

# THE WORD OF TRUTH

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

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*"Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (James 1:18).*

## SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL

### THE INDISPENSIBILITY OF SPIRITUAL MINDEDNESS

How refreshing to the soul to hear the clarion call to spiritual mindedness amidst a religious world that is taken up with appearance, programming, and conformity to that which is pleasing unto men. *The Lord is calling His children to a state where they be "like-minded" not only with one another, but with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself (Phil. 2:2, 5).* To be like-minded with our Lord Jesus is not an optional matter - it is essential in the manifestation of the sons of God! It is true that some benighted religious professors are prone to cast shame upon those whom they declare to be "too spiritual"; but I had rather have the epitaph "too spiritual" over my life than "too carnal"; for the Lord always speaks highly of spirituality, but only disparagingly of carnality. Now, we intend in this short article to encourage your hearts toward spirituality by declaring the truth "as it is in Christ Jesus" upon this matter. Our Father hath chosen a people unto Himself, and the end of that choice is manifested in their peculiarity and zealously for good works (Titus 2:14). If the manifestation be not there, it is wholly an assumption to suppose that the Sovereign choice of God has been made in that case. Thus, we find that efforts expended towards spirituality, and the development of it, form a test for the believer whereby he may "examine himself to see if he be in the faith; for ye know that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates." (II Cor. 13:5).

It is vital at this point that we properly define spirituality. *It is not the product of human initiative, nor the accomplishment of mortal wisdom.* Men are not spiritual because they have made themselves so; it is not the fruitage of finite activity! Spirituality is not at all synonymous with church-activity, church attendance, winning souls, evangelism, loyalty to the fellowship, Bible-knowledge, or desires of a religious nature. While any or all of these things may be found in the truly spiritual individual, *they are not that which comprises his spirituality. To be spiritual-minded is to possess a mind that is controlled by and instructed by the Holy Spirit of God (I John 2:20, 27).* A spiritual person is one that has a "sound mind" (II Tim. 1:7), being able to think properly in the Spirit, and not becoming entangled with the smallness of earth-reasonings. *The spiritual mind is that mind which is receptive and responsive to the Lord, that is found in hearty agreement with the Law of God, and desires only to dwell with the Lord in His tabernacle, and inquire within His Temple, while beholding His beauty.* Such a mind finds that the yoke of Christ is "easy, and His burden light" (Matt. 11:27-29), and that "His commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:3).

*Spirituality is not a profession, it is a possession; something that has been, by grace, imputed to the believer by our "Father which is in heaven."* It is that which accompanies, in embryo, the new birth, forgiveness of sins, or justification (all of which are but facets of the same precious jewel of salvation). The "new man" (or the "new creation in Christ Jesus" - II Cor. 5:17), is actually "renewed

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## The Word of Truth

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### SPIRITUAL MINDEDNESS

(From page 1)

in knowledge after the image of Him that created him" (Col. 3:10), so that the thoughts of God are actually entertained by those whose minds are spiritual (Psa. 139:17). **Spirituality is a state of character, a refinement of the nature by the mighty power of God, whereby the veil is lifted from eternal verities and the Kingdom of God, and men are given to see "the truth as it is in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 4:20-21). Spiritual-mindedness is an accomplishment of Deity, wholly apart from merit, and entirely "by grace through faith."** If one does not possess it, he is to seek it from the Father, not attempt to develop it in his own inadequate wisdom and strength. **To be spiritually minded means that you have been brought into accord with the Law and decrees of God, so that they are no longer contrary to your nature, but in one accord with you as well as with the Lord who decreed them.**

Now, it would be well for each of you to test your own spirituality, to see if ye be in the faith. How is your heart in relation to God's Law? Are you in agreement with it, or are you at variance with it? What are your desires in relation to beholding the Lord in His beauty? Do you fear it, or are you living in anxious expectation of that "great and notable day of the Lord"? Are you able to see the spiritual reasonings behind your salvation? to give God the glory for all things? to acknowledge your own inability? and to recognize the effectual work of grace within your heart? If so, then you are truly spiritually minded, and thus have been afforded "great grace!" But if such be not the case with you, then we are dealing with no small matter, for this is necessary to a life that pleases the Lord. **Those that possess not a spiritual mind (i.e., a mind that is not in accord with the Holy Spirit of God) are totally unable to please the Lord. As it is written: "For to be carnally minded is DEATH, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is**

**enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. "SO THEN THEY THAT ARE IN THE FLESH CANNOT PLEASE GOD" (Romans 8:6-8).**

The carnal mind, or the mind of the flesh, is that mind which has at its disposal **no** supernatural resources. The natural man is wholly a product of nature, and endowed not with the true life from God which is unto everlasting. The mind of the flesh is limited in its appropriations to the realm of earth, unable to rise above the capabilities and endowments of flesh and blood. But, the spiritual mind has access to the very throne of God, and possesses within itself the very Seed of God (I John 3:9). The difference between the carnal mind and the spiritual mind is the difference between the Holy Spirit and the spirit of man, between Heaven and earth, Christ and Satan, life and death! Those that have no more than mortal strength and human wisdom, who possess nothing that earth cannot give, are rendered **totally and completely** displeasing to God; yea, as it is declared, they **"CANNOT PLEASE GOD"** - it is an **impossibility**. God cannot be pleased with that which issues forth from earth, from uninspired and unendowed men, from the realm which is filled with sin, and where man "drinketh iniquity like water" (Job 15:16). **The only things that please the Lord are those things which He himself performs.** This is why His will is called the "good pleasure of His will" (Eph. 1:5, 9). It is only as the Lord Himself "works in you that which is well pleasing in His sight" (Heb. 13:21) that you yourself will be pleasing and acceptable to Him. That person which is experiencing this glorious work is likewise spiritually minded - he which is a stranger to this grace is a stranger also to the mind of the Spirit, and thus rendered an **active** enemy of God. The carnal (fleshly or UNspiritual) mind is **"ENMITY (itself) against God"** (Rom. 8:7); i.e., it does not merely author things that are inimical to God, **but that very mind is of itself abhorred, loathed, hated, and rejected** by the Lord God of heaven and earth. It ought to be obvious to all that God cannot be pleased by that which He has Himself declared to be evil, and which is at variance with His own Nature. Just as "two cannot walk together unless they be agreed" (Amos 3:3), so the Lord cannot form an alliance with those whose thoughts are contrary to His own; and all such must, of necessity, be rejected finally by Him. Thus, the necessity of spiritual-mindedness is clearly seen. Those that cannot please God, and whose minds are an enmity with God's law, who "mind earthly things" (Phil 3:19) - unless their state be changed by Sovereign decree of God - shall forever perish in that state, for they are, in that condition **opposites** to the Lord of all!

**"TO BE SPIRITUALLY MINDED IS LIFE . . ."** There is a most wonderful grace; "LIFE"! It speaks of a state of reciprocity to the Lord, of hearing His voice, seeing the "lighting down of His arm" (Isa. 30:30). **This speaks of that most blessed condition of the soul whereby one is made sensitive, by grace, to the presence of the otherwise imperceptible God. Hallelujah!** Though God fills all the earth, yet only those that are alive in the Spirit are sensible to Him. They possess that gift of faith which enables them to see beyond the seen to those things which are eternal. As it is

written: "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (II Cor. 4:18). By the words, "things that are not seen", the Spirit means "those things which are not perceptible to the natural senses." By using the term "things that are seen", He means, "those things which are plainly evident to the flesh, or which may be perceived alone with the natural faculties, and which require no supernatural vision." Now, it is a great benefit to see beyond what mere mortals may see; to have a scope of vision that extends beyond the temporal and into the eternal. Surely, none but a fool would suppose that such glorious vision could be developed or begun by man! No! "It is the gift of God", given at His discretion to whomsoever He would; "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, LORD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. EVEN SO, FATHER: FOR SO IT SEEMED GOOD IN THY SIGHT" (Matt. 11:25-26).

The "babes" are those that are not wise of themselves, who are wholly depending upon the Lord of glory for their instruction and tutelage. The "wise and prudent" are those who attempt to wade to glory in the brine of their own wisdom, refusing grace, and desiring only that which makes for flesh-glory. But, alas, they shall not have their desires, for the Lord must reveal these things before they can be known - and unless He reveal them, men shall be doomed to everlasting destruction; "for if our Gospel be hid, IT IS HID TO THEM THAT ARE LOST, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God should shine upon them" (II Cor. 4:3-4). The only remedy to this situation is given in verse 6 of this same text; "FOR GOD, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness (wholly unsolicited), hath shined in our hearts (just as free from solicitation as in the creation of visible light), to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the Face of Christ Jesus". This is a view of spiritual-mindedness; it is the light of the knowledge of the glory of God being beamed into the soul through the medium of contact with and participation in the Lord Jesus Christ. The "light of the knowledge of the glory of God" is that work whereby the soul is enlightened to the Godhood of God, His greatness and majesty, and is thereby brought to contrition and adoration before Him. It is that work whereby the soul has impressed upon it the very spiritual image of God, and therein is brought into conformity to the "Lord's Christ" in affection, will, and purpose. This is spiritual-mindedness. It is the means which the Lord has chosen to fulfill His counsels concerning salvation. All who possess it are saved, all who do not are lost. There is no such thing as an unspiritual Christian, or a carnal Christian - such terms and admixtures; they cannot be mingled together! One is either spiritual or carnal, not a combination of both. If spiritual, he shall live with the Lord; if carnal - unless his state be changed - he shall be "destroyed from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power" (II Thess. 1:9). And now, oh reader, what is your state? How is it with your soul?

## THE GREAT TRIBULATION

The subject of Christ's coming is of intrinsic interest to true believers and worshippers; not because of its appeal to the intellect or curiosity, but rather, because of its SIGNIFICANCE to the saved. The coming of the Lord is truly the "blessed hope" of the church, and so do we view it (Titus 2:11-13). Our hearts are truly comforted by meditation and communication on this noble theme of faith, for then shall we "ever be with the Lord" - glad contemplation. **Because of the utility of this doctrine in comforting, encouraging, and stimulating the saints to pureness of spirit (I John 3:1-3), Satan has coloured it with heresies and surmisings in order that its true value might not be derived by the needy people of God - of which we all are a number.** We rejoice in Christ Jesus, however, that we may be delivered from such "strong delusion", and be brought to truly benefit **within** by the truth" as it is in Christ Jesus" concerning His coming. Praise the Lord! It is our hearts desire to pass on to Christ's brethren those things which have assisted us, according to providential grace, in rising above such wicked deception as pervades the world of our day.

Not the least of the many points of confusion which touches on the Lord's return is the subject of (what is commonly called among fundamentalists) "the great tribulation". A whole host of doctrine has arisen on this subject which merits exposure because of its defiling effect upon the hearts and minds of God's people. It verily doth eat as the words of Philitus and Hymanaeus - "as a canker" - eroding and corrupting the souls of those who give ear to it. **To begin with, the term "THE great tribulation" is not a Scriptural one, and hence cannot connote a Scriptural concept.** The Holy Spirit uses the terms "great tribulation" (the article "the" is not present) Matt. 24:21; "the tribulation of those days" (Matt. 24:29); "that tribulation" (Mk. 13:24). The same period is called "affliction" in Mark 13:19, and is pictured as a type of distress which had not been experienced before, nor ever after, upon the earth. Matthew 24:21 makes the same point, declaring: "such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." Now, there is a primary, or first meaning to this prophecy, and a more general or secondary meaning. We shall concern ourselves with the first or primary one at this point. We stand with the men and people of God in these matters, not wishing to be divers from those saints of old that have spoken under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. At this point we are swift to point out that a great source of confusion on this, as well as other major doctrines of Scripture, is the Scofield reference Bible. In our persuasion, the church should be the better without this bit of literature, even though we understand that it is well revered among many of our fellows - but that is only because they have no understanding of their own, and thus must borrow from another.

The fact that people revert to men to gather in their doctrines is an evident token of their own spiritual bankruptcy. The Word of the Lord declares that "... a good man shall be satisfied from himself" (Prov. 14:14), i.e., that out of his own person there flows "rivers of living water" (John

7:37-38) so that he does not require that "any man teach him, but as the same Anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, so shall ye abide in Him" (I John 2:27). **God has placed life within us, not merely external to us, and thus we may derive everlasting benefits from within, though we be deprived of much outward helps and instructions.** The truth and verity of the Kingdom, together with a real sensitivity to it, is brought by a communion with the Lord. The instruction that is given us by holy men is raw material which is to be refined within our spirits by the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven. Men can but sow and water; the increase is always of God. Now, it is our contention, and if pressed to the case, we are well able to defend it, that much of the teachings of Mr. Scofield on the subject of the Lord's coming, the great tribulation, and other eschatological studies, cannot be refined to the benefit of the saints, because it is "contrary to sound doctrine." To his own master Mr. Scofield stands or falls, together with us all - but we are not bound to accept him, any more than you be bound to accept us. We pray your indulgence on this matter, for many of the doctrines which have arisen from, and been fortified by his teachings have caused great spreads of carnal theology among the churches. **The common view that the great tribulation is a period of great and stupendous calamity that shall befall the earth AFTER the saints have been gathered out of the world by the Lord, is wholly unsupported by Scripture.** It will do no good to fit together some scattered and remote texts and form a doctrine of "private interpretation" - the apostles did not teach such a doctrine, and thus we totally repudiate it, for we continue in "the apostles doctrine"; and if they did not teach this, neither do we - praise the Lord! We are persuaded that it is our duty as stewards of the mystery of God in Christ to sound the warning concerning false doctrines, as Paul did in his day, concerning that grievous error of Hymaneus and Philetus (I Tim. 1:20; II Tim. 2:17). The doctrines that have arisen concerning, what is commonly termed "the great tribulation" are destructive to faith, and prevail upon men to become carnal in their thoughts and in their expectations. The fruitage of this doctrine of things abundantly evidences its corruption - and thus will we spend no more time in calling your attention to them, but shall set ourselves to declare the "truth as it is in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 4:20-21).

Matthew, chapter 24, is a chapter of great depth. It is twofold in its application, dealing both with the destruction of Jerusalem, which was to follow some forty years later, and with the end of time when the Lord Jesus shall come in "power and great glory." **It appears from the text that Jesus purposely mingled the prophecies in order to prevail upon His disciples to live in a constant expectation of His coming, and in a ready fear of the anger of the Lord against their nation.** We shall in this portion deal with Matthew 24, verses 21 through 31. It is here that Jesus mentions "great tribulation." Observe the references the Son of man made to this period specified. (1. It is a distinctive period - "such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no,

**nor never shall be"** (verse 21). (2. It is a dangerous period - "except those days should be shortened, **no flesh should be saved"** (verse 22a). (3. It is a determined period - "but for the elect's sake, those days **shall be shortened.**" (verse 22b). (4. There shall be a period of delusion - "for there shall be **false Christ's and false prophets"** (verse 24a). (5. It is a period of exceptional delusion - "and shall show **GREAT signs and wonders:** inso-much that, **IF IT WERE POSSIBLE,** they shall deceive the very elect" (verse 24b). (6. It is described as a period of deceptiveness concerning the presence of the Lord, declaring that His coming is secret - "they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert . . . behold, He is in the **secret chambers**" (verse 26). **This is delusion, as Jesus declares in verse 27, stating that His coming is not secret, but open, even as the lightning that "shineth even unto the west: so shall the coming of the Son of man be."** **There is nothing secret about the coming of the Lord - it is public, open, even as the lightning of heaven;** let none deceive you on this point. 7. Immediately following the tribulation of those days, there shall be great disturbances in the heavens - ". . . and the powers of the heaven **shall be shaken**" (verse 29). This is, to my understanding, speaking of the shaking of the spiritual powers that rule the world - the hosts of wickedness, that are mentioned in Ephesians 6:12; I Peter 3:21, etc. (8. It is then (after the mentioned tribulation) that the Son of man shall appear with great "power and glory", sending forth His holy angels to gather up His people from the four winds, "from one end of heaven to the other" (verse 31), or, as Mark puts it, "from the uttermost part of earth to the uttermost part of heaven" (Mark 13:27).

The immediate application of this prophetic utterance concerning a tribulation, doubtless refers to the great destruction of the city of Jerusalem in 70 AD by Titus of the Romans. As Josephus records, there was never a devastation like that before that day, and after reading accounts of it, it is difficult to conceive that there has been such an one since that time. There were 1,000,000 Jews slaughtered in that great destruction, as well as approximately 97,000 carried away captive. There was dire famine within, as well as sore destruction by the Romans - so much so that the parents began to eat and consume their own children. There were numerous dissensions, violence, and continual bloodshed and murder, and great pestilence. As Chrysostom puts it: "Whence came there thus upon them wrath from God intolerable, and more sore than all that had befallen aforetime, not in Judea only, but in any part of the world? Is it not quite clear that it was for the deed of the cross, and for this rejection? Mark, I pray thee, the exceeding greatness of the ills, when not only compared with the time that is past, they appear more grievous, but also with all the time to come. For not in all the world, neither in all time that is past, and that is to come, shall anyone be able to say that such ills have been. And very naturally; for neither had any man perpetrated, not of these that ever have been, nor those to come, a deed so wicked and horrible" (Hom., in loc.) Because the Jewish people committed the most dastardly crime ever

wrought upon the earth in crucifying "the Lord of glory", and justly suffered the greatest of all tribulations in the flesh, surpassing all that passed before, or shall come thereafter. The affliction that was spoken of here by our Lord, however, was not only in the body, but included the great anguish of mind which accompanied a forsaken and persecuted people. When the people of Israel cried out in Pilate's hall of judgement, "His blood be on us and on our children" (Matt. 27:25), never did any other people invoke such an awful curse upon themselves, and upon no other nation did such a judgment fall. We read in Josephus' account of Jews being crucified until there was no more wood for making crosses; of thousands of people slaying one another in the fierce faction-fights within the city; and of so many of them being sold as slaves in the market, until their lives were finally counted valueless. Then came the fearful carnage of the Romans, which blood-curdling story exactly bears out the words of our Savior, uttered some forty years before it was fulfilled and these terrible events occurred. **Jesus gave no hope for the situation, but told them to pray fervently that their flight would not be on the Sabbath, or in the winter, because it would then be accompanied by many difficulties.** The women were to pray that they would not be heavy with child, but more free in their bodies to make swift flight, and get away from the terrible judgment of the Lord God Almighty, as He was incensed beyond imagination by the rejection of His Son by His own chosen people. **Truly, a trumpet sound to the slothful and indolent in their spirits today, who would reject and turn aside the Lord Jesus Christ, trodding under foot the blood of the covenant, and doing despite unto the Spirit of grace** (Heb. 10:27-31).

There is a second application of this truth - one that is taught throughout the Scriptures, and which merits our earnest attention. The tribulation spoken of posed a threat, in this sense, to the entire scope of the earth; "and except those days should be shortened, no flesh should be saved" (Mk. 13:20). **It is only the Lord's consideration of "the elect" that brings a shortening of these days:** and thus are we brought to glory in election (Rom. 11:5-7). The word "flesh", in this sense, has a different meaning than is ordinarily conceived. There are several different usages of the word in the sacred oracles. It is used to denote the adamic or natural part of man which is condemned, and repudiated by God (Rom. 8:3, 8, 9; Gal. 2:17, 24; Eph. 2:3; Rom. 7:25). Again, it is used to describe the external or outward part of our being; the body (Gen. 17:11, 24; Lev. 15:7; II Kgs. 4:34). Again, it is used in describing the nature of animal sacrifices under the law (Judges 6:20; I Sam. 2:15). But, another meaning is that which refers to race of men themselves; the word "flesh" is repeatedly used in reference to men in general (Isa. 40:5; 49:26; Ezek. 21:5; Isa. 66:16, 23; Jer. 25:31; 45:5; Ezek. 20:48; Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17; Zech. 2:13; Ik. 3:6; Psa. 65:2; 145:21; Gal. 2:16). In my understanding, Jesus uses the term in this sense here (in Matthew 24 and Mark 13). He used it in the same way in John 17:2, when He prayed; "Thou (the Father) hast given Him power over ALL FLESH, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him." **While it may well**

**be alarming to many religionists of this day, it is probable that the tribulation mentioned in our texts is, in this secondary application, a tribulation of the soul, in which doctrinal delusion becomes the chief force of the Devil.** There has never been, until our present day, a world-wide and divers fabrication of **Gospel** truth. While the early Roman church with all of its vanity and lies deceived the whole world, its chief weapon was that of fear and physical hostility - not mere doctrinal delusion. There was nothing suave about that early harlot - she was a beast in every sense of the word, and thousands, yea millions, of faithful saints were martyred at her hand, and their blood yet cries forth from the ground. With her doctrine of works in the stead of grace, and of merit in the stead of mercy, she yet threatened people's lives if they conformed not unto her villainess. For those that were acquainted with the Scriptures, her ways were evident. **But the tribulation of which we speak is far more subtle than this, and uses for its groundwork great doctrines of Biblical statement, perverted and wrested to mean what they contain not.** This affliction of soul is so fierce and strong, that were it not abated by Sovereign grace, no one could be saved, the Gospel of truth being so perverted as to render it totally obscured.

The distinctiveness of spiritual delusion is mentioned by the apostles frequently, as they warned the early church of the coming of fierce deception and apostasy. There is mentioned "strong delusion" (II Thess. 2:9-12), and a falling away from the truth (II Tess. 2:3); also a departure from the faith (I Tim. 4:1). This gives us a picture of the great power of delusion, that it even compels some to relinquish truth and faith! While I am not certain that these prophetic statements should be limited to the specific time of which I now speak, it is clear that they speak of a tribulation of spirit far stronger than many have imagined. It is, to my understanding, this sort of tribulation that is prophesied in general by our Lord.

Now, it is my conviction that we are truly living in just such a tribulation. **The Gospel has been so utterly perverted that it is scarcely possible to hear it anywhere declared in all of its pureness.** Spiritual assaults are being made upon the faith from all avenues, and few are able to withstand the evil day. Institutionalism, sectarianism, and traditionalism are mingled together and sprinkled with a few remote Gospel truths - so much so, that the Scriptures and the "everlasting Gospel" even possess a strange ring in most all religious assemblies. Religion has become big business, with gigantic temples, educational units, sophisticated clergymen called "doctors", efficiently trained personnel that are basically ignorant of even the fundamental doctrines given us by the apostles, and men wise in the ways of the world. Preachers have a continual stream of vain tradition flowing from their mouths, and religious gatherings are more for spectacle and recruitment than for worship and edification. The whole picture is appalling to the spiritual mind, and brings great grief of soul. Further, those who do not subscribe to such a conception of things are not permitted to gospelize in those circles. It is verily a fulfillment of the word in Revelation;

“. . . no man may buy or sell, save he that has the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name” (Rev. 13:16-17). **That text speaks of spiritual trafficking, and of the limitation placed upon it by spurious religion. Qualifications for leaders, as well as followers, are laid down, ranging from Bible college or seminary training, to subscription to traditional creeds and dogmas of men.** Men are held aloof from God and His Word, and given interpretations for truth and tradition for precept. Those who wish to minister in such circles must receive the mark of identification which is acceptable to all false religionists. It is not a visible or tangible mark, but rather a **concept of things**. There may be general differences in doctrine, but there is a basic unity among all - a common unseen and unknown devilish purpose to destroy the faith. **The center of all these religions is the church or institution, and not Christ Himself.** Men work for the institution, contribute to her, and adore her. The pre-eminent activity is that of building up the organization, which is nothing more than demon-worship and doctrines of devils (II Tim. 4:1-4). The Roman church started this apostasy around the third or fourth century, and has since mothered many smaller and more insignificant “harlots” (Rev. 18). The institution in all such systems takes the place of Christ who Himself possesses “all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2). The members of these institutions, or religious businesses, acknowledge to all true worshippers (John 4:24-25) that they know very little about such things as spiritual worship, “communion of the Holy Ghost” (II Cor. 13:14), walking “unto a pleasing” (Col. 1:10), or “knowing what the will of the Lord is” (Eph. 5:17). Their knowledge of the Scripture is small; they possess little or no knowledge of God (thus confessing their lack of participation in the new birth (Heb. 8:11); they are strangers to true grace, and have little appetite for the real things of the Kingdom of God. Yet, they are well accepted in their organization, and considered as very spiritual people. Such are victims of great tribulation!

The continual spew of religious garbage on the literature market, the virtual flood of false and traditional emphases - these beat as a mighty storm and flood upon the child of God, causing grief, and many times, virtual despair. Few are able to bear up under the viciousness of the onslaught. Delusion binds the minds of these people to such an extent that they many times suppose themselves to be in the grace of God, when actually they are laboring under a system of law. They are estranged from God in their affection, and yet suppose the Lord to be tolerant of their contemptible state. May the Lord raise up laborers and send them into these white fields to bear the “glad tidings of the Gospel of peace”, and may there be a swift fall of all popular religion as we see it, and a resurrection of the old Jerusalem Gospel and its true fruits.

We address those of you that are caught in such systems and institutions. The word to you from the Lord is “Come out from her my people, and touch not the unclean thing” (II Cor. 6:16-17). Is it not trying upon your soul? Can you not feel the greatness of the tribulation? Is it not exceedingly greater than physical death? It wears and tears with heartless relentlessness upon your

hearts, making you weak and spiritually vacillating unless you leave it. Why do you stay there sucking upon the asps hole? What can you gain but damnation to your soul? You cannot hope to reform the situation - it has already been cursed with a great curse, which shall not be reversed. “Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity” (II Tim. 2:19); both moral and religious iniquity.

We anticipate, praise the Lord, the fall of religious systems void of life, under the powerful spread of the Gospel in **God's due time**. You who languish because of such oppression, be of good cheer! Our King shall yet bring an end to this tribulation. Until He does, have no fellowship with it, and “keep the faith”, pressing “toward the mark.” “In patience possess ye your souls.” God hears the desire of your very heart, and is interested in your preservation in the truth faith once delivered to the saints. Cleave unto Him with purpose of heart, laying up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. Finally, when there is a conflict between your faith and fellowship with the Lord, and the traditions and emphases of your “church”, abandon the allegiance to the institution, letting God be true, and every man a liar (Rom. 3:4). Do not permit any man to dampen your spirits unnecessarily. It is better to withdraw and be clean, than to fellowship and be filthy. Be a goad in the side of the false prophets of the land. Insist that they speak as oracles of God (I Pet. 4:11), and upbraid them when they do not - praying all the while that the will of the Lord be done. We commit you unto the Lord, and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified by faith in Christ. Amen.

Wives are to obey their husbands as “it is fit in the Lord” (Col. 3:18) whether they are ideal or not. Husbands are to love their wives and care for them whether they are obedient in all of their relationships or not. Children are to honor their parents and love them, whether they be “up-to-date” or not. Wives are to “guide the house, be keepers at home, love their children, and love their husbands”; husbands are to provide “for their own, and especially those of their own houses”, be not bitter against their wives, and provoke not their children to wrath. While these may appear more earthly relationships, they are not! **These are matters between God and man!** His will for the family! Whosoever refuses to bow the knee to Him as LORD in these relationships is as liable to condemnation as the murderer or the drunkard, for they are both immoral and disobedient, as well as unspiritual!

We cannot divorce grace from conduct of life! It is by grace that our lives are CHANGED, and our conduct altered. Grace is effectual and conforms us to Jesus Christ, so that our actions, words, thoughts, and deeds, become a declaration and representation of the purity of our hearts. If my external life has not been changed, I do greatly error in assuming that I have had a change of heart; for it is out of the heart that the issues of life flow forth (Prov. 4:23).

## REAL RIGHTEOUSNESS

The righteousness which we possess in Jesus (I Cor. 1:30; Jer. 23:6) is a **real** one. It is not **merely** legal, although, hallelujah, it is certainly that! It is also, however **EFFECTUAL**, and transmissible to our beings and spirit. John the beloved, speaking of these things, said; "Little children let no man deceive you; he that **DOETH** righteousness is righteous, even as He (Jesus) is righteous" (I John 3:7). By this, John means that **the individual whose life is characterized by righteousness is actually the man that has already been made righteous in Christ Jesus**. The clear implication is that he that does not do righteousness does not do it because he has not received the righteousness of Christ by faith. **Christ's righteousness is imputed to me by faith, and diffuses itself into my character and being, so that I actually and personally become involved in true servitude to "righteousness unto holiness"** (Rom. 6:19). Let no man delude you on this point! An ineffectual righteousness is no righteousness at all! You may expect a changed and a holy life after the experience of grace and redemption; and if such be not there, you must immediately question the reality of your profession. **God does not work in ambiguous fashions!**

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"The Lord accepteth no man's person"; i.e., He does not measure men according to their fleshly distinctions and attainments. Those who are children of the Lord possess the **same** mind on the matter! Their **evaluations** of men are based upon their contribution to their faith - not on their "person". Their **love** for them is founded upon their sonship and acceptance in the Beloved, not upon their achievements or attainments in the flesh - or even in the Spirit. Paul expressed this principle in Gal 2:6: "But of these who **SEEMED** to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who **SEEMED** to be somewhat in conference **added** nothing to me". Seeming to be somewhat (i.e., outward appearance - perceptible to the senses) is not enough, though men would have you believe so. Men are to be esteemed for "their work's sake" (I Thess. 5:13), not for their person's sake. Though in speech they may be "contemptible" and their "bodily presence weak", yet if they are used of the Lord to establish you in the faith within the "truth as it is in Christ Jesus", there is every reason to highly esteem them, and above all to give abundant thanks to the Lord for them (see II Cor. 10:10).

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The regenerative process is called the **new birth** because it is wrought by God, and involves a separate life. God's personal life is imparted to those whom He "begat with the Word of truth" (James 1:18), thus making them "new" and diverse from the world order. They are "born" in that they proceed out of the concealment of earth into the enlightened realm of heaven; from darkness into His marvelous light." This birth cannot be accomplished by men, because it is "from above" (John 3:3, 5 ASV). It is clear evidence of **DIVINE ACTIVITY** and good pleasure, and is intended to rejoice the hearts of all who see and know the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

## THE UNQUESTIONABLE RIGHT OF GOD

While it is true that the Lord needs no defense from the mouths of we feeble mortals, it is equally as true that He has graciously ordained that we who have been made "partakers of the Divine nature" (II Pet. 1:4) may announce and publish the truth concerning Himself. It is with this in mind that I am presently devoting myself to a proclamation of the unquestionable right of the Lord. The Lord God **ALMIGHTY** possesses all things, **made** all things, and **upholds** all things "by the word of His power." The attitude that men take toward this truth has no bearing upon it whatsoever, for it is **not** relative or true only to the measure of its acceptance. What we declare of the Lord is truth - **uniquivocal truth**. It has been "settled forever in the heavens", and we but proclaim, or announce it, that you might learn more fully of Him "with whom we have to do." By the very essence of the case, whatsoever the Lord says or does partakes of His own immutable nature - it is unchangeable, eternal, and truth! Nothing can be put to it or taken from it in order to make it finer or more palatable! How glorious it is to worship and adore the Lord of **all** the earth, who "doth whatsoever He hath pleased" in heaven and in earth (Psa. 115:3; 135:6). He is by His very nature **GOD** in all of His purposes, words, and works! No man may question Him or say "what doest Thou?" (Job 9:12). Verily, it is true that "Where the word of the King is, there is power (or authority): and you may say unto Him, What doest Thou?" (Eccl. 8:4). It was declared by king Nebuchadnezzar of old, after that he had spent seven whole years in the fields, wandering and eating as a least, with hair like eagles feathers, and nails like birds claws; "... **all** the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as **nothing**: and He (the Lord God) doeth **according to His will** in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and **none** can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?" (Daniel 4:35). It often appears to me that a similar experience as that of Nebuchadnezzar would convince many a religious sophist that the Lord, He is God, and besides Him, there is none other. When it comes to the matter of plans, purposes, and counsels, the entire earth with all of its inhabitants are reputed as nothing before the Lord. He consults with none of them before working His own will, nor does He seek their approval, or attempt to work so as to be easily interpretable by mortals. **Whatever He performs is right, and therefore cannot be questioned**; else He is not God!

Now, while this may seem evident to the head, it is the heart that often recoils from an acceptance of this great truth. Men will honor God with their mouths, but when it comes to the matter of "justifying God" (Luke 7:29), or of insisting that the Lord "be justified in His saying" (Rom. 3:4), at the expense of men themselves becoming liars - ah, **then** it is, that the carnality of men begins to assert itself, and they obstinately refuse to acknowledge that He is Lord of all! When godly men speak forth such great truths as, "Whom the Lord foreknew, them He also **PREDESTINATED** to be conformed to the image of His Son" (Rom.

8:29-30), and "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you" (John 15:19), and "**From the beginning God hath chosen you** unto salvation" (II (II Thess. 2:14), or "Jesus Christ . . . a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the Word, being disobedient; **WHEREUNTO THEY WERE APPOINTED**" (I Pet. 2:8) - then the chaff begin to wave themselves before all, asserting the authority of man, and the rights of men, and the injustice of God--thus manifesting their "gross darkness" of heart!

Now, it is not our purpose in **THE WORD OF TRUTH** to merely defend these great truths of election, surety, and God's Sovereignty - but rather to **declare** them as the Lord hath spoken. We care not whether some are not disposed to accept them; they are truth, and we rest in them with great joy! **The whole crux of the matter hinges on whether or not God is right in making choices independent of man's initiative.** It is plainly declared in Scripture that God chooses in just such a fashion; but lest there be some that are not acquainted with the Word of God on this matter (and I suspect that legion is your name), we shall here attempt to familiarize you with **some** of the declarations made by the Holy Spirit concerning the rights, prerogatives, purposes, and works of the Lord God of heaven and earth; "Thou hast created all things, **AND FOR THY PLEASURE they ARE AND WERE created**" (Rev. 4:11); "Is it not lawful for me to do what I **WILL** with **MINE OWN**? Is thine eye evil, because I **AM GOOD**?" (Matt. 20:15); "Jesus answered (to Pilate), Thou couldest have no power at all against Me, **EXCEPT IT WERE GIVEN THEE FROM ABOVE**" (John 19:11); "For the children (Jacob and Esau) 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" (Rom. 9:11); "For the Scripture saith to Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I **RAISED THEE UP**, that I **MIGHT SHOW MY POWER IN THEE**, and that **MY NAME** might be declared throughout the earth. **THEREFORE HATH HE MERCY UPON WHOM HE WILL HAVE MERCY, AND WHOM HE WILL HE HARDENETH**" (Rom. 9:17-18); "Hath not the Potter power over the clay; **of the same lump** to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" (Rom. 9:21); "Promotion cometh neither from the east nor from the west, nor from the south. But **GOD IS THE JUDGE: HE PUTTETH DOWN ONE, AND SETTETH UP ANOTHER**" (Psa. 75:6-7). These references could be multiplied many times, but this ought to be sufficient to bring out of your soul of what spirit you are. Do you really worship the Lord God, who rules according to His **own** purpose and will? Or do you pay homage to a God that is governed and restricted by men - the creatures of His own hand? Are you disposed to think of yourself as sufficient? Then come to the knowledge of the truth, and confess with the saints of **all** ages; "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think (or purpose or decree) anything of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God" (II Cor. 3:5). Is it not declared by God Himself concerning Himself; "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do **ALL THESE THINGS**" (Isa. 47:7). Does that text seem strange to you? Difficult to receive? Does your theology or church-doctrine place restrictions upon your spirit when

it comes to these **eternal assertions** of the God you profess to worship? If so, hear Him speak again; "The Lord **killeth**, and **maketh** alive: He **bringeth** down to the grave and **bringeth** up. The Lord **maketh** poor, and **maketh** rich: He **bringeth** low, and **lifteth** up. He **raiseth** up the poor out of the dust, and **lifteth** up the beggar from the dughill, to set them among princes and to **make** them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and He hath set the world upon them" (I Sam. 2:6-8). What God performs is not only unquestionable, so that no man may inquire as to the legality or properness of it, but it is irresistible, as is declared in the Word; ". . . rulest Thou not over all the kingdoms of the heathen, and is there not power and might, **SO THAT NONE IS ABLE TO WITHSTAND THEE?**" (II Chron. 20:6). Again, when Job was deprived of all of his children, his oxen, and asses, sheep, and servants, he declared in truth: "Behold, **He** taketh away, **who can hinder Him?** who will say unto Him, **What doest Thou?**" (Job 9:12). Job, who lived centuries before the giving of the Law and Moses, and whose history was recorded by inspiration in later years by Moses himself, declared to the consternation of many an "enlightened" theological student today; "**WHO KNOWETH NOT THAT IN ALL OF THESE THINGS THAT THE HAND OF THE LORD HATH WROUGHT THIS?** In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind" (Job 12:9-10). Must we not answer the patriarch of old, gifted with patience, that there be very few indeed today who possess even a small measure of the perception that he had? Has not the religious institutions of our day managed to obscure these truths to their constituents, so that in times of trial and calamity, instead of recognizing the hand of God, they are brought to dismay and blaspheme the Lord?

(Continued next issue)

Our "peculiarity" does not consist of abnormal psychological behavior, but in a changed manner of life which is motivated from within. God's children (by faith in Jesus Christ) are zealous for (spiritually) good works. His grace has taught them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts because they have come to hate and abhor them. **Such new creations** (II Cor. 5:17) **are undiscernible to the natural man because saints are constrained and motivated by unseen and hidden impulses which flow from the Throne of God.** It is this undiscernible portion of their life that constitutes them peculiar to the world. Without it, men are destined to be but common and most assuredly "children of wrath."

Those who will not worship God in spirit and in truth are prone to feign worship by form and ritual - thus increasing their abomination before the eyes of our Lord.