**." We read in Luke 10:38-42 that Martha was cumbered about with much serving and troubled about "many things" when only "**one thing**" was needful, a fellowship with God in his word. Paul said, "this **one thing I do**" (Phil. 3:13). David said, "**One thing** have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple" (Psa. 27:4). Here is the key to true unity: when all are truly seeking the same thing.

Condemned For Believing The Bible

In all ages of the world, men of faith have been condemned for believing the Bible. Because God's "record" flies squarely in the face of human philosophy, those who openly espouse its proclamations as ultimate reality are met with the animosity of evil men. We certainly do not claim any distinction in this respect, but from time to time, we do feel it to be beneficial to our readers to pass on the remarks made by religious sophists, in order to set forth the rarity of faith "in the world" (Luke 18:8). Recently, a public attack was leveled at us by a Mr. Derwood Fetherbay of Alden, New York. Having taken us into his confidence in a series of letters, and posing himself as one interested in our labor of love and work of faith, he seemingly appeared as one of that precious fellowship that "walk in the light as he is in the light" (I John 1:7). Taking upon himself the responsibility of pronouncing our official status before the "Father of lights", he writes in a specially prepared paper for public circulation; "About a year ago I was warned that . . . 'The Word of Truth', Editor Given O. Blakely . . . contained 'Campbellite' teaching. So, based on this information, I have been trying to discover this myself by searching their periodicals and writing to them and others for some facts."

What Mr. Fetherbay does not relate is the method that he employed in his inquiry. He wrote as an interested brother, seeking to know the truth concerning "baptism." One of my first letters from this viper dates back to December 22, 1968. In that letter he stated: "I enjoy both the Banner of Truth and The Word of Truth which comes from your meeting in Indiana. When so much teaching is watered down, it is good to drink from pure fountains. If it is not too much trouble, I would like to know more about your meeting and also more about your work in India." Some time elapsed after I had replied to this inquiry, believing it to be honest and forthright, without subterfuge at all - an assumption that later proved to be wholly unwarranted. In his next letter he wrote; "Do you have any good tracts defending water baptism by immersion? Your articles are excellent on God's Kingdom and future things." Still believing the inquiries to be what they appeared to be, another round of correspondence was had, during which a severe criticism was leveled at the Editor of The Banner of Truth (my father in the flesh) for quoting Alexander Campbell. Perceiving from what he stated that he really had no knowledge of brother Campbell, I apprised him of some of the faith of that saint of old, and frankly asked him if he had ever read anything that Alexander Campbell wrote. This was the reply; "Thank you for the letter stating the position of Alexander Campbell. I confess that I have not read any of his writings and do not know where to procure them. . . . I agree with all that you said in your letter, but if you have any tracts on baptism, please send them to me. Just seeking the truth."

Now, I have taken the time to quote these matters because I intend to show the subtlety that is in the human heart. After these eloquent displays

of sincerity, Mr. Fetherbay wrote the paper referred to entitled; "Does Baptism Procure Eternal Salvation"? In this fleshly treatise he states; "I believe the letters below (copies of correspondence between himself and brother Fred O. Blakely, Editor of THE BANNER) will show without a doubt that the above mentioned periodicals (that is, their Editors) believe that baptism procures eternal salvation." To seal his testimony, he quotes from a personal letter received from a Georgian Bigot, Mr. William R. Crews; "Both of these publications hold many Campbellite heresies. . . . Both Mr. Fred O. Blakely and Mr. Given O. Blakely . . . are ministers in the Christian Church . . ." The indictment was brought because of our belief of the Scriptures. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16) are the words of our Lord - not of Alexander Campbell or any other reformer. "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38) is the assertion of Peter the Apostle - we chose to believe these words **without modification**. If we are condemned for that by men, so be it - the Lord shall vindicate such faith in the last day. I seek to here make several observations; observations which should serve as a warning to those who are naive concerning religious associates and devotees.

1. Mr. Fetherbay was not honest in his approach to us. He came seeking a confirmation of what he **believed** to be an evil report. Learn from that not to take the words of religious men at their **apparent** value. They have sometimes been dipped in poison.
2. By his own admission, Mr. Fetherbay admitted that he had never read anything written by Brother Alexander Campbell. Yet he considered his writings **heretical**, and those that felt no compulsion to condemn brother Campbell were considered by him to be dangerous, teaching "heresies." Surely we have here a most excellent demonstration of the strangling hold of sectarianism upon the senses. Truth is truth, regardless of the promulgator of it. **We cannot evaluate words by the one who states them, but rather by the import of their message and their conformity to reality as it is in Christ Jesus.**
3. Our friend further quotes from a man who does not know either myself or the editor of The Banner of Truth, using him as an authority on our persons and positions. It is interesting to behold the authority with which this **total stranger** speaks. However, he is altogether incorrect in his analyzation of those to whom we minister, as that particular sect would be most happy to verify.
4. The traits that have shown themselves in Mr. Fetherbay are not altogether pleasing. Deception, lying, sowing seeds of discord, sectarianism, and carnal-mindedness - all shine brightly in him. We commend such unto the Lord who is able to bestow such mercy as he surely requires. Further, let all who entertain like views as him think more deeply of their spiritual juvenility, for God's word cannot be gainsayed, nor will the puny resistance of such pygmies achieve any lasting effect; either upon us or the Rock of God's Word.

Philosophizing Evidences Ignorance

Recently a revelative editorial appeared in THE EXHORTER, monthly publication of The Church of Christ denomination. Speaking in defense of the Premillennial heresy, reference was made to THE WORD OF TRUTH and an article published there that was purported to contain "harsh, biting remarks" instead of "trying to arrive at the truth." The article referred to was entitled "The Premillennial Wedge". The following remarks were made; "If the writers of that paper are capable of discussing the Word of God in a calm, dignified manner we feel some progress could be made toward a better understanding of the Scriptures they used, which we feel they have misunderstood. But until there is some attempt to be rational in their thinking and not emotionally full of scathing remarks, there is not much use to attempt a discussion" (November-December issue, 1969).

It is neither incumbent nor expedient for anyone to seek to defend themselves or their statements. Particularly is this true in relation to the proclamation of what we have been given to "understand by faith" (Heb. 11:3). In trying the spirits, however, it is both edifying and stimulating to observe the remarkable consistency of flesh - **it always approaches a matter from the same viewpoint.** You will observe such words as "rationality", "calm", "dignified manner", "rational in their thinking", etc. **All of these phrases are employed to make room for the flesh and its reasonings - to prop open the door, as it were, for the carnal mind.** Men would like very much to "arrive at the truth" through their own endeavors - to find God and His mind by "searching" (Job 11:7). The postulation is that such a thing is possible in the first place; that man, by reasoning and rational powers can arrive at the truth. But this is not at all the way truth is brought home to the heart. **It comes by revelation; by the "eyes of the understanding" being "opened" by God (Eph. 1:18ff).** It is when God "shines" into the heart "with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus" (II Cor. 4:6) that men are apprised of what is really true. Until that time, endless hours may be spent in the discussion chambers to no avail - although momentous decisions and analyses may result from such seasons. **When once the heart has been illuminated to truth, there is no further need for discussion.** Concerning the great declarations of Scripture, it is the Lord that "opens the heart" that we might believe and "attend unto the words spoken" (Acts 16:14). We are not at all interested in "trying to arrive at the truth" through systematic reasonings and probings of the carnal mind. We greatly desire, however, to "buy the truth and sell it not" (Prov. 23:23). This places the matter in entirely a new perspective. It means that God confronts us with the Truth and we accept it as it is - we do not arrive at it by reasonings. Such a procedure may not be termed scholastical nor intellectual, but it is effectual, and there is great joy in it.

There are at least two observations that I would like to make concerning the analysis of THE EXHORTER. **It must be understood, of course, that these remarks were occasioned by the attack made**

upon their sacred cow - premillennialism. Had it been made upon Roman Catholicism, or upon Hinduism, or upon Mohammedanism, not a word would have been said. They would have been quite tolerant of that, I am sure. The objection to what is termed "harsh, biting remarks" is only a subterfuge. **The thing that has made them sharp and "biting" is their applicability to the doctrines embraced by themselves.** This brings me to the observations which I seek to make.

- (1. **Reasonings are necessary only when there is no word from the Lord illuminated to the understanding.** The very fact that these sophists approach such doctrines purely intellectually, in a conference-table manner, indicates how dry they are! It is true that the apostles and elders of the early church gathered together to consider matters - like the Gentiles acceptance and the necessity of circumcision (Acts 15). That was due, however, to the lack of revelation received from God on the subjects. Later, when the same situations arose, there was no need for conferences or seminars. When Paul confronted Judaizers, he did not have to call a conference, but firmly resisted them (Gal. 2:5). God had revealed the matter, and there was no longer any question about it.

Today we are blessed with the Scriptures which sprang out of those very experiences and promptings of the Holy Spirit of God. What God revealed to them was recorded for us, and walking in a fellowship with the Beloved, we too may realize their meaning and significance. We have no need that any man teach us of these things (I Jno. 2:20, 27). Their truth is sealed to our hearts by the Spirit of God, as it is to all believers hearts. **There are some matters concerning which reasonings and tolerant speculations are all together out of place.** It is an affirmation of truth that is needed - an affirmation. Not philosophical speculation! If men seek to be polite and tolerant, accommodating one another in their fleshly views, that is their business - but let them not pose as men of God - prophets of the most high. Elijah, Isaiah, Malachi - they did not come reasoning, gathering around a conference table and discussing the variety of views that were set before them, seeking to "arrive" at the truth, nor did the Apostles of the Lamb. They spoke from higher places than that, speaking back to earth, as it were, from the heavenly places. Those that insist upon probing for truth like a blind hog for an acorn will neither receive the approbation of God nor the sympathy and admiration of those whom He has graciously illuminated. **You cannot obviate God in your quest for truth!** Somehow, however, I receive the distinct impression that this is precisely what is being done. **The Bible is being viewed in disassociation from the God that inspired it.** Rather than taking the book to the Lord and begging for an understanding of the mysteries contained therein, they take the book and gather together to see what sort of conclusions their little minds can come to. The saints are to emulate their Lord, in their own measure, by "speaking what they know" (John 3:11). While we certainly do not know ev-

everything about any single thing, nor some things about every thing, yet we have restricted our expressions to matters concerning which we have enjoyed fellowship with the Lord. If that seems quite unpalpable to some of our readers, let them go and "learn Christ" (Eph. 4:20ff). Further, any deviations from this procedure will result in a mere scholastic or philosophical approach to the Scriptures - which approaches are something less than profitable. To speak out of an empty head is not wise. **If one has not had the reality of a matter stamped upon his heart, he had well keep quiet about it.** I know that some will question the reality of what I say, but that is really no matter to me. The writer of THE EXHORTER speaks of their "efforts to study God's word sincerely." The whole matter evidences a somewhat lower state from which ascendancy is absolutely essential. **Self energy is a miserable substitute for faith,** and while the writer probably did not mean to convey such a thought, he nevertheless did.

(2. As to "abusive and harsh language"—this objection is purely fleshly. The absolute lack of sincerity behind it is evidenced by such remarks as "If the writers of that paper are capable of discussing . . . emotionally full of scathing remarks", etc. But aside from the hypocrisy that is there evidenced, the entire principle is wrong. Using their false hypothesis, we should have to condemn the Lord Jesus and His Apostles for the same sort of speech. The manner of the Kingdom must here be realized. The Lord spoke only truth, and when error was apparent, and hypocrisy and ignorance prevalent, there was never any hesitancy to set it forth as it was. Take, for instance, the following "harsh biting remarks" of our Lord Himself; "Woe unto you Scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites . . . ye make him twofold a son of hell than yourselves . . . blind guides . . . ye fools and blind . . . ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel . . . within they are full of extortion and excess . . . ye are like unto whited sepulchres . . . within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity . . . ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how shall ye escape the damnation of hell" (Matt. 24:14-33); "Ye know not the Scriptures nor the power of God" (Matt. 22:29), etc. He called a Gentile woman a "dog" (Matt. 15:26), and rebuked Peter saying; "Get thee behind me Satan, for thou art an offence unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men" (Matt. 16:23).

As for the Apostles, they too used "harsh bit-

ing remarks", as our adversaries would put it. Paul for instance, spoke of men as "dogs" (Phil. 3:2), also charging "Hymenaeus and Philetus" as those whose words ate "as a canker, who concerning the truth have erred . . . and overthrow the faith of some" (II Tim. 2:17-18). I suppose it never occurred to Paul to reason with these men, or to sit down with them in hopes of "arriving at the truth." He stated that "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved more this present world" (II Tim. 4:10) - quite a charge to make, yet true! Peter spoke of those that brought in "damnable heresies" (II Pet. 2:1-3), and Jude spoke of some that were "filthy dreamers . . . spots in your feasts of charity . . . clouds without water, carried about of the winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever" (Jude 8:13); also calling them "murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaking great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage" (Jude 16).

I suppose that these men did not have the training in approaches to men that are so abundantly available today. But in spite of that lack of training, their words have spoken to many of our hearts, and we are thankful that they did not mince words concerning the flesh and its gruesome tendencies and insistence upon the pre-eminence. If the language that we use seems to be abusive to some of our readers, we can only recommend that they get them up to the high mountain where it is simply not applicable to them, for as long as you dwell in the flesh, promoting fleshly doctrines and views, exalting reason and summoning men to earthly findings, we shall be constrained to call such findings what they are - "dung"!

JESUS CHRIST - CREATOR . . . (From page 5)

Lord's Christ!

Note; it states that "all things" consist or are held together by Him; not "some things", but "ALL things." **That means that there is no entity that is not sustained by Him; no power, no purpose, no circumstance, that is not maintained by Him until its work and contribution to the eternal purpose is fulfilled.** Worlds are held together by Him; wicked spiritual powers are kept in tact by Him; our fellow laborers among angelic hosts are kept in their sphere of operation by Him; earthly magistrates are maintained in their separate lots by Him; all men are specifically and providentially manipulated by Him. These are axiomatic conclusions if "ALL things consist" by Him.

Our Lord, then, is the very center of everything. **Creation is but an interlude during which the Son of God has charge of the Kingdom for the purpose of bringing the elect to God and putting down the adversary of their souls.** When this transcendent work has been completed, the "mystery will be finished" (Rev. 10:7). During this interlude all things are being maintained with that great work in specific interest, and nothing can possibly interrupt or alter that Divine purpose. Our faith must be strong to believe this, and if it is, we shall surely experience victory that other paltry substitutes cannot possibly offer.