

THE WORD OF TRUTH

Published Monthly

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

Volume 19

MARCH, 1975

Number 3

"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

CARNAL CHRISTIANS?

Is there really such a thing as a "carnal Christian"? This is a term that is a standard part of many a religious vocabulary, and to question its validity, we know, will cause many brows to raise. Notwithstanding, I do wish to challenge the usage of "carnal Christians" in reference to *any* members of the body of Christ. Firstly, the term is NOT found in the Scriptures. You may find the word "carnal", and you may find the word "Christian", but you NEVER find them used together!

The word "carnal" means "fleshly", while the word "Christian" means "of Christ." Putting the two together, therefore, would be something like saying; "A fleshly person that is of Christ", or "one that is of Christ that is fleshly"! Or, to be more precise, an unbelieving believer, or a believing unbeliever! That would be the same as to say "holy demons" or "holy wicked angels." The two terms "carnal" and "Christian" simply do not go together; they are NOT compatible!

The Scriptures DO have somewhat, however, to say about carnality: "The carnal mind is *enmity against God*" (Rom. 8:7); "For to be carnally minded is death" (Rom. 8:6). We may conclude, therefore, that if there really is such a thing as a "carnal Christian", then there really is such a thing as a reconciled active enemy, or a living dead man! That one may, indeed, be alive unto God, while dead toward Him, and that He may be God's friend and son, while still remaining His foe!

The word of God says: "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die" (Rom. 8:13), but the very postulation of a "carnal Christian" declares that there are some that "live after the flesh" that shall "live", thereby mocking God. It is pointedly declared that "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit" (Rom. 8:5). However, in the case of a "carnal Christian", we have spiritual people minding the things of the flesh, or fleshly people minding the things of the Spirit, depending upon your perspective. "Fleshly wisdom" (II Cor. 1:12), "fleshly lusts" (I Pet. 2:11), and a "fleshly mind" (Col. 2:18) all have the uncontestable curse of God upon them! We are well aware of the case at Corinth, where reference was made to men that were "carnal": "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For one sayeth, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal"? (I Cor. 3:1-3). Firstly,

In This Issue . . .

The Two Strangers At Christiana's Door - page 3

Pungent Points - page 5

Lord's Supper Meditation by Richard Ebler - page 8

The Word of Truth

Published monthly by The Church at 78th and Independence, Merrillville, Indiana.

Author and Editor: Given O. Blakely

Circulation Managers: Mr. and Mrs. Al Stoner

Publication Office: 78th and Independence St., Merrillville, Indiana. (Send no correspondence to this address.)

Business Office: 10701 W. 124th Ave.

Cedar Lake, Ind. 46303

Address all correspondence to 10701 W. 124th Ave.

Cedar Lake, Ind. 46303

Sent Free upon request to all interested parties.

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT
CROWN POINT, INDIANA

it is to be observed that Paul did NOT call them "carnal Christians." He DID say that they were "carnal", that they did "walk as men", and that he "could not speak unto them as spiritual". Now, all of these were points of condemnation, not commendation! The issue was, that for the time they had been professors of Christ, they should have been teachers; but they were still taking milk as little children (Heb. 5:12-14). This is an extremely dangerous state to be in, for there is no guarantee of dwelling forever with the Lord while we yet remain in such a condition. **"Going on to perfection" is not an option in the Kingdom of God**, it is rather an evidence that the Seed of the Kingdom has fallen on good ground, and that God will there reap a harvest to His own glory (Matt. 13:1-8; 19-23). You see, the real evidence of the people of God—the genuine ones—is their perseverance, for ONLY those that "endure to the end" are said to be "saved" (Mt.10:22). Let it be clear here that we are not speaking of any form of justification by the works or deeds of the Law; God forbid! We are, rather, saying that **genuine faith possesses some very real and consistent evidences**. While the Lord indeed "knows them that are His" (II Tim. 2:19), we do not. Our evidence lies in the fruitage that we possess toward God; in the fact of our conformity to the Divine Image (Rom. 8:29). We are NOT to assume our sonship, but to rather "give diligence to make our calling and election sure" (II Pet. 1:5-10).

That these observations strictly comport with the revelation of God may be seen in the remainder of this third chapter of First Corinthians. Because of the carnality that was prevalent among the Corinthians, Paul questioned the total goodness of the spiritual material being added to God's holy temple there: "But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. . . For if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day will declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is" (I Cor. 3:10-13). Paul is not here speaking of the personal achievements of each individual—i.e., his deeds; but of the **converts** of teachers. The Corinthians themselves were Paul's "work in the Lord" (I Cor. 9:1); they were the result of his efforts, and that was his reason for concern over their spiritual juvenility (putting it very charitably)! Gold, silver, precious stones, wood,

hay, stubble—these all refer to the caliber of individuals brought into the fellowship of the church. Some are lasting, some are temporal; some are of a solid nature, some of a flimsy and soft nature. While all apparently comfortable fit together in this world, it shall not be so in the next. Every individual associated with the church of the Living God shall pass through the fire of God's scrutinizing eye—and there shall be no deception of the Almighty! Those that have made a profession of faith under the influence of Paul, Apollos, etc., shall be tried by God. "If any man's work abide which he hath built thereon, **he shall receive a reward**. If any man's work shall be burned, **he shall suffer loss**; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (I Cor. 3:14-15); i.e., **the teacher must stand the same tests of genuine validity as the converts**. If his converts are proved to be hoaxes, intruders, tares, false children, bastards—then he shall suffer a loss of reward. Much of his labor shall have been expended in vain (Gal. 4:11). If, on the other hand, those that have been influenced by his ministry abide, then he shall receive a reward, and his labor has not been expended in vain! Praise the Lord for that! But either way, he himself has to pass through the fire! He must hear either "Well done, good and faithful servant", or "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you"!

Furthermore, "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple YE are" (I Cor. 3:17). It is a point of obvious deduction that **carnal people ought not to be in the church of the Living God!** It is the "pillar and ground of the truth" (I Tim. 3:15), and **truth is inhibited by carnality**. God does not take lightly the matter of swelling the membership roles with those that are double minded and unstable in all of their ways! Let the one that is building upon the foundation of Christ "Take heed HOW he buildeth thereupon"! Do you see why Paul was concerned about the carnal expressions at Corinth? This endangered his own reward, not to mention the fact that it brought into question their association with Christ in the first place.

We offer no consolation, no hope, no promise, to those that are carnal; simply because God offers them none! **You will search the Scriptures in vain for one single promise of good to those that are carnal and walk after the flesh**. They are consistently and regularly upbraided, cursed, warned, and admonished! Those that insist upon being carnal cannot boast themselves to be Christians—they are **carnal**. If they are but "babes in Christ," we might endure them for a season; but not those that are seasoned veterans—that have been in the Lord's association (by profession) for some time. They need to read and absorb Hebrews the sixth chapter, and "go on to perfection"—"IF GOD PERMIT" (Heb. 6:3). If you are deluded by this term "carnal Christian," let me assure your heart that the day is coming when the hearts of all men will be made manifest. If, in that "great and notable day of the Lord" you are found filthy, the solemn injunction of Scripture shall prevail, "Let him that is filthy still" (Rev. 22:11), thereby fixing you in a state of condemnation! Ought not these things to provoke us to seek "holiness", "without which no man shall see the Lord"? (Heb. 12:14).

THE TWO STRANGERS AT CHRISTIANA'S DOOR

by Sister Deanna Hunley

KNOCK! KNOCK! Two strangers are standing on Christiana's step, the first a smiling young man, the second a young woman holding a tired, runny-nosed child by the hand.

1st Stranger:

Hello. We're conducting a community religious survey. Would you mind answering a few questions?

Christiana:

I am always ready to give an answer to every man that asks me a reason of the hope that is in me, with meekness and fear.¹

1st Stranger:

Wonderful! Do you belong to a church?

Christiana:

To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven.²

1st Stranger:

I don't have that one on my list. What faith is that?

Christiana:

The common faith.³

2nd Stranger:

We mean what kind of faith are you—Lutheran, Baptist, Wesleyan. . .

Christiana:

Lutheran? Baptist? Wesleyan? Is Christ divided? Was Martin Luther crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of John the Baptist or John Wesley?⁴

1st Stranger:

Well, every church has a founder. Who was the founder of your faith?

Christiana:

We are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.⁵

1st Stranger:

Perhaps it would help us to figure out what you are if you told us your church doctrine.

Christiana:

We have continued stedfastly in the apostle's doctrine, and fellowship in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.⁶

2nd Stranger:

But you must have a church creed or manual or statement of faith. Otherwise, how could your people be united in their opinions?

Christiana:

We are of the same mind toward one another.⁷ For our conversation is in heaven from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.⁸

1st Stranger:

Oh, yes! We're looking for that, too!

2nd Stranger:

Yes, indeed! The secret Rapture! The great snatch! We'll be gathered up first, then the wicked will have to go through the tribulation.

Christiana:

Thou hast well spoken "We'll be gathered up first. . ." for the parable says "Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."⁹

1st Stranger:

But that can't be referring to the rapture.

2nd Stranger:

Our pastor explained that. The church won't be here during the tribulation.

Christiana:

For then shall there be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.¹⁰

1st Stranger:

But the elect must not be the church because the church will be raptured before the tribulation.

2nd Stranger:

Our pastor explained that verse. I'm so glad I'll be raptured because I just know I wouldn't be able to bear the great tribulation.

1st Stranger:

Smile! God loves you! And a loving God wouldn't make us go through that. After all we can't come under the judgment of God!

Christiana:

But I glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.¹¹ I praise and thank God continually that he has counted me worthy to be a partaker of the faith of Gideon, and Barak, and of Samson, and of the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of the fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others had trial of cruel mockings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.¹²

2nd Stranger:

Maybe they never heard that believers don't have to suffer tribulation.

1st Stranger:

You do go on and on don't you? Perhaps we'd better press on to question two. Are you a Christian?

Christiana:

I was first called that in Antioch.¹³ I confess that I am a pilgrim and stranger on the earth and I declare plainly that I am seeking a better country.¹⁴

2nd Stranger:

Well! That doesn't sound very patriotic!

Christiana:

Truly, if I had been mindful of that country from whence I came out, I might have had opportunity to have returned, but I desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called my God: For

he hath prepared for my brethren and me a city.¹⁵

2nd Stranger:

What we mean by the question is, are you saved?

Christiana:

Scarcely.

1st Stranger:

What?!?

Christiana:

And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.¹⁶

1st Stranger:

Well, let me see, I think I can check the yes box on question two. Now, what's question three?

2nd Stranger:

(Whispering): Don't you remember? We learned that in our workshop on evangelism. If somebody claims to be a Christian, try to pin'em down. Ask them "When did they become a Christian?"

1st Stranger:

Oh, yes! Question three: When did you become a Christian?

Christiana:

He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. . .¹⁷

1st Stranger:

Now wait a minute. You say you were saved before the foundation of the world? That's impossible.

Christiana:

But by the Grace of God I am what I am.¹⁸ My substance was not hid from God when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. His eyes did see my substance yet being unperfect; and in His book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.¹⁹ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.²⁰

1st Stranger:

Don't you think your views are a little narrow minded?

Christiana:

We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And 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.²¹

1st Stranger:

Well, of course we can't really know yet if we have eternal life, I hope so, but we won't know until we get to heaven.

Christiana:

Jesus said "Verily, Verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him

that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.²²

1st Stranger:

Passed from death unto life! You can't really know that you are.

Christiana:

We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren.²³

1st Stranger:

You're kidding!

2nd Stranger:

Wait a minute you two. You lost me way back there when you said "predestinated." Don't you realize we shouldn't talk about such things because it just confuses people? And am I confused!

Christiana:

Thou hast rightly said!

1st Stranger:

Yes, we don't want to go around scaring people.

Christiana:

God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner; but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.²⁴ And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate. . .²⁵

2nd Stranger:

AAAUGH! There's that word again!

Christiana:

. . . He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.²⁶

2nd Stranger:

But God doesn't predestinate men to be lost. After all, that wouldn't be fair.

Christiana:

When Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then?²⁷

2nd Stranger:

Well, I don't know. You've got me so confused.

1st Stranger:

Yes. Are we still on question three? And I really must agree with my friend that all this predestination talk is scary. How could a loving God hate a little baby before he was even born?

Christiana:

Esau was a profane person, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.²⁸ Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid! For he saith

PUNGENT POINTS

"What about the heathen"?, is a question that often falls upon the ears of believers. In answer we say, "What heathen"? The word "heathen" is a Scriptural word, and is used to denote "nations" in contradistinction to the Hebrews. These "nations", or "heathens" were characterized by a lack of the knowledge of God—by a non-covenantal relationship to their Creator. **Wherever the knowledge of the true and Living God is absent, we have heathens**, in the Scriptural sense of the Word—and it ought to be obvious that we do not have to travel beyond the sea to find such as this. What about them? Justification has been promised to them (not restricted to the Jews)—Galatians 3:8; provision was made in the **early church** to "go to them" (Gal. 2:9); Paul was ordained of God to "preach unto the heathen" (Gal. 1:16). In short, they have not been without the knowledge of God, for the Gospel was "preached to every creature which is under heaven" (Col. 1:23), and the Gospel sound has already went into "the ends of the world" (Rom. 10:18). The fact that certain countries in this world do not have the Gospel at this present time is not at all owing to the supposition that they have never heard it! The Apostles were faithful in their commission to go into all of the world—in their own day. That knowledge, however, has been quenched, squelched, and exchanged for the things of this world. There has been an obstinate refusal to "retain God in their knowledge" (Rom. 1). We ought not, however, to be surprised at this, for we ourselves are living in a country that is in the very process of practicing the same thing. What about the heathen with whom we live?

I have heard it said that preaching is really secondary in the Kingdom—that there are other things, such as personal work, etc., that really take the precedence over preaching. Multitudes of preachers confess that the least amount of their time is spent in preparation for and in preaching. This attitude is apparently accepted of the majority, for there is a lamentable dearth of real preachers—of powerful proclaimers of the Word in the land. One can hardly hear anyone speak with power the things of God anymore. But, what does the Word of God have to say about preaching—about the public and audible proclamation of the Word of God? The Apostles were commanded to "**preach**" (Acts 10:42); the "word of faith" is to be "**preached**" (Rom. 10:8); men are commanded to "**preach the word**" (II Tim. 4:2); the proclamation of the cross is called "**the preaching of the cross**" (I Cor. 1:18); God has appointed "**preaching**" as the means to salvation (I Cor. 1:21); God has "manifested" His purpose and His salvation "**through preaching**" in these "due times" (Titus 1:3). Make no mistake about it, dear reader, when preaching is diminished or minimized in any sense, faith decreases, and the knowledge of God is on the wane. There needs to be a very definite return to an **emphasis** on preaching—on the proclamation of the message of God in the ears of people!

It has often been of interest to me that referring to a meeting as a seminar, offering a work book, and charging a fee, draws more people than the simple preaching of the Word of God. Surely we are living in a time of spiritual decadence

when such methods need to be employed to stir interest. In our own area it is difficult to get a handful of people to hear the message of Christ and to fellowship in the truth—but if one comes offering a workbook and a badge or certificate of approval, multitudes will flock in. Strange—exceedingly strange!

* * *

There are some precious things mentioned in the Word of God, and the degree of their preciousness to us will indicate our real level of spirituality. To name a few of them: "The word of the Lord" (I Sam. 3:1); the thoughts of God (Psa. 139:17); wisdom (Prov. 3:15); Christ as the "Corner Stone" (I Pet. 2:6); the "sons of Zion" (Lam. 4:2); tried faith (I Pet. 1:7); the "blood of Christ" (I Pet. 1:19); the Lord Jesus to believers (I Pet. 2:7); the faith itself (II Pet. 1:1); the promises of our God (II Pet. 1:4).

* * *

What is a believer? Firstly, it is not merely someone that declares himself to be a believer. Believing is a very real thing, and believers are very real. Believers have repented (Matt. 21:32); they have "received" the Lord Jesus (Jno. 1:12); they are not interested in the honor of men (Jno. 5:44); they have accepted Moses' writings (Jno. 5:47); they are "justified from all things" (Acts 13:39); they have learned, and are learning, what it means to suffer (Phil. 1:29); they are those that "come to" God (Heb. 11:6); Christ is precious to them (I Pet. 1:21); they have a joy and peace in believing (Rom. 15:13); they overcome the world (I Jno. 5:5).

* * *

There are few liberties as wonderful as that of believing the Word of God; freedom of the heart and conscience which permits one to unreservedly receive and trust implicitly in the Word of the Almighty, regardless of its association with what is already accepted.

* * *

The Book of Revelation gives an overview of the world from three different perspectives first, the trials of the church (the seven seals); second, the judgements of God against the world (the seven trumpets); third, the judgements of God against spiritual Babylon the great (the seven vials). This great book also reveals the three great assaults made against the church. First, the assault of the natural order at large; second, the assault of the principle of earthly government, as depicted in the "beast"; third, the assault of the perverted church—Babylon, which operates on the principle of earthly government, riding upon the "beast." Revelation also reveals the inferiority of earthly kingdoms, and the superiority of the heavenly Kingdom. The heavenly Kingdom did not weaken in the face of success, in the face of persecution, in the face of earthly deprivation, in the face of death, in the face of the necessity of avengement, and in the case of the collapse of the entire earthly order. It shall withstand all things—whether it be summarized in the assault of earthly governmental powers, or in the attack of organized religion. All other kingdoms shall ultimately fall beneath the superior Kingdom of God. Knowing these things, the book of Revelation becomes a great source of comfort and consolation to fighting saints.

SOME THINGS THAT GOD DOES

1. Wounds and heals—Deut. 32:39
2. Kills, makes alive, makes poor, makes rich, brings low and lifts up—1 Sam. 2:6-7
3. Makes sore, binds up, wounds, and His hands make whole—Job 5:17-18.
4. Shuts, cuts off, gathers in—Job 11:10.
5. Makes the heart soft—Job 23:16.
6. Weakens strength—Psa. 102:10, 23.
7. Forms light, creates darkness, makes peace, creates evil—Isa. 45:7.
8. Changes times and seasons, removes and sets up kings—Dan. 2:20, 21.
9. Gives the kingdoms of the earth to even the basest of men—Dan. 4:17.
10. Makes the dumb, the deaf, the seeing, and the blind—Ex. 4:11.

See how wonderfully diverse our God is in His workings. He cannot be understood in terms of mere patterns and trends, but only by faith. His works are characterized by truth, not by pattern; by justice, not by static forms. To know this in truth is to experience a liberty of heart that is of the greatest magnitude. How I thank God that His people are given to see these things.

A religion that must depend upon organization to be successful is more of the earth than it is of heaven; more temporary than eternal; more fleshly than spiritual! God's Kingdom moves like the wind—often unpredictable, illogical—but effectual in every way! The great spiritual moves of the Scriptures were unplanned, unorganized—but mighty (Pentecost, conversion of Samaria, Ephesus, Cornelius' household, the Philippians' jailor's household, and the harbinger-ministry of John the Baptist.

The religious seminary concept is necessary to the perpetration of the clergy system, and the clergy system is necessary to the propagation of the religious system or order. Neither, however is necessary for the forgiveness of sins, the investment of spiritual power, peace, joy, or the increase of the Kingdom of God!

The notion that man proceeded from a lower form of life is a devilish doctrine, and only those that are subject to the Devil will ultimately embrace it. It makes no room for God, no room for the fall of man, and thus no room for the redemption and reconciliation of man. One simply cannot embrace the Lord Jesus Christ and the theory of evolution, for Jesus Christ came to redeem FALLEN man, not evolved man! But if man has in actuality evolved and advanced, then he has not fallen—and if he has not fallen, then there can be no need for a Savior! There are two things that every man must do—die and stand before the judgement of the Almighty (Hebrews 9:27). Natural men refuse to confront the fact of death, and modern religious men refuse to confront the fact of judgement—but we shall all face them both, and it behooves us to prepare for that confrontation.

God is truly glorified by such things as husbands loving their wives, wives loving their husbands, children obeying their parents, laborers

working heartily to the Lord. What the world sorely needs now is a working class of believers—those that do whatsoever their hand finds to do heartily as to the Lord, and not to men! Organized religion has taken its toll of men's energies for the sake of the institution—it is time that the Lord is now served on a daily basis in order that the Divine Light might shine in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation.

Wherever it becomes necessary to emphasize witnessing and soul-winning in order to thrust men into activities of influence, there has been an admission of spiritual deadness.

Often young people ask, "Is it wrong to dance, etc.?" But we would like to go on record as saying that this is not the question! The question is, "Is it **right** to dance, etc? Does it glorify God? Is it in harmony with the purpose of God? May I do it heartily as unto the Lord?" That, young people, is the sort of questions that you ought to be asking about these things—and we might add, that to ask them is to answer them!

We live in a time when sin is being dressed with respectable garments—and often with garments of pity. Drunkards, homo-sexuals, and those addicted to narcotics are said to be sick—to be possessed of a lamentable disease. But the Word of God identifies such things as sin—**willful** matters which will lead to ultimate and final condemnation.

There ought to be times when the saints come together to share with one another the good things of God—when everyone is not merely a listener, but where they become a contributor to the other brethren's faith. I can testify by experience that this is very rewarding, and that it greatly assists in overcoming the snares of the Evil One.

Truth is exhilarating it lifts the soul, illuminates the understanding, strengthens the heart, and excites the spirit. We ought not to stoop to inferior methods by which to elevate the spirits of the saints. Songs ought to contain the truth, when tunes cannot; sermons ought to be saturated with truth, although the voice in which they are presented might not be necessarily exhilarating! **Methods, techniques, and the likes are all artificial means of stimulating the saints of the Most High God.** They might well appear to be successful sometimes, but that is only because the end which they serve is not God's objective!

"Which church is the right church"? The one where Jesus Christ is in truth; the one where the whole counsel of God is delivered; the one where the brethren love one another fervently; the one where they honestly and earnestly meet in the Name of the Lord. All other churches are mere organizations—unworthy of the support of the seekers of the Lord!

Does habitual company and identification with the ungodly convert them? If so, why didn't Lot convert Sodom, Moses Egypt, Jesus Cana of Galilee, or Stephen the Sanhedrin?

Two Strangers at Christiana's Door

(From page 4)

to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.²⁹

1st Stranger:

I think you missed the point of the question.

2nd Stranger:

Yes, we want to know exactly when you prayed to receive Christ as your own personal Saviour. When did you come to know the Lord?

Christiana:

The Lord hath said, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not each every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.³⁰ Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.³¹

1st Stranger:

Baptism! How people blow that up out of all proportion! After all baptism can't save us!

Christiana:

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison: Which sometime were disobedient when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure where unto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.³²

1st Stranger:

Baptism is just a picture of what has already taken place in our hearts. If we invite Christ into our hearts He comes in and never leaves, no matter what we might do in the future.

Christiana:

I have many things to say of Christ and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God. ³³For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put hi into an open shame.³⁴

1st Stranger:

Well, we really must be moving on. We've spent

too much time at this house already.

2nd Stranger:

Yes, we must be on our way if we are to fulfill the Great Commission in this generation.

Christiana:

Great Commission? Those are not words which the Holy Ghost teacheth. Yet, it's true the Lord has given us some great tasks to do in the time of our sojourning here. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."³⁵

2nd Stranger:

No. We don't mean that.

Christiana:

NO? Then perhaps it's "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life."³⁶

2nd. Stranger:

Uh. . .no.

Christiana:

Go, and sin no more?

1st Stranger:

No, that's not it either.

Christiana:

(Turning to the young woman with the child by the hand): To be sober, to love your husband, to love your children, to be discreet, chaste, a keeper at home, good, obedient to your own husband? Surely this must be the Great Commission for any young mother!

2nd Stranger:

What an outdated idea! Why, the modern liberated woman can partake in any number of outside activities and still take care of her home.

Christiana:

Who hath bewitched you that you should not obey the truth?³⁹ For the Word teaches young women to be keepers at home, not merely keepers of the home. (Touching the tired little child's head, Christiana goes on) Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.⁴⁰

2nd Stranger:

Well! I don't have to stand here and take this!

Christiana:

(As the two strangers turn to leave): But, tell me, what is your Great Commission?

1st Stranger:

Why, to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.⁴¹

Christiana:

(Calling out in amazement and wonder after them): But. . .When are you going to start!?

* * *

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

1 I Peter 3:15	13 Acts 11:26
2 Hebrews 12:23	14 Hebrews 11:13
3 Titus 1:4	15 Hebrews 11:15-16
4 I Corinthians 1:13	16 I Peter 4:18-19
5 Romans 4:16	17 Eph. 1:4-5
6 Acts 2:42	18 I Corinthians 15:10
7 Romans 12:16	19 Ps. 139:15-16
8 Ph. 3:20	20 Eph. 2:10
9 Matt. 13:30	21 I John 5:19-20
10 Matt. 24:22	22 Matt. 5:24
11 Romans 5:3-5	23 I John 3:14
12 Hebrews 11:32-38	24 II Timothy 1:7-10

LORD'S SUPPER MEDITATION ON

II CHRONICLES 13:11

By Richard Ebler

“. . . the shewbread also set they in order upon the pure table . . .” (II Chron 13:11).

This passage is referring to the table of shewbread under the old covenant worship set up by Moses through the Levitical law. It was a table in the Holy Place which stood off to the right as you entered therein. This was the same sanctuary which contained the golden candlestick and the golden altar of incense. On this table were twelve loaves of shewbread, one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel, set in order. It was called the pure table because of its holy character, being set apart and ordained of God for the service of God in the Holy Place.

Now, if this pureness was true of the table of shewbread under the old covenant; then how much more is it true of the Lord's table under the new covenant? If the old covenant had holy ordinances, then how much more the new covenant which excels in glory?

Not only is the Lord's Supper pure because it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer, ie. holy in origin and practice, but it is also intrinsically pure because of the holy realities that it sets forth to our faith. It was the pure blood of Christ that we recognize here that was shed for our sin. It was His pure sinless body that was broken for us who were impure and sinful.

This faith tends to make our hearts pure as we partake of this pure table aright. May the purifying effects of the gospel be felt on every heart!

Why do we sin? Certainly not because we have to! Those that are born again are admonished "awake unto righteousness and SIN NOT" (I Cor. 25:34). The things of Holy Scripture are also written unto us that "we sin not" (I Jno. 2:1). Further "we are not debtors to the flesh to live after the flesh" (Rom. 8:12), and "He that is in us is greater than he that is in the world" (I Jno. 4:4). Besides these things "God is faithful, who will not suffer (permit) us to be tempted above that 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). In view of these things, how humbled and contrite ought we to be when we sin and "come short of the glory of God!"

I have casually observed that when people attend a fellowship of believers, their general deportment, preferences, listening habits, contributing habits—all manifest their relationship to the Living God. If they do not sing the songs of Zion, sit as far back as they can, attend erratically, and forget their Bibles. I have found that they are generally in poor spiritual condition. There have been very few, if any, exceptions to these observations.

I have observed that in our day too many supposed believers have a religion that is not for their children. Their studies, retreats, etc., are generally called and attended without the offspring. This trend is interesting in view of the Word of God, which seemed to always bring the "little ones" into full connection with the assembly of the righteous (Ex. 10:10; Duet. 20:14; Josh. 8:35; II Chron. 20:13; Ezra. 8:21).

25 Romans 8:28-29	33 Hebrews 5:11-12
26 Romans 8:29	34 Hebrews 6:4-6
27 Romans 9:10-14	35 Matt. 5:48
28 Hebrews 12:16	36 I Timothy 6:12
29 Romans 9:14-16	37 John 8:11
30 Hebrews 8:10-11	38 Titus 2:4-5
31 Romans 6:3-5	39 Gal. 3:1
32 I Peter 3:18-21	40 Mark 16:15

The wisdom of this world is "foolishness with God" (I Cor. 3:19). It is "foolishness" whether it goes under the guise of "doctor," "master," or "wise man." If wisdom is not in strict comportment with the mind of God, it is vain and foolish, however advantageous it may appear on the surface! This does not mean that we are to place a premium upon ignorance, but that we are rather to seek the sanctification of all true knowledge by building it upon the foundation of the revelation of God!

* * *

The truth is to be received, no matter who speaks it. Balaam of old heard truth from the lips of an ass, and the Sanhedrin from Caiaphas who spoke truth contrary to his own heart. **The value is on the truth, not on the messenger as such.** While we are never to reject truth because it is spoken by an apparently ungodly man, we are never to accept error though it is spoken by an apparently godly man. Blessed is the man that has mastered this holy art of sifting.

* * *

We are faced with all too much professional religion these days. True religion, however, does not come in a professional garb. It is not characterized by stereotyped representatives. Those that are born of the Spirit of God are like the wind which blows wherever it is heard, although we know not where it comes from or where it goes. There is a certain freedom inherent in regeneration that liberates one from static, as well as stagnant, life.

Satan is bold—his followers are bold. Especially is this true in his followers that claim to be followers of Christ. They resist the Truth boldly, blatantly, openly. They are not hesitant to speak their carnal minds and too often stand in opposition to the forthright proclamation of the Word of God. They are not afraid to recruit the children of the Lord, if possible, to their particular sect and school of thought. The thought has occurred to me that the righteous "are bold as a lion", and that these traits ought to be found within them in reference to their responses to Satanic falsehood. Let every child of God become bold and forceful in his dealing with Satan's children, sparing no feelings.