

# 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

### ALL PURPORTED QUICKENING IS NOT REAL QUICKENING

In recent years there have been numerous happenings which have been credited to the Holy Spirit. Fresh anointings are announced, new infillings, and the most remarkable testimonies of joy, peace, and spiritual expressions. We must confess that all of this is quite refreshing in the midst of dull and lifeless religion, and that we are giving thanks to our Father for the awakening of such souls. Equally true, however, we must acknowledge certain things about these movements concern us because they do not comport with God's Word. It is axiomatic that anyone filled with the Spirit will be in harmony with His teaching. Paul spoke of "words which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (I Cor. 2:13). *The Holy Spirit will never move or contrain one to live in a contradictory fashion to these words - we must understand this if we are to "try the spirits, whether they be of God" (I Jno. 4:1).*

I have observed in these instances of the purported infilling with the Holy Spirit (their authenticity is known of "God the Judge" - Heb. 12:23), there are some strikingly similar characteristics and developments. Not all of them support the supposition of a great spiritual work, though they certainly give evidence to some renovating work - sometimes, I fear, quite unacceptable. I realize that in saying such things I will immediately incur the indignation of some that seek to defend zealously their convictions - but we have a right to bring your convictions and your proclamations into question if they do not compliment the Word of God. You must, therefore, bear with us while we place these things under examination. While we are not at all prepared to deny that such as claim to have been filled with the Holy Spirit are wrong in their analysis, we are prepared to affirm that some of the traits that are often seen in such circles are certainly not befitting of a Spirit-filled person, to say the very least.

Generally, it seems (at least in the cases with which we are familiar), the woman of the house assumes the role of representative, often becoming the spokesman for the family. At the very least, they become very verbose, always having much to say - all of which is not altogether edifying. This is interesting in view of the expressed will of the Spirit for the sister's in Christ; "shamefacedness" (not forward or thrusting oneself into the prominence), and a "meek and a quiet spirit" (I Tim. 2:9; I Pet. 3:4). Spiritual and physical laziness is soon seen to take place, mothers are taken out of the home, children are left to their own vanities, and husbands begin to eat more out of cans. Such things are disgraceful for the saints and cause the word of God to be blasphemed (Titus 2:5; I Tim. 6:1). Also, there often comes to pass an almost intolerable tolerance of sin. No longer is it harshly dealt with, but it is condoned with carnal patience and understanding. The Scriptures are generally not primary with such people, but great stock is placed in dreams, visions, leadings, and feelings, purported "prophecies"

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## The Word of Truth

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dealing with contemporary happenings, etc. The inward struggles of the believer are also found disdainful, and discussions of such are studiously avoided. Such is truly contradictory to the expressions of the apostle's in their "doctrine" (Romans 7). Prayers, among such folk, are heard to be uttered to Jesus and to the Holy Spirit, which things proceed from a very basic ignorance of the facts (John 16:23). The Holy Spirit prompts us to cry "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6). But little of this is known within the confines of the fellowships of which I now speak.

Too, Babylon is virtually unknown among these people, which is equally a cause of great concern. Their "filling" has often made more avid sectarians of them than they have ever been before. False doctrine is imbibed without reservations, and there are no compunctions about keeping habitual company with those that God hates (Psa. 5:5; 11:5; II Chron. 19:2). Churches that perpetrate such dogmas as may be appropriately called "damnable heresies" (II Pet. 2:1-2) are attended by these people as well supported by them, while all the while their sequestering teachings are unopposed. Now, while this may be called spirituality by some, it is called quite another thing by those whose heart has been enraptured with the truth. The commandment of the Lord is to "come ye out from among them", "from such turn away", "avoid them", etc. (II Cor. 6:17; Rev. 18:4; II Tim. 3:5; Rom. 16:17). **There is nothing that can excuse disobedience to these commandments - they stand as the will of our God!**

We do not wish to cast an undue reflection upon the legitimacy of the spiritual experiences of which these brethren speak. But at best they are but a beginning, not the acme of involvement with God. Our objection is that such people are taught by sophists that this is the pinnacle of experience, the mountain peak of blessing. With such teaching as a foundation, such people proceed with full confidence that **what has happened to them** is to be trusted — not the Living God Himself! Thus they are unwittingly thrown upon their own natural mind, all the while persuaded of "God's leading." In such a case, spiritual simplicity sets in,

robbing the soul of the morsels of grace that are so necessary to spiritual advancement. We have seen several well beloved brethren, captivated by this enamorment, become spiritual idiots, unable to discern the true things of the Kingdom. The great and enlivening teachings of Scripture are minimized, salvation is considered secondary, and a virtual complete loss of spiritual perspective is experienced. We make no apologies for the fact of our animosity toward such results. The Lord has taught us to love Zion, the city of the living God (Heb. 12:12ff), and when we see the constituents of that Kingdom set back by mundane categorizations of Scripture and merely human concepts of experience we become indignant. When flesh and blood begins to interpret the excitations of man's spirit - the drawing toward glory, the expressions of one that has been touched by God - great and devastating results take place. **Our only recourse must be to the Scriptures, where holy men of old have recorded and interpreted for us legitimate spiritual experiences.** If, in our recourse there, we find contradictions - flagrant contradictions - we are forced to deny the validity of the experience that is purported. If some of our brethren are angered at that, let them rather rejoice that this will guarantee the reception of and rejoicing in of **all truly authentic blessings** from God. We do not want the mere interpretations of deceptive hearts for confirmation (Jer. 17:9), but the liberty which permits us to search the Scriptures to see whether these things be so (Acts 17:11). **If the fruitage of your experience is not the fruitage of the Holy Spirit, then a more true quickening must be experienced!**

### God-Centered Preaching

The subject of God is an intriguing one - one that transcends all natural understanding. In discussing the matter, the Holy Spirit witnessed, **"Great is the mystery of godliness"** (I Tim. 3:16). There is no question but that **the greatest confusion in Christendom is found in this sphere - God Himself.** Satan has managed to divert the vast majority of Protestantism from the Lord Himself to a variety of emphases - none of which bring righteousness nor peace, nor joy in the Holy Ghost (Rom. 14:17). **Men's hearts are to be enraptured with the Lord Himself; it is He that is to ravish their affection and tantalize their minds.** It is in quest of this aim that I write.

The Godhead is much misunderstood. Under the present domination of Babylon, for instance, God the Father has been almost totally obscured. Little is said of Him, of His glorious attributes, and of His eternal purpose (Eph. 3:11). **The whole deplorable condition evidences that the contemporary church has been completely oblivious to the matter of redemption and its true import.** Truthfully, I am zealous to recapture the truth of God-centered preaching; of the proclamation of "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Cor. 1:3). It is evident in the Scriptures that Jesus Christ came to reveal the Father; to unfold to men His great Person, and to give His life a ransom for many that we might gain true and living access to God. The whole of redemption is cen-

tered in this; we now have, in Christ Jesus, access to God; "By Whom we also have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:2); "For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Eph. 2:18); "In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him" (Eph. 3:12); "For the Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by the which we draw nigh unto God" (Heb. 7:19); "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Heb. 10:19); "Draw nigh unto God" (Js. 4:8); "And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear" (I Pet. 1:17); "For Christ also hath suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God . . ." (II Pet. 2:18), etc.

In the preaching of the Gospel, a pre-eminent - THE pre-eminent position - is reserved for the Father Himself as expressed "in the face of Christ Jesus" (II Cor. 4:6). "The word which GOD sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all)" (Acts 10:36); "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, GOD HATH FULFILLED the same unto us their children, in that HE HATH RAISED up Jesus again" (Acts 13:32-33); "And now, brethren, I commend you to GOD, and to the word of HIS grace . . ." (Acts 20:32); "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is THE POWER OF GOD unto salvation . . ." (Rom. 1:16); "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us that are saved, it is THE POWER OF GOD" (I Cor. 1:18). See the centrality of God in that preaching! But further, **Christ Himself is pre-eminently the revelation of the Father**; "God hath shined into our hearts with the light of the glory of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus" (II Cor. 4:6); "Who (Christ) is the IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD" (Col. 1:15); "For it PLEASSED THE FATHER that in Him should all fullness dwell" (Col 1:19); "Who (Christ) being the brightness of HIS GLORY, and the EXPRESS IMAGE OF HIS PERSON . . ." (Heb. 1:3). **We dare not view our Lord Jesus Christ without keeping these things in mind; else we will miss His ministry to our spirits.** We were estranged from God, and the whole purpose of our salvation is to bring us back to Him. To this end our Lord died and rose again, praise His holy name! In this whole economy, it is **the glory of God** that is the aim; "For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound TO THE GLORY OF GOD" (II Cor. 4:15); "Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, UNTO THE GLORY AND THE PRAISE OF GOD" (Phil. 1:11); "And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, TO THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER" (Phil. 2:11). I take great caution at this time to emphasize that **this is not intended to be a minimization of our Lord Jesus - God forbid such blasphemy!** It is rather a sanctified effort to set forth the truth of Christ, that He is **the Lord's** anointed; the one sent by God, the

Lamb of God, the Bread of God, and the Word that was the beginning with God,—made flesh and dwelling among us as the "only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

### The Imperative of God-Centered Preaching

Our Lord and Savior Himself set the example for us, always drawing attention to the Father and His "doctrine"; "My doctrine is not mine, but **His that sent Me**" (John 6:16); "My meat is to do the will of **Him that sent me**, and to finish **His work**" (Jno. 4:34); "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth **THE FATHER** do: for whatsoever things **He doeth**, these also doeth the Son likewise" (Jno. 5:19); "I am the true Vine, **MY FATHER** is the husbandman" (John 15:1); . . . "All things that I have **HEARD OF MY FATHER** I have made known unto you" (John 15:15), etc. By His own confession He spoke not out from Himself, but "**as my Father hath taught me I speak**" (John 8:28; 14:10). Over 60 times in the Gospels the phrase "**MY FATHER**" is used of our Lord, drawing attention to **His** pre-eminence in the unseen world. Contrary to carnal appearances, this does not obviate the Lord Jesus Christ, nor does it bring reproach upon His great Name by casting Him in a lesser role. God forbid that such an erroneous impression should be created in the saints! **Rather, the proclamation of the Father permits our Savior to execute His office properly; for He truly is the means "to the Father" - that is what redemption is all about. Those that fail to make God the Father pre-eminent in preaching rob our Lord Jesus of His ministry, and render effectual growth impossible. If there is no conscious relationship with the Father realized, then all religious quests have been in vain, for that is the aim of the whole matter!** Let none despise this emphasis; it was introduced to us of our Lord Himself, and was maintained by His holy Apostles. Christ Jesus is our High Priest **unto God**; He is our Mediator and Intercessor **with God**; He is the Good Shepherd to lead us **to God**; the Bread of God in order to our ultimate living unity with **the Father**; He is the Vine which the Father bends, together with its associative branches; He is the Covenant which **the Father** hath given to the people; He is the Lamb of God, the Wisdom of God, and the Righteousness of God, as well as the Power of God and the image of God. The Spirit constrains us to cry "**Abba Father**", it is through Christ that we "**come to the Father**", and our fellowship is "**with the Father and HIS Son, Jesus Christ**" (I John 1:3). It was "**God**" that "spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets", and it is that same **God** that now speaks "to us through His Son Christ Jesus, who **HE HATH APPOINTED** Heir of all things, through Whom also **HE MADE** the worlds" (Heb. 1:1-2). **Let us never lose sight of this glorious truth. It is invigorating to the spirit, liberating to the conscience, and honoring to the effectual work of our Redeemer, Christ Jesus!**

**Mistaken Emphases Produce Unsound Adherents.** If the improper member of the Godhead is emphasized, there will come a certain unsoundness into the lives of believers. This is demonstrated all

## BABBLINGS FROM BABYLON'S BULLETINS

### BABBLE #2

"A 'Name That Bus Contest' is now in progress and will continue until January 25th. There will be five winners - one in each age group (pre-school, grades 1-3, 4-6, 7-9 and 10-12). Then the winners will compete for the grand prize on February 1, 1970. Don't forget to place your entry in the box under the balcony. Contest closes at 9:00 P.M., January 25th."

Taken from  
THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE  
\* \* \*

### BABBLE #3

"Due to the building program, the decision to elect a different Chairman of Elders every year, has been suspended for one year only, and ..... has been asked to continue in this office for the present year."

Taken from  
THE LAMPLIGHTER  
\* \* \*

### BABBLE #4

"If we leave the North Vietnamese with the impression that we are divided, it will: 1. Lengthen the war. 2. Increase American losses. 3. Result in weak peace that could lead to later larger wars. 4. Encourage future harassment by other nations."

Taken from  
THE HARVESTER

Jesus-centered preaching can, and often does, lead to humanism. It is here that some eyebrows are raised, but let them be patient, for we know whereof we speak. This is the type of preaching that centers upon distinctively human interests and ideals. It makes my existence primary, and human interests pre-eminent. "Relevancy" is the word that comes into focus here, as men speak of Jesus solving our problems, being a Friend in trouble, etc., etc. All of this sounds fine to the carnal ear, but it has a strange ring to the ear of the one that has truly sat at the feet of Christ Jesus the Lord. You do not read in the Scriptures such prattling as: "Jesus will be your helper on the job; Christ understands all of your problems; Jesus will show you each day what you are to do; Christ can help you with your decisions, etc. These are words for simpletons, not for those that are of full age, who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil (Heb. 5:14). **Our Lord Jesus is instrumental in the overthrow of sin in our lives; in the defeat of that evil One that walks about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour** (I Pet. 5:8). Away with these paltry offerings of sophistry - we want none of them. What of my preparation for death, to face the Judgement seat; to rid myself of these cleaving sins - that is where Christ assumes a vital role, for these all have to do with preparing to meet God. As for understanding, it is written that Christ is able to be touched with the feelings of our infirmities (Heb. 4:15), which infirmities have to do with our wretched proclivity toward sin - temptation (Heb. 2:18). That is where the believer suffers. But, I have drifted from the point which I seek to here make; namely that Jesus-centered preaching leads to humanism. **Christ is here seen as a super-human rather than a humbled God. The Word of God views Him as "God made manifest in the flesh"** (I Tim. 3:16); as one that "humbled Himself", divesting Himself of His glory in order to the redemption of a fallen race (Phil. 2). **Let all men discard that notion that Jesus is like a Greek mythological character; some sort of super-human being. He is God amongst us** (Jno. 1:14); **Deity brought down, not man inflated to some extraordinary degree.** Well, we hear a lot about Jesus these days; His Name is used throughout the country in churches of divers sorts. I suppose that some believe we should rejoice in this; and, indeed, when Christ is preached, we do rejoice in it. But what does it mean for Christ to be preached? Is He not God's Christ? God's anointed One! That is when we preach Christ; when we set Him forth as the propitiation for our sins, as the Lamb of God, as the Son of God, as the Power and Righteousness of God. **He that was revealed of the Father to take away our sins and bring an end to the works of the Devil! Leave the Father out of the picture and Christ means nothing - absolutely nothing!** In both of these emphases - the Spirit, and Jesus - man becomes the chief center-point. **But the whole purpose of our Lord Jesus is to elevate us above man, above the earthly order, to the Holy and Infinite God!**

### God's Centrality Proclaimed In The Scriptures

How did the Apostles preach? Where did they place their emphasis? How did they proclaim

about us in Babylon. For instance, **Spirit-centered preaching leads ultimately to subjectiveism.** It limits knowledge to conscious states and elements, claiming that the supreme good is some subjective experience or feeling. Thus do many Babylonians speak of their experiences more than of God; of the sensations of their body more than the sensations of their heart and spirit. Individual feelings become the ultimate criterion, and whole lives are hung upon the flimsiness of mortal moods and frames. Men's experiences become primary, and the Word of the Lord becomes secondary. In every place where this **emphasis is made**, there is gross ignorance concerning the truth of God. The Holy Spirit becomes the object of prayers and songs, which practice ought to be eliminated. He is the unobtrusive member of the Godhead - the silent Worker, as it were. He does not draw attention to Himself, and is not to be the subject of preaching. We do not read of the Gospel of the Spirit; or the hope of the Spirit; or the Spirit so loving the world; or of the Spirit sending the Son; or of men preaching the Spirit. These are all concepts that have arisen with the advent of human philosophy, and thus we repudiate them for the disgrace that they are. They have fostered no spirituality, but have only thrust men into their soul (animal life in contradistinction to the spirit) for interpretations. Thus, many professed Christians are nothing more than modified hippies and heathens because they are motivated by their soul, and not by their spirit as it is brought into contact with the Living God.

Christ? How I thank God for the Scriptures, given of God for our learning upon whom the ends of the world are come! No need to speculate on these questions; to the word and to the testimony; let them speak for themselves. It is declared that **God** placed us "in Christ" (I Cor. 1:30), that He "anoints us" (II Cor. 1:21), and He "built all things" (Heb. 3:4), and He makes us "stand" (Rom. 14:4). Further, He has "called us into the fellowship of His dear Son" (I Cor. 1:9), is the "**Author** of peace in all the churches" (I Cor. 14:33; II Tim. 1:2), and "makes all grace to abound" (II Cor. 9:8). Faith comes from **Him** (Eph. 6:23); gifts come from **Him** (James 1:17), and we are to "behold what manner of love **the Father** hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of **God**" (I John 3:1). **The Father** hath elected **His** people (I Pet. 1:2), sanctified them (Jude 1), and "shined into their hearts with the light of the glory of the knowledge of **God** in the face of Christ Jesus" (II Cor. 4:6). When the Holy Spirit comes into our hearts, He constrains us to cry "**Abba Father**" (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6). We are kings and priests "**to God**" (Rev. 1:6), and bow our knees to **Him** (Eph. 3:14). Jesus is our Advocate "**with the Father**" (I John 2:1), and we "give thanks to **the Father**" (Col. 1:3, 12).

How abundant are the Scriptures with morsels of meat here! Our sufficiency is "of **God**" (II Cor. 3:5); our righteousness is "the righteousness of **God**" (Phil. 3:9); it is He that will "not suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able to bear, but will with the temptation make a way of escape that ye may be able to bear it" (I Cor. 10:13); Christ delivered us from "this present evil world according to the will of **God and our Father**" (Gal. 1:4), and the promises are aptly called "the promises of **God**" (II Cor. 1:20). In our regeneration, we "live unto **God**" (Rom. 6:11), bring forth "fruit unto **God**" (Rom. 7:4), yield our bodies "a living sacrifice unto **God**" (Rom. 12:1), and yield ourselves "**to God**" as those that are alive from the dead (Rom. 6:13). Do not fail to see the Father in all of these things - see that He is pre-eminent; that the whole purpose of salvation in Christ is to bring us clean and pure to the Father for fellowship and glory.

#### The Testimony Of These Things In Ephesians

I could not leave this theme without going to one of my favorite passages of Scripture. Here it was that the Lord first opened up Himself to me, and still He speaks abundantly to my heart out of this book. The first two chapters will suffice to show the truth I am proclaiming here. How I want you to see it! It is the pre-eminence of the Father. See in these chapters how Paul's preaching was **God-centered**. Now do not misconstrue that phrase; I do not mean to imply that He did not preach Christ - such a foolish conclusion that would be! But his preaching **ended in God**; that was the aim of it all! His preaching was like Christ - meant to bring us to God. Observe the following phrases in that segment of Scripture to which I have referred; "the will of **God**" (1:1); "**God our Father**" (1:2); "**who** (God) hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings" (1:3); "**He** (God) hath chosen us in Him (Christ)" (1:4); "that we should be holy and blameless before **Him** (God) in love" (1:4b); having predestinated

us", "to **Himself**", "according to the good pleasure of **His** will" (1:5); "the praise of the glory of **His** grace", "**He** hath made us accepted in **the Beloved**" (1:6); "the riches of **His** grace" (1:7); "**He** hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence" (1:8); "having made known unto us the mystery of **His** will", "**His** good pleasure", "**He** hath purposed in **Himself**" (1:9); "**He** might gather together into one" (1:10); "the purpose of **Him**", "worketh all things", "the counsel of **His** own will" (1:11); "the praise of **His** glory" (1:12); "the **God** of our Lord Jesus Christ", "the **Father** of glory may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and of revelation . . ." (1:17); "the hope of **His** calling"; "the riches of the glory of **His** inheritance in the saints", (1:18); "**His** power to us ward who believe", "the working of **His** mighty power" (1:19); "**He** wrought in Christ", "when **He** raised Him and from dead, and set Him at **His** own right hand in the heavenly places" (1:20); "**He** hath put all things under His feet", "gave Him (Christ) to be head over all things to the church" (1:21); "you hath **He** quickened" (2:1); "But **God**, who is rich in mercy", "**His** great love", "**He** hath loved us" (2:4); "**He** hath quickened us together with Him" (2:5); "**He** hath raised us up together" (2:6); "**He** might show the exceeding riches of **His** grace", "**His** kindness" (2:7); "the gift of **God**" (2:8); "We are **His** workmanship" (2:10); "**God** hath before ordained" (2:10b); "that He (Christ) might reconcile both unto **God**" (2:16); "Through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the **Father**" (2:18); "the household of **God**" (2:19); "an habitation of **God** through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:22), etc., etc.,

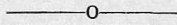
Brethren, there are hundreds of passages just like that in the Scriptures; passages that have had their glory and the lustrous beauty hidden by the vanities of earthly wisdom. O, to uncover them once again, that the face of God might shine through; that the true ministry of our precious Savior might be realized. The Father has reserved the pre-eminent place in the Kingdom for Himself - none ought to be offended at that; Jesus was not! He gladly acknowledged He came to do His Father's will; ought not we to acknowledge

#### SPECIAL NOTICE TO THOSE RECEIVING TAPES

We recently discovered that we had received a bad lot of recording tapes. After examining our recording facilities, it was found that the tapes themselves were defective. It occurred to us that it was possible that some of our readers received sub-quality tapes - fuzzy and erratic recordings, etc. If you are such a one, please return the tape to us immediately. We will replace it with a flawless recording. When returning the tape, make sure the defect is in the tape itself, and not in your tape recorder. Forward to;

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the same? O, let the saints of the most High restore the Father to His rightful position in their hearts; prayers, supplications, thanksgivings, praises, and adorations; worship, psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs - let them all arise to the "Father of lights" through Christ Jesus the Lord and by the Spirit. That is what is comely for the people of God! Let God be "all in all", as He is now declared to be (Eph. 4:6), and as He shall ultimately be manifested to be (I Cor. 15:28). Amen.



## Commentary On Philippians

By Richard W. Ebler

### Chapter Two (cont.)

(vs. 3, 4) "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."

In the preceding verse Paul has exhorted the brethren at Philippi to unity. Now in verse three he identifies the causes of division: (1) Strife (faction, party-spirit, see ASV) and (2) Vain-glory (fleshly pride). Brother Calvin says, "These are two most dangerous pests for disturbing the peace of the Church. 'Strife' is aroused when everyone wants to guard obstinately his own opinion; and when it has once begun to rage it rushes headlong along the road it has entered on. 'Vain glory' tickles men's minds, so that everyone is delighted with his own inventions. Hence the only way of guarding against dissensions is when we avoid strifes by deliberating and acting peacefully. . . ."

"Strife" is listed as one of the works of the flesh in Galatians 5:20, while our text exhorts us to let **nothing** be done through strife or vain-glory. Therefore we see this as an example of how no provision whatsoever is made for the flesh to express itself among the saints. God permits no flesh to glory in his presence; indeed, once the nature of God and the nature of flesh is truly discerned, it is easy to see why.

By the term "flesh" we refer to everything natural about man. It is everything that came from the womb: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh" (John 3:6). It is human nature apart from God's Spirit. It includes the heart, mind, and body, and it is set against the true and living God. It loves sin, self, pleasure, false gods, and a host of other vanities and deceits. It hates the true God and His eternal word of truth, yet strangely loves to counterfeit true religion, even as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses by duplicating the works of God up to a point (II Tim. 3:8). Thus religious flesh, ie., flesh in the church, is the most subtle and damning of all.

In Galatians 5:26 we read, "Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another." The glory of the flesh is vain glory because of its ephemeral and godless nature. The prophet Isaiah compares it to the flower of grass which withers and perishes (Isaiah 40:6-8). To this the Holy Spirit contrasts the things of God which have "eternal glory". Yet flesh wants glory for itself. The fleshly mind sits

in the temple of God, our bodies, declaring that it is God and there is none else, opposing and exalting itself above all that is called God (II Thess. 2:3, 4). Flesh desires worship and glory as much as Satan who uses flesh as his domain of operation. Flesh desires glory so much that it even glories in its shame, ie., in that which it should be ashamed of, such as nakedness (Gen. 3:7, Ex. 32:25, Phil. 3:19).

Flesh has a way of provoking flesh. When one desires vain glory the disease can spread. Just as hatred tends to provoke hatred, so pride can tend to provoke pride. Then we are found "provoking one another, envying one another."

Even if others do things through strife we must not come down to their level and strive with them in our own flesh. Victory over carnality within any individual or within any assembly is largely obtained by simply ignoring it and rising in the Spirit to the heavenly realm where flesh cannot come. This is victory by indirection. If we try to attack flesh directly in the strength of our own flesh we shall soon become like unto them. "The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with" (Prov. 17:14). Emulate Elijah who refused to come down from his mountain to do battle in the flesh with his enemy (II Kings 1:9-12).

We also are to esteem others better than ourselves. If it is asked how this can be done when there are obviously going to be differences in levels of grace and growth represented in any assembly the answer is easy. This is possible when we have a right estimate of God's gifts and our own infirmities. "For however anyone may possess outstanding endowments, he ought to consider that they have not been conferred upon him that he might be self-complacent, that he might exalt himself or even esteem himself. Let him instead employ himself in correcting and detecting his faults, and he will have abundant cause for humility. In others, on the other hand, he will regard with honour whatever there is of excellence, and will in love bury their faults. The man who will observe this rule, will have no difficulty in preferring others before himself."

Another fact that makes this possible is that the graces of the Spirit can be poured out upon any person regardless of their age, experience, or natural ability, for anyone can be given grace to love God. Thus zealous beginners are often very refreshing to older veterans in the faith. Also, the possession of natural or spiritual abilities should humble us when we consider that they are gifts from God which bring with them grave responsibilities of stewardship. Furthermore, it is true that in a sense each member of the body of Christ is indeed superior to all others in some way, for each has been placed in the body with a special endowment for the profit of the whole body. If we look mainly upon this gift in gratitude to God there will be no schism in the body.

Finally, we are told to "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth" (I Cor. 10:24). We are able to do this by faith since it is written, "He that watereth shall be watered also

himself" (Prov. 11:25). We ought to seek one another's spiritual profit above all else and make our decisions in the light of this principle: "What will most greatly be a blessing to God's people?" Then that verse will be fulfilled in us, that they which love Jerusalem shall prosper (Psa. 122:6).

## David A Saint Of Sensitivity

BY

Brother Danny Powers

Brother Danny Powers is the brother-in-law of the editor of THE WORD OF TRUTH, and attends the fellowship at 26th and Colfax. Often he gives introductions to the Lord's day messages, having been endowed of the Lord with some understanding of the things pertaining to life and godliness. Brother Danny is 22 years of age, and is the son of Brother and Sister Andrew Powers, circulation managers for THE WORD. We ask you to pray for Danny, that his faith might increase, and that he might keep himself pure from the course of this world, together with its many temptations and lures.

In all of the Scriptures, there are few of whom more is spoken than our beloved brother David. This is largely attributable to his loving sense of the Lord's presence (he was very aware of the Lord). This was the reason that after he had committed the sin with Bethsheba he confessed that against God and God **only** had he sinned. David said this because of the **real** relation that He had with the Father. He knew that the Lord was not happy with his actions. He was sensitive to the will of the Father, and longed to be acceptable with God, and to dwell with God in heaven. David always took refuge in the Lord, for he felt that there was no better place where man could be at rest than with his Maker.

David was known as the man "after God's own heart". How much better could we ever want to be remembered? David so wanted to be like the Father would have had him to be that he earned a title as precious as this one. He was striving to win the heart of God! Certainly this is a wonderful commentary on a pure saint of God, as well as a good exhortation to godliness for all those that are to come along this same road; i.e., to fight the good fight of faith, and always remember that we are strangers and pilgrims upon the earth, awaiting the return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ the Son of God.

David was known for many things, but his sensitivity to God was the greatest attribute that he possessed, in my understanding. Being very sensitive to God is a must, for without it we shall soon lose contact with the supreme "power-Source" of the saints, the God of the universe. I use the term "Power-Source" because we are a lot like an electric toothbrush. Just after a good charging, we can work up a storm, but let us lay around for a while and we are soon dead and useless to anyone. But returning to God we find once again the strength to fight. But in reality, if we lose

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our sensitivity we will not even know if He is around or not. In such a case we grope in the darkness, walking out on our own understanding blindly falling over every obstacle.

So strive to be like our beloved brother David, listening when God speaks and remorseful over our transgressions. Let us act according to God's wooing, not fighting against those inclinations toward the Lord. Those inclinations are a sign that He would have you as a son. Meditate and pray upon thy bed; be prudent and righteous, knowing that these wholesome things will engender godliness. Remembering David, be sensitive toward the Lord and you shall find Him that thou desirest.

## A Personal God

Our Lord is precious to our hearts because we are personally affiliated with Him. All who sustain this glorious unity of spirit with Deity have come to some measurable degree of understanding concerning the all sufficiency of God. He who has God has everything; he who possesses Him not is absolutely destitute. Whatever natural deficiencies we may possess are wonderously met by the sufficiency of our God and Father and His Son Christ Jesus. In Christ we become the true possessors of "all things" (I Cor. 3:21); Glory to God!

This basic truth of God's all-sufficiency is demonstrated in the prayers of "the sweet psalmist of Israel" (II Sam. 23:1). Contained therein are refreshing confessions of total dependency upon "God the Lord" (Psa. 141:8); a dependency that unhesitatingly ascribes every spiritual bulwark and benefit to Him with whom we have to do. The saints aspirations, protection, strength, and portion are all found to be in the Lord Himself. The following phrases set forth this most invigorating truth. We invite you to examine them in the Spirit and see if they are the confessions of your own soul.

"My glory" (Psa. 3:3)

"My God" (Psa. 3:7; 31:14)

announce His availability to you. The Lord will confirm the filling of the Spirit - which is the same as the baptism of the Spirit - with new tongues, as the Spirit gives you utterance. This is the answer to the hungrying of your heart. After these words Cornelius and his whole house fell on their knees and began to pray for the glorious infilling of the Holy Ghost. As Peter laid his hands upon them and prayed, they were gloriously filled and began to speak in other tongues."

To the learned, the above is obviously a spurious quotation, and not the actual words of Acts 10:34-47. The truth is that NO emphasis was made of the Holy Spirit in that memorable discourse to the household of Cornelius. He preached "peace by Jesus Christ", that Jesus was "anointed" by God, and went about "doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil." He declared that this Son of God was "slew and hanged on a tree" by His own countrymen, and that God "raised Him up the third day and showed Him openly". The people to whom He was manifested, Peter declared, were "chosen witnesses", even those "who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead". Peter then expounded how that they were commanded to "preach to the people" and "testify that it is He which was ordained of God to be the Judge of the quick and the dead". He further proclaimed that "all of the prophets" bore witness to Him, "that through His Name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins". Upon the pronouncement of these Gospel words, the "Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word", and they were heard to "speak with tongues, and magnify God". Then Peter "commanded them to be baptized in the Name of the Lord". That is the true account!

Now, we freely acknowledge that we perverted that text in the above pseudo-quotation. It was a complete misrepresentation of the case - but not without purpose. We pray God that those who perpetuate this non-apostolic doctrine - almost precisely as it is related in the spurious segment of this article - will be equally as swift to admit the purely sectarian and fictitious bent of such teaching. Admittedly, a great portion of denominational dogma will topple; but such would serve the purpose of God - let it topple!

### Pungent Points

It is not Deity that is inhibited by man, but man that is inhibited by Deity - and well might we thank God for it (Psa. 76:10).

\* \* \*

No one but God can see far enough to make unalterable plans. For us, all things are to be subject to His will and good pleasure (James 4:15).

\* \* \*

The Word has been preached in power when the realities of the Kingdom have been laid upon men's consciences. Whether they accept it or reject it has no real bearing on the case.

\* \* \*

Disobedience cannot be rationalized; it is wrong, condemned by God. The end of such things is death!

"My King" (Psa. 5:2; 44:4)  
"My Lord" (Psa. 16:2; 35: 23)  
"My Strength" (Psa. 18:1; 31:4)  
"My Rock" (Psa. 18:2; 31:3)  
"My Fortress" (Psa. 18:2; 71:3)  
"My Deliverer" (Psa. 144:2; 43:17)  
"My Buckler" (Psa. 18:2b)  
"Horn of my salvation" (Psa. 18:2e)  
"My High Tower" (Psa. 144:2)  
"My Shepherd" (Psa. 23:1)  
"My Light" (Psa. 27:1)  
"My Salvation" (Psa. 38:22)  
"My Help" (Psa. 33:20)  
"My Trust" (Psa. 71:5)  
"My Hope" (Psa. 71:5)  
"My Shield" (Psa. 28:7; 33:20)  
"My Helper" (Psa. 30:10)  
"My Hiding Place" (Psa. 32:7)  
"My Strong Habitation" (Psa. 71:3)  
"My Goodness" (Psa. 144:2)  
"My Refuge" (Psa. 91:2)  
"My Portion" (Psa. 142:5)  
"God of my life" (Psa. 42:8)  
"God of my strength" (Psa. 43:2)  
"God of my mercy" (Psa. 59:10, 17)  
"My Defence" (Psa. 59:17; 94:22)

### Acts 10:34 - 47

"Then Peter opened his mouth and said, Of a truth I perceive God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him. The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching power by the Holy Ghost (He is available to you). Verily, on the day of Pentecost we were all baptized with the Holy Ghost and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit gave us utterance. Untill that time we were without strength and unable to do what the Lord had commanded us. But verily, when the Holy Ghost came upon us we began to rejoice and praise God. We felt the very power of God surging through our bodies. We proclaim unto you Gentiles - this glorious experience - for Pentecost is an experience in order that you might know that this same gift is for you. It is separate from salvation, a distinct experience of empowerment following other spiritual things like salvation and healing. You need this baptism, but must seek it to receive it. The Lord will give you this baptism if you will believe - let go and let God. You have not known about the Holy Spirit before, and have now viewed Him as a Person. Now we an-