

THE WORD OF TRUTH

Published Monthly

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

Volume 11

MAY, 1967

Number 5

"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

PHILOSOPHY IS NOT FAITH

Philosophy is not to be confused with faith! Groping is not understanding, speculation is not prophecy, and vain philosophy is not persuasion! BECAUSE A SELF-ADOPTED VIEW MAY SEEM TO POSSESS SOME ELEMENT OF SATISFACTION, DOES NOT INDICATE THE PRESENCE OF TRUE FAITH - THE "FAITH OF GOD'S ELECT" (Titus 1:1). Faith is a persuasion FROM heaven; philosophy is a surmising of earth. The difference between a mere philosopher and a man of faith is this: The philosopher is groping for the unknown, seeking to know; the man of faith is being led to the unknown, with the promise of participation. One is done in the strength of man, the other in the strength of the Lord. FAITH IS BASED UPON THE FIRM FOUNDATION OF GOD'S IMMUTABLE WORD; VAIN PHILOSOPHY IS BASED UPON MERE HUMAN ANALYSIS AND CONCEPTION. It is vitally important to distinguish between the "faith of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:9), and pseudo-persuasion (vain philosophy) which parades itself as faith! The Holy Spirit witnesses; "Beware lest any man SPOIL you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col. 2:8). The heart of man is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it" (Jer. 17:9); so much so is it deceptive that, through the instrumentality of Satan, it can produce an assurance which is fraudulent, yet which calls itself faith. Such self-faith is actually "leaning to your own understanding" APART from Divine revelation. THEIR conception is the ultimate criterion, and thus is way given to pride. In such a frame of spirit there is possessed no spiritual poverty ("Blessed are the POOR in spirit, for theirs IS the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:3-4). There is no real sense of the sufficiency of Christ ("I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:12), nor of the insufficiency of self; "without me, ye can do nothing" (John 15:4-5). On the contrary, there is a building up of pride, self delusion, and self exaltation. How utterly unattractive to anyone wearing the Name of Jesus! Let all who seek a genuine faith call upon the Name of the Lord! Let them devote themselves to the Word of God, to fervent prayer, fasting, fellowship, and other ordained and lawful means of appropriating faith - but let them not blindly grope in the dictates of their own heart apart from

(Please turn to page 8)

In This Issue . . .

The Danger of Religious Error - Page 2

Some Cautions Concerning Newness - Page 5

The Word of Truth

Published monthly by The Church Meeting at 26th and Colfax Street, Gary, Indiana.

Author and Editor: Given O. Blakely

Circulation Managers: Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Powers
Publication Office: 26th and Colfax St., Gary, Indiana. (Send no correspondence to this address.)

Business Offices: 7903 Hendricks Place,
Crown Point, Ind. 46307

Address all correspondence to 7903 Hendricks Place,
Crown Point, Indiana 46307

Sent Free upon request to all interested parties.

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT
CROWN POINT, INDIANA

THE DANGER OF RELIGIOUS ERROR

Our Lord summons us forth to watchfulness, sobriety, and spiritual alertness (I Pet. 1:13; I Cor. 16:13; II Tim. 4:5). For the saint, life is marked with great and pressing dangers which demand sound-mindedness (II Tim. 1:7), and a vigilance of spirit (I Pet. 5:8). We are in a hostile world that is, constituted an enemy of the Lord (James 4:4), and so we are "strangers and pilgrims" in this earth (I Pet. 2:11). **Everything in it militates against our faith, presses hard upon our spirits, and attempts to drag us into the mire of carnality.** Everything that is in the world is "not of the Father, but is of the world; and the world passeth away, and the lusts thereof . . ." (I John 2:15-17). We are to beware of such cankerous growths as "covetousness" (Luke 12:15), and see to it that the light that is in us be not darkness (Luke 11:35), i.e., that the thing which we credit with bringing great illumination has not actually brought grievous deception, and thus filled our lives with spiritual ignorance. **There is no room for the sloth in the Kingdom of God;** he poses a threat to the whole spiritual community of saints, as well as opening the door for great and sore troubles in his own life. Let each saint be encouraged to "**strive to enter the strait gate**" (Matt. 7:13-14), and leave off any trend that sets up sloth, indifference, and general spiritual laziness upon the throne. Let it be said of all believers as it was said of the Hebrew children in the days of Nehemiah; "Nevertheless we made our pray unto God, and set a watch against them day and night because of them" (Neh. 4:9). Our adversaries are many, and chiefly those of great spiritual power; "For we wrestle **not** against flesh and blood, but against principalities, and powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places, against the rulers of the darkness of this world" (Eph. 6:12).

Not only, however, are we to keep vigilant watch for those about us in the world, and for the evil within our own breasts asserting itself, **but we are to beware of false religious influence.** Here is one of the most contaminating influences of our day; corrupt religion. Satan, disguised as a "minister of light", and his angels as "ministers of

righteousness" (II Cor. 11:15) have infiltrated the church, bringing in demonical teaching and doctrines (I Tim. 4:1). These "doctrines of devils" are not always apparent, especially to those that are young in the faith. Some of them are extremely cunning, and able to confuse, to say the least, many a sincere person. **We are to beware of this propagation of religious error, not receiving everything into our hearts without some element of reservation and proving.** It is this matter of the subversive nature of religious error that now merits our attention, and I bid you to "gird up the loins of your mind" (II Pet. 1:13) and think on this.

* * *

The Insufficiency Of An Understanding Not Formed By The Word of God

Frequently, of late, have I heard this statement made: "If we are honest and sincere, we have nothing to fear from religious error." This may appear on the surface to be worthy of embracement, but there is far more than meets the eye. I am persuaded that this is a delusion of the Devil, and is designed to provoke the saints to open up their affection and their hearts to every form of religious propagation. It is, of course, quite out of step with the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and for that reason alone, ought to be shunned with great vigor of heart. The Holy Spirit has never moved any one to say or write that we have nothing to fear from corrupt doctrine - **me thinks, however that there are other spirits in the higher realms which would have us to embrace such a concept.** Let it be sure to all of our readers that when a man is truly filled of the Spirit (and that is a daily experience, not merely a day on the calendar when you became the particular recipient of a peculiar experience) you will not be subject to delusion. The Lord has graciously fortified us against delusion when we are "walking in the light as He is in the light." Thus are we able to "judge all things" (I Cor. 2:14-16). **However, the saints life is not always dominated by such a walk - however desired it might be.** In the wisdom of God, there have been grievous valleys interspersed throughout our life's journey, gall, and bitter herbs. When we are upon the mountain of transfiguration, we also come to experience the coming down into the lower regions to face humiliation and trials, even as our Lord's disciples did (Matt. 17:1-8). The casting down of the soul, fears without and fears within, testings many, trials of our faith, God hiding Himself, the heavens as brass - these are all conceptions taught by the Holy Spirit. Those who are not familiar with the Word of the Lord have, of course, little basic understanding of these matters, and thus are subject to all sorts of spiritual rubbish and contamination. Our lives are not spent upon the higher rejoicing and discerning plains continually - and that according to the wisdom of the Lord. The attitudes of the heart that prevail when you are in the very Throne-room of the Lord, relishing and imbibing of His Nature, seeing and beholding His face, are not attitudes to be depended upon for valley experiences! There are times when we must simply cry out to the Lord, pleading and begging for mercy, asking Him not to forsake us,

supplicating for a sense of His presence, and seeking His face.

It is during such times as this that the saint becomes vulnerable to delusion. His defenses are not as strong as they might be, and thus he learns what it means to "flee." Even his own heart is not readily discernible to him, and he realizes that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). Who will dare to stand up and say that during these times the saint has nothing to fear from error; that he is impervious to delusion; that incorrect conceptions will not have an adverse effect upon his heart and demeanor of life. Surely none but a fool would dare to contend for such foolishness! But, praise the Lord, **those who have their understanding molded by the living Word of God are not ignorant of these things;** they see the "slimepits" and the pitfalls before them, and will not "tempt God" by submitting themselves to contamination of any kind!

Is not the "heart deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked?" (Jer. 17:9), who can know it? Who will trust to their own discernment; or, as the Lord has put it; "lean to their own understanding" (Prov. 3:5-6)? Is not this self-confidence? and are we not warned against such practices? If a man's understanding is not formed by the Word of God, he is shut up to his own understanding, and thus in continual conflict with the judgement of the Lord! Not even our experiences may become the basis for our understanding - it must be firmly based upon the Word of the Lord; "Through Thy precepts I get understanding: therefore hate I every false way" (Psa. 119:104); "The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (Psa. 119:130). Further, our understanding is given to us of the Lord in order to an appreciation of the judgements of His mouth; "Give my understanding, **and I shall keep Thy law;** yea. I shall observe it with my whole heart" (Psa. 119:34); "Give me understanding **that I may learn Thy commandments**" (Psa. 119:73); "I am Thy servant, give me understanding **that I may know Thy testimonies**" (Psa. 119:125). The clear implication of the Lord is that if we have **no basic understanding of His Word, we shall have a faulty understanding in all other things.** How startling this is, in view of the prevailing ignorance concerning God's Word that exists in our day. Surely we live amidst a stupid people; devoid of understanding and at variance with the Lord God of heaven and earth; and yet myriads of these same people profess to have a close fellowship with the Lord; to worship and adore Him, and to have real victory through faith - though they confess with their own mouths that they are ignorant concerning His Word, and find it too deep for their feeble minds to even begin to appreciate. See to it that you do not lean to your own understanding, or trust in your own discernment; "He that trusteth his own heart is a fool" (Prov. 28:26). We are charged of the Holy Spirit not to walk "as other Gentiles, **IN THE VANITY OF THEIR MIND**" (Eph. 4:17-18). Any walk that is dictated by your own understanding minus the Word of God is surely a vain walk, and fraught with many a hurtful snare and lust. Oh, that more would see this truth of trusting implicitly to the Lord and His Word, and removing themselves from self-understanding.

The World There Are Many False Prophets In

The danger of religious error, and the insufficiency of an understanding not formed by the Word of God is highlighted by the great abundance of false prophets that are in the world. We are sent forth as "sheep among wolves", and our souls are constantly in jeopardy of spiritual damage if we keep ourselves not pure and undefiled, and "unspotted from the world" (Matt. 10:16; I Tim. 5:22; James 1:27). A "false prophet" is a very deceptive person; we need to define, or make an attempt to define, who he is. **A false prophet is a prophet that is not a prophet in reality; it is a man purporting to be sent from the Lord that has not been sent from the Lord; it is a man delivering a message to whom no message has been given; one that is preaching that has not been sent to preach; one occupying the place of an instructor in the church whom God has not so set in the church.** His words may outwardly conform to the text of the Scripture and his manners may appear quite orthodox; but if he has not been called, sent, and endowed with wisdom by the Lord God Himself, he is a false prophet. His quiet manners, good disposition, and ability to influence people are all subterfuge, and of the Devil! His message may appear to be true, and fundamental; but if it does not produce the fruit of God, he has spoken as an imposter, and is proved to be but a minister of Satan disguised as a minister of righteousness (II Cor. 11:13-15); "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if **HIS MINISTERS** also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works".

A false prophet is a product of self labor; no burning message within the heart, no genuine freshness from heaven. It is true that the vast majority of seminary graduates today fall into this category; false prophets! Even though they have the shell of truth, yet they are not endowed with the power of God, and are intruders into the ministry, speaking only those things which they have learned to mimic. Of such men it is witnessed; "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken unto them, yet they prophesied. But if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my word, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doing" Jer. 23: 21-22.

Legion is the name of this congregation of false prophets; they, posing themselves to be men of God, only expose through their speech, their manners, and their emphases that they are not sent from God, but are ministers of Satan, disguised as ministers of righteousness, whether they are aware of it themselves or not. These have no message from the Lord; they expound traditional thoughts, thinking all the while that they are declaring the Word of the Lord. Yet, by their own confession, they are woefully ignorant of God's word, having knowledge of only those portions which seem to propound their particular theology.

When it comes to prophets such as Isaiah, Malachi, Zechariah, Obadiah, Amos, Nahum — they will acknowledge that they have probably never even read them (along with the majority of the Scriptures). Away with them, for they are an abomination in the eyes of the Lord, and in our eyes, who have come, by grace, to love the Lord with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

There are "MANY false prophets" that have gone out into the world (I John 4:1), and because of this, we are enjoined to "try the spirits to see whether they be of God." The believer is not to be gullible; he is to be deliberate in receiving those things that purport to be of God. Did not our Lord Himself warn His disciples; "Beware of false prophets which come to you in **sheep's clothing**, but inwardly are ravening wolves" (Matt. 7:15). They have the **appearance** of sheep, but inwardly they seek to devour, for their own profit and career, the sheep of God. These "take away the key of knowledge" (Luke 11:52) and thus render people's worship profitless and vain! There are false prophets about you, and they are seeking to bring you into their snare, even though many of them believe that they are declaring the truth. These corrupt the people of God, who are not impervious to their attacks apart from faith and the knowledge of God (Isa. 3:12; 9:16; Jer. 6:13-14; 12:10; 23:1; Ezek. 13:10, 22; Micah 3:5 Mal. 2:8). The warning is that these false prophets will allure many **disciples** (Acts 20:29), and that "**many** will follow their pernicious ways" (II Pet. 2:1-3). It behooves all people of God not to underestimate their adversary in this matter of delusion through false prophets. **We do have to fear error**, for that is the broad way that leadeth to destruction, and none are so advanced that they may let down their guard in respect to it. **Beware of any religious emphasis that propogates the false dogma that true believers have nothing to fear from error.** If this were the case, it would obviate a good portion of the Scriptures which warn believers concerning false prophets and error. This, as you may well see, is underscored by the fact of "MANY" false prophets. Let your minds be gird up, and your eyes open, not permitting Satan to gain a foothold in your mind because of spiritual relaxation.

* * *

The Danger Of Error - Its Contaminating Influence

Error cannot be treated passively; it is contaminating: Just as men are instructed by the truth to do the truth, so men are instructed by error to error from the truth. There are those that not only break the commandments of God themselves but "**TEACH**" others to do so (Matt. 5:19). Their condemnation is twofold. First, because they themselves have departed from the truth, and second, because they have instructed others to depart from the truth. **Do not suppose that you may depend upon the Lord to keep you back from error when you stubbornly pursue it.** Our Father does not work in this manner. If you insist upon following the pathway of error, and walking in ignorance and alienation from the Lord, then you are **assuming** when you say that

you are a child of the Lord, and you may not depend upon the Lord to guide you into all truth if you yourself have blindly followed the blind. The Lord has promised to look upon the humble and contrite heart (Isa. 57:15), but the solemn injunction of Deity is that when the blind lead the blind, the "BOTH" fall into the ditch (Matt. 15:14). **Error is harmless to us only as we stand aloof from it, and ever seek after the "deep things of God."** The solemn words of Scripture are: "**Cease to hear words that cause thee to err**" (Prov. 19:27).

Many do I personally know that are aware that the church or fellowship they are affiliated with is guilty of propagating false emphases and dogmas, and yet they persistently continue in their fellowship with them. What do they think of God, and of the Word of God. Are they not warned to "make them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine, and to avoid them" (Rom. 16:17-18). Is it for naught that the Lord speaks this? Are we not told that our minds can be "**corrupted** from the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus" (II Cor. 11:3-4)? Yea, the Apostle even declared that he feared this would come to pass. He had, in the Spirit, observed their looseness of spirituality, and their proneness to give ear to all sorts of religious garbage and spiritual juvenility.

The Lord still speaks the same today to those unstable souls who are never satisfied with truth, but are always in pursuit of some new thing which will serve as a substitute for "holiness, without which, no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14). It is such people that are led astray by false prophets, and are perverted by corrupt teaching, for in their hearts they have not been stabilized; and it is a "good thing that the heart be established with grace" (Heb. 13:9). Remember the Galatians? They had received the Word of God, had turned from their wicked ways to serve the living God, and had received the Holy Spirit of God because they were **truly** sons (Gal. 4:4-6). Yet, they removed themselves from the true Gospel of Christ and followed and embraced "another gospel", which was not "another" (but some would "pervert the Gospel of Christ") (Gal. 1:6-7). And do you, oh simple one, that is given to lending your soul to all such as pervert the Gospel of Christ, believe that you shall escape a like situation. "Awake to righteousness and sin not" — separate yourself from those who speak not in "wholesome words", even the "words of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Tim. 6:3). "Be not deceived, evil communications corrupt good manners" (I Cor. 15:33).

Are we not warned against being corrupted by "enticing words"; "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up with his fleshly mind" (Col. 2:18); and again; "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col. 2:8). **God's strength is not intended to make you strong so that you may test your strength by being bound by the green withes of traditionalism and philosophy. Likewise, Christ's wisdom is not given to the saints in order that they might make their homes among the ignorant. It is a false phi-**

(Please turn to page 7)

SOME CAUTIONS CONCERNING NEWNESS

Newness is fraught with danger, and yet it is a blessed benefit for the saints. The word to all believers is "watch" (Mark 13:37). Especially is this true for those who are experiencing new things spiritually. It is possible, for instance, to develop an inordinate desire and affection for newness, as the Athenians in Acts 17:21. **We must never glory in new things, but rather, in the Lord;** else the Devil shall keep us busy with new matters while we neglect the "old paths" (Jer. 6:16). Many there are who have become enamored with new experiences, new doctrines, and new conceptions, and thus they have left "the faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3-5). Curiosity, in such cases, replaces firm hope; and surmisings de-throne persuasion. Thus are great difficulties spawned and places made for the Devil (Eph. 4:27). Beware, therefore, of that "inordinate affection" (Col. 3:5) for things new, which many times ushers in a disdain for things "old". Remember that a good scribe "bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old" (Matt. 13:52).

Secondly, newness, by its very nature, is attended by some degree of ignorance. If this were not the case, there could be no spiritual newness in the manner of which I speak. How graphically this is illustrated in the new birth itself. In Jesus we become "new creatures (creations); behold old things pass away, and all things become new" (II Cor. 5:17). This birth is followed by an evident period of juvenility spiritually, during which entirely new conceptions must be learned and new principles and manners understood. How unhesitatingly we confess that our Lord Jesus has sent the Holy Spirit to assist and instruct us effectually in these matters "pertaining to the Kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3; John 16:13). When we are meek in the acceptance of His gracious instruction (James 1:21), we will become acutely aware of our prevailing ignorance in spiritual things, and will thus be constrained to ask "wisdom" of the Lord (James 1:5), whole giving earnest heed to the Word of God (I Pet. 2:2; II Pet. 1:5-9).

Unless the following traits characterize the young believer (1. Prayer for illumination. 2. Attentiveness to the Word. 3. Receptivity to instruction — both by the Spirit inwardly, and by means of Spirit-filled instructors outwardly) there will develop an inevitable proclivity toward heretical doctrines and vain imaginations. Too, men will, of necessity, be constrained to lean unto their own understanding (Prov. 3:5-6), and thus displease the Lord, evidencing themselves to be certain fools (Prov. 28:26). Because of the ignorance that needs to be dissipated following newness, there often arises surmisings — self-wrought interpretations of Providence and the Word. Sometimes, these surmisings, because of man's intrinsic evil, become so pervading that they are perpetrated as dogma and doctrines. Experience becomes the mould for instruction, and feeling is substituted for faith. While both experience and feeling are valuable and necessary to the believer, they are, like the law, "weak through the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). By that I mean that they are subject to interpretation, in which area the flesh is not only prone, but bound to error. **Whenever men are thrust**

upon a course which excludes the guidance of the Word expressly and categorically, they are in a weak area — weak because the flesh (man as He is) does not see properly, and even if the new man sees the truth, the influence of the old nature so mitigates observations that errors of judgments and evaluations are most likely. Man, apart from God's influence and guidance, is totally unable to make proper evaluations of experience and feeling. The solemn Word of God on this matter is; "Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (I Cor. 2:11-14). **Whatever is wrought by God** and that is "all things" (II Cor. 5:18; Rom. 11:36) **can be made clear ONLY by the Holy Spirit.** Apart from His ministry, man is in complete ignorance! It is worthy of our remembrance at this point to recall the position of the Scriptures in this matter — it is one of pre-eminence. These are the oracles of the Holy Spirit: "Holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Pet. 1:21). While men's opinions and imaginations are not assured of profitableness, the Scriptures are (II Tim. 3:16-17). Each believer must learn to gauge his experience and feeling by the testimony of the Scripture, the Word of God which is "the Sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6:17). In short, it is vitally necessary that any new thing be followed by an examination of God's Word, prayer, and a spiritual reluctance to be gullible, always remembering that deception and delusion are twin sisters of a most powerful persuasion.

In the past few years, the Lord has been working "new things" (Isa. 43:19) among many peoples. Outward spiritual gifts and phenomenon have occurred which are strongly reminiscent of the days of the "acts of the Apostles." There seems to be no limitation in respect to the place of these manifestations. People from every denomination and walk of life have been involved to the glory of God. Among many there has come a real sense of God's magnificent "power and godhead" (Rom. 1:20), a more worshipful spirit, and a real zeal for fellowship, prayer, and praise. A sense of the supernatural has been restored where so long it has been missing, and more meekness in the reception of the Word of God is evident. The newness of these things has, however, brought certain problems with it — not unsolvable, praise the Lord! There is a great need for spiritual guidance and instruction in the Word in order to achieve a proper handling of these various dispensed stewardships. There is, in some circles, even an intensification of traditional forms and modes. For example, there has been a recent spiritual awakening in the very heart of Notre Dame University, in South Bend, Indiana. Through some acquaintance that we have there, coupled with some written reports by eye witnesses, we believe there has been great hunger for God and the things of God manifested — prayer groups, study groups, miracles of healing, and various other external manifestations of the spiritual order.

Though a very deep attitude of worship and praise pervades their services, yet there is allegiance given to the devout recitation of the "Mass" — yea, more devout assent to it than ever before. Prayers are being made to Mary, patron

saints, etc. Such spiritual misdemeanors arise from ignorance more than faulty love, and thus may be graciously corrected by the proclamation of the Word of God. In other circles with which we are even more familiar, men have asserted that they still preach the same messages, except with great power and conviction. It is known that not a few of these messages are based upon thorough misconceptions of the Apostles' Doctrine; yet, because of a very basic ignorance of the whole tenor of the salvation which was promised by the prophets, these men, though enlightened Godward, yet give allegiance to the traditions of men — unwittingly, perhaps, but really nevertheless. It brings to mind a similar example in Scripture, that of Apollos, the zealous evangelist of old (Acts 19:25-28), who knew “only the baptism of John”, and even after his conversion, yet continued to proclaim a wholly inadequate and faulty message at this point. Of course, by the providence of God, he was corrected, and continued preaching the Gospel with a brighter light within his heart. **Good teaching will, as it always has, be necessary to the correction of misdemeanors of incorrect application.**

Now, this is no new problem. Corinth was juvenile and unwise in the handling of external supernatural graces. Thus were they graciously corrected by apostolic instruction (I Cor. 11-14). Rome was childish in their application of the truth of salvation by grace, and thus some supposed that sinning more would be but an opportunity for further reception of grace. They too were given further instruction to mature them in the truths of grace and justification (Rom. 6-8). Colossae suffered from juvenility in the matter of subjection to teachers, and thus were led into all manner of vanity, having failed to receive Jesus Himself as the pre-eminent One. Thus were they taught more perfectly concerning our real union with Christ by faith (Col. 2-3). Galatia, having been familiar with the Law, and knowing that it must be fulfilled, failed to see the vitality of faith, and so reverted back to a bondage to the Law. Very graciously, “correction” (II Tim. 3:16-17) and “instruction in righteousness” was also given to them to teach them to “handle aright the Word of truth” (II Tim. 2:15) — see Gal. 3-4. Time would fail us to mention the matters where newness ushered in an ignorance of the infant order which called for correction — such as Apollos (Acts 18). But, these should suffice to illustrate the point in question — that there is no new thing under the sun, and that this situation with which we are presently confronted is no new thing, but an old one.

* * *

An Improper Emphasis In Instruction Often Seen

It is quite often that fellowships, which have been blessed with an abundance of new things, begin, unfortunately, to deliver a perverted Gospel. The things which have happened unto them appear to become the major things, and thus they preach and minister a Gospel that no apostle ever ministered. Experience, in many cases, becomes a basis for doctrine, rather than the message of

Christ and the apostles. To illustrate how erroneous some of these emphases are; (1. No apostle made reference in his instruction to the day of Pentecost as a common experience for all believers. (2. No apostle taught on the matter of tongues those who had not the gift among themselves. (3. There appears in all of Scripture no apostolic doctrine on the signs of being filled with the Spirit. (4. There is no exhortation in Scripture to “get filled with the Spirit.” It is to “BE filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18), a phrase indicating continual condition, not a marked point of time. (5. No apostle exhorted us to seek spiritual gifts that did not profit the understanding. Further, we are exhorted not to be children in understanding, but men (I Cor. 14:20). (6. The Word of God is never pictured as inadequate, or unable to meet the needs of God's people. Quite to the contrary, it is declared to carry with it the ability to make the man of God “perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work” (II Tim. 3:17), and to “build us up and to give us an inheritance among all them that are sanctified” (Acts 20:32). (7. No apostle ever taught that physical healing was an integral part of the atonement. The only passage which may even be grossly misconstrued to teach this is found in Matthew 8:17, and in that passage the application is made to Christ's healing ministry upon earth, not one which sprang out of His atonement for sins. God's people must learn that although certain emphases seem quite palatable to the soul, yet must they be judged and discerned in the light of God's Word. We do not mean to cast an uncomely light upon these less-informed, but merely to call their attention to some of the faulty spots which are most likely to develop when under an overcoming rush of newness.

There are certain tendencies which arise in these groups (and they are to be noted in all candor and honesty) which need to be examined carefully, to say the least. By way of explanation, there is no doubt in my mind that the fellowships of which I speak are genuinely raised up of the Lord. But this does not mean that they are exempt from improper trends, any more than was Corinth, Laodocia, or Sardius. I mention these, not by way of mere criticism, but to alert the people of God to tendencies and trends that are not at all proper. (1. There is often a verbal recognition of God's Sovereignty and rule, but little real adaptability of this great doctrine. (2. There is a general ignorance of the Scriptures. (3. There is often a perverted view of physical infirmity, which is not wholly supported by the Word of God. (4. There is a tendency to consider faith from God, yet to seek it by self achievement. (5. There is an over-simplification of the walk of faith. (6. Often there is a leaning toward mysticism, which more frequently springs from demonical influence than from the Spirit of the Living God. (7. There appears to be little hate for false doctrine, and more of a tolerant view entertained toward it. (8. There is no opposition to spiritual Babylon, which has perverted and confused the Gospel of Jesus Christ with its declaration of meritorious works. (9. It seems that there is too little knowledge of the real nature of edification. (10. There is in not a few places an actual minimizing

of the Word. (11. It is evident that there is a proneness to trust the inclinations of the heart, which thing is heartily warned against in Scripture (Prov. 3:5-6). (12. There is no emphasis on remembering Jesus; often in these fellowships, due to misdirected affection, there is not even a fellowship about the Lord's Table, save on a few scattered occasions. (13. There is a glorying in things that are not understood, which gives rise to all sorts of Satanic traps and snares. (14. Most of the appeals to the Scripture are made for purpose of application, to the exclusion of the straight instruction that was meant by the Holy Spirit. While there is nothing wrong with going to the Scriptures for application (as a matter of fact we should refuse to do without this most wholesome exercise), it is advisable that we first learn what the Scripture "meaneth." (15. Many of these newly empowered assemblies have little instruction. While there are long periods of prayer and worship (praise the Lord), there is not much wholesome instruction, and thus prayers and worship themselves eventually are performed by rote, according to old knowledge. (16. The deep things of God are not known among many of these brethren. (17. There is often an underestimation of Satan's power, which leads to a very definite subversion by his cunning craftiness whereby he lies in wait to deceive. (18. There is too much glorying in externals, which things shall soon be forgotten in the bright light of spiritual reality which fadeth not away. (19. Far too often attempts are made to explain spiritual things in human and earthly terminology, which is most certainly contrary to (I Cor. 2:10-12). (20. There is a tendency to neglect domestic duties and affairs, seeking to be exempt from those earthly affairs which the Lord hath ordained.

Now, the above things have been given for your examination. Search the Scriptures to see whether these things be proper, and receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your soul (James 1:21).

Deliberate effort must be exerted to dissipate the ignorance that accompanies newness, else these traits that we have mentioned shall soon arise, detracting from the glory of the Lord, and robbing you of a worship that is not only in spirit, but that is also in truth (John 4:24-26). **One of the primary means, if not the primary means, of rising above a religion void of understanding is to "desire the sincere milk of the Word that ye may grow thereby"** (I Pet. 2:2). There is no substitute for a spiritual knowledge of God's Word. Develop regular study habits. Probe into the Word itself, and dig for wisdom as for rubies. Search the Scriptures daily, as did those more noble Bereans (Acts 17:11). As Chrysostom said; "Take Bibles unto yourselves, for every sin comes from an ignorance of the Scriptures". The great world-shaking revivals and awakenings of the earth have come through a return to the Scriptures, and our day shall prove no different if such mark the life of believers.

Also, keep your theology in a state of flux. By that I mean that your conceptions must be held so as to be moulded by further insight into the Word of God. While creeds, dogmas, and formulas are well suited for men that grow not in the grace and

knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (II Pet. 3:18), they are ill-adapted for we who seek to go from "glory unto glory", even as by the Spirit of the Lord (II Cor. 3:18). Is not the path of the just to grow "brighter and brighter unto the perfect day" (Prov. 4:18). Let our proclamations reflect advancement in grace and knowledge. It is quite unbecoming for a man to have no more to say on a Scriptural theme today than he did several years ago. **Abandon your theology if it restrains your acceptance of the Scriptures as they are.** If your understanding of your experience does not find substantiation in the Word of God, then throw it overboard, and "let God be found true and every man a liar" — including yourself (Rom. 3:4).

Learn to ponder things that happen, and things revealed in the Word of God. Great advancement may be had through pondering, as with Mary, the mother of Jesus (Luke 2:19). Further, the Lord has instructed us to ponder the path of our feet (Prov. 4:26; 5:6). Deliberate and meditate upon your direction, upon your advancement in the Lord. It will be good for your understanding. And, as you ponder, spend time in the Word of God, in prayer for wisdom, and in fellowship with believers which are more advanced than yourself.

And now, brethren, let none disdain newness, but rather receive it with great joy and wisdom. Shun it not, but accept it with a pondering, thankful, and a meditative heart. So shall it do you good, and cause you to prosper.

The Danger Of Error - Its Contaminating Influence

(From page 4)

losophy that teaches such stupidity. **We are made strong in order to overcome the world; to break through the hosts of wickedness and appropriate the much coveted grace of fellowship with Jesus. We are made wise in order that we might plot our daily path through the hosts of wickedness, avoiding the contaminating influence. No person is strong enough to continually walk with the deceived without himself being deceived to some measure.** Although Jesus did teach us that the elect could not be deceived (Matt. 24:24), He was speaking of **ultimate** deception, and not that temporary delusion of which we **all** have been victims at some time. Our past delusion ought to have taught us at least this single lesson; avoid those things which do not increase to spiritually intelligent godliness and worship.

Because error is so subtle, and we of ourselves are so ignorant, we are categorically told by the Holy Spirit to deliberately refrain from lending our ears to those things which do not make for spiritual stabilization, and which cannot be answered properly; **"Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do"** (I Tim. 1:4); and again; **"But refuse profane and old wives fables . . ."** (I Tim. 4:7); **" . . . keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: which some professing have erred concerning the faith . . ."** (I Tim. 6:19-20); **"Of these things put them in remembrance, charging**

them before the Lord that they strive not about words to **no profit**, but to the subverting of the hearers . . . shun profane and vain babblings; **FOR THEY WILL INCREASE UNTO MORE UNGODLINESS**" (II Tim. 2:14-16). That ought to be enough to alert all, that have a genuine love for the Lord, concerning these things of which we speak. The false words of the unenlightened will "eat as a canker", as is witnessed in II Tim. 2:17). **Subjectivity to words of the flesh — words that proceed from the Adamic nature — will corrupt and pollute the heart of believers, and thus they are most solemnly enjoined to refrain from those profitless conversations which characterize the unlearned and ignorant in spiritual matters.**

It is true that strange doctrines will carry a person about (Heb. 13:9) and thus dislodge him from the firm rooting of faith. Have you not observed the discourses of the flesh that are all about us; men speaking of things that they have neither seen nor heard, giving their opinions, and traditional dogmas. **Stand clear of such prattlings of the flesh, for they are a cancer to the soul, confusing and muddying the waters of the mind concerning the things of God.**

The contaminating influence of error is also seen in the fact that those who instruct in such damnable heresies **must** have their "mouths stopped", according to the words of God (Titus 1:10-11). We quite well acknowledge that we hold no congeniality for those who would pervert the Gospel of Christ and make merchandise of the sheep of God. We are neither tolerant of them, nor do we intend to permit them to minister freely. We shall ever be a goad in their sides, pointing to their malicious errors and sounding the trumpet of warning to the saints of God. While we may be unlearned and ignorant in the things of the world, it is not so concerning the things of God. God has given us to see, by His grace, far more than we have ever seen before — and we are confident that more is to come. The utter futility of the vast majority of religion (and we speak of fundamental and orthodox religion) has been so high-lighted that we cannot but speak the things which we have both seen and heard. Truly "many have followed the pernicious ways" of the false prophets (II Pet. 2:1-3, 14). **Great religious institutions and organizations have been built in the name of the Lord, whose primary aim is to make a name for themselves, even as was the aim of Babel (Gen. 11). Finally, brethren, "beware, lest being led away by the error of the wicked, ye fall from your own steadfastness" (II Pet. 3:17).**

I would, in closing, offer a few suggestions for those who have not yet learned the principles of truth — who are novices, standing in need of guidance. (1. Stay away from ANY emphasis that is not an EMPHASIS in the Scriptures. Just because the Scriptures teach on the matter does not necessarily mean they EMPHASIZE it. Learn to emphasize what God emphasizes, and let other things be secondary. (2. Beware of any religious training that brings into your heart an attitude of suspicion concerning the Scriptures and those who adhere to them closely. (3. Stay clear of any teaching that minimizes the commandments of God — these DO make a difference (I Cor. 7:19). (4. Beware of any fellowship that makes expe-

rience (a peculiar experience) the basis of fellowship and acceptance. And now, may the God of all grace guide you into all truth, and give you all understanding in all things. Amen.

THE ATTIRE OF WOMEN

The attire of a woman will reflect the colour of her soul! Excessive hair-styles, jewelry, and costly array that attract attention to the flesh evidence a serious malady of the soul. Women (and men also) must "let their moderation be known unto all men; the day of the Lord is at hand" (Phil. 4:5). Those that aspire to have the praises of men, whether by their conduct, dress, or speech, shall forfeit the praise of the Lord, for He will not render as valuable those which the world applauds. **We are in dire need of courageous Christian ladies who will refuse to let the world set their standards of adornment — who will not divorce their dress and appearance from godliness, but will rather permit godliness to permeate into their appearance, in order that the Lord may be glorified.**

The display of a woman's flesh (which practice is becoming increasingly common in our day) is an abomination unto the Lord. Her flesh, like that of man, is her shame, and is to be appropriately covered. The parading of female wares is reserved in particular for their husbands, and then it is to be honorable, and not maintained upon a sensual and devilish basis. Especially is the display of the woman's body obnoxious in meetings of the brethren. There ought to be especial care given here not to be attired in any way so as to provoke the lust of the flesh. Such actions are subject to the most stern rebuke, for they feed and nourish that which God has categorically and completely condemned. The Scriptures are explicit at this point, and are to be heeded by every sister in the Lord (I Tim. 2:10-15; I Pet. 3:1-7). While we do not mean to lay down laws and ordinances pertaining to dress, it does seem appropriate to admonish daughters of Sarah to see to it that they are adorned in "shamefacedness" (a trait that does not push itself forward; accepting the retiring position; refusing to occupy the limelight and the attention. Now, suffer the word of exhortation, and may the Lord give you grace to so live as to bring honor and glory to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Philosophy Is Not Faith!

(From page 1)

grace! Let them avoid every system which sends men to the reservoir of human learning and wisdom to obtain faith. Let them with great spiritual consistency avoid traditions of men, and the words of all who intrude into things that they have not seen; vainly puffed up with their fleshly mind (Col. 2:18).

Bless God for the reality of faith, which roots us in the eternal counsels of the Lord, and in His Nature; and releases from self, with all of its delusion!