

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

OBEYING THE TRUTH

"Ye did run well; who did hinder you that you should not OBEY THE TRUTH" - Gal. 3:7

Truth has to do with the sphere of ultimate reality, i.e., the everlasting Kingdom of God which shall not be destroyed (Heb. 12:28). Because the truth itself is eternal and "will be with us forever" (II Jno. 2), the knowledge of it liberates the soul from the blindness and tyranny of ignorance, which Satan so adeptly ministers. As it is written; "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32, 36). The truth also has a sanctifying influence about it whereby men are fitted for God and glory; "Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth" (John 17:17). The setting forth, therefore, of spiritual reality to the heart both liberates and sanctifies, frees and prepares, and unshackles and fits or equips!

In the text above, Paul is correcting a backsliding people. The "race" (Heb. 12:1-2) that they had "begun" (Gal. 3:1-2) was at the first marked with the quality of becoming endurance. In "patience" they were running the race set before them, "looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of their faith". But what had happened? False teachers had deterred them in relation to the truth, setting before them the niceties of human wisdom, and had thus "hindered them". The nature of the hinderance was this; it had inhibited them in their obedience to the truth. Where once they obeyed the truth, now they were found in disobedience to it. Their teachers had performed no benefit in thus distracting them from that which had freed and sanctified them.

It is to be understood that the phrase "obey the truth" is actually a synonym for faith! The indictment against the Galatians, therefore, was that they had not "kept the faith" (II Tim. 4:7). It was Paul who wrote; "But they have not all OBEYED the Gospel, for Isaiah saith; Who hath BELIEVED our report" (Rom. 10:16). To believe God is to "obey the truth." This is the "obedience of faith" (Rom. 16:26); the trustful response of the heart to the proclamation of reality. To believe "through grace" (Acts 18:27) is the highest and most acceptable form of obedience, while to "believe not" is the very epitomy of sin and transgression (John 16:7-11). In short, the false teachers at Galatia had caused the people to "depart from the faith" (I Tim. 4:1), and to trust in their "own righteousness" (Phil. 3:9). They had forfeited the Gospel for Law, "going about to establish their own righteousness, and not submitting themselves to the righteousness of God" (Rom. 10:3). When men quit believing, they immediately begin to trust in their own accomplishments, and thus are "fallen from grace" (Gal. 5:4). Instead of

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The Word of Truth

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Obeying The Truth

(From page 1)

trusting in the merit of Jesus, the Galatians had abandoned Him who is truth (John 14:6) for the figmentary "righteousness of the law (Phil. 3:9; Rom. 10:5). Tragic state, for then they ceased from obeying the truth. They had submitted to a message of demands and obligations instead of the "Gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24) They now sought to receive from God upon the basis of works rather than as father Abraham Who "believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Gal. 3:6). Even as there is a difference between an acknowledgement and an achievement, so there is a vast difference between faith and works. Faith says to God; "I believe what you say", and thus is God well pleased (Heb. 11:6); while works declare to God; "I shall try my best to bring myself to a state of perfection, expecting you to acknowledge my efforts, and of necessity save me." Miserable wretch, that one who so comes to the "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," for truly "all of our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6) before Him with whom we have to do; and "in us, that is in our flesh, dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:18).

Dear reader, are you obeying the truth by building up yourselves upon your most holy faith (Jude 20-21)? Is your relationship to the message of God's grace in Christ Jesus one of implicit trust? If so, you are obeying the truth - see that none lead you astray or hinder you from such lovely obedience. There are myriads of prophets in the land today that are apostles of confusion, leading people away from the truth by causing them to rest in their own achievement, their own works, their own persons! Run not with them! Your personal preparations, works, achievement, etc., are totally insufficient for the demands of God! **It is only by believing the report of God that we may be brought into favor with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Further, a knowledge of our condition by nature (Eph. 2:3) shows the absolute necessity of such an arrangement, thereby rejoicing the heart and causing "a joy unspeakable and full of glory."**

THE GOSPEL - A PROCLAMATION OF WHAT THE LORD HAS DONE FOR US, NOT WHAT THE LORD IS DOING IN US

Experience is, in the current usage of the word, a term describing a work which the Lord has done within us. This is a wonderful thing, and has its place in the Kingdom of God - **but it is not a proper subject for preaching.** The Gospel, or glad tidings, is not a proclamation of what the Lord is currently doing in me - however great it may be. Rather, it is a declaration, or **report**, of what has **already** been wrought **in my behalf**; the activity of Jesus Christ toward God the Father in the behalf of me, a child of wrath by nature. Yet, there is a current trend in the direction of substituting experience for Gospel, and actually creating an idol out of such experience. This is alarming to those who possess any degree of spiritual understanding (Col. 1:9).. It is generally thought that relating personal experiences will challenge believers and non-believers alike to seek similar experiences, thereby procuring to themselves great blessings. Naively believing that this is proper, great energies are expended in this direction in the apparently sincere conviction that it is advancing the Kingdom of God. The Gospel, by which we are saved (I Cor. 15: 1-4) has evidently lost its "power" unto salvation" (Rom. 1: 16) under such a system, and thus men concoct their own messages of light and illumination - at least it appears that this thought has been embraced.

By "experience", I mean happenings which are accredited to the Lord - "accredited" I say, because it is questionable, in my thinking, that all such reports are properly categorized as rehearsals of the "righteous acts of the Lord" (Judges 5:11). **Let it be clear that there is room for the relation of such events in truth, and that such reports are good and wholesome. But, they are never to take the place of the Gospel - never considered to be Gospel!** Further, they are not to be made the basis for fellowship, but rather are to be held as a means that enable us to rejoice with one another in understanding and spiritual union. It is lamentable that there are so few, in most "churches", that actually have anything to report concerning the Lord working in their lives. Few can get beyond the juvenility of rain, sunshine, families, and health. The great and glorious results of "walking in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4), and of "walking in the light as He is in the light" (I John 1:7) are virtually unknown to my myriads that claim nominal affiliation with Jesus Christ. This instruction, therefore, is not meant to encourage such lifelessness - God forbid! But rather to assist those who replace the Gospel with the experiences of men - who are only constrained by what has happened to men, rather than by the love of Christ (II Cor. 5:14).

The Constraining Power of the Gospel

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is not deficient! It is the very "power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Roman. 1:16). Further,

it "brings life immortality to light" (II Tim. 1:10) and reveals the "righteousness of God from faith unto faith" (Rom. 1:17). It was to the brethren at Rome that Paul wrote; "And I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come in the **fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ**" (Rom. 15:29). There is, praise God, a **fulness of blessing** in the Gospel - the glad tidings of what the Lord hath done! There is no area of our lives - no need of our souls, that is not blessed by the Gospel's fulness. Referring to this "fulness" that is in the Gospel, it is witnessed; "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height: and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph. 3:17-19) He is speaking of insight into this glorious **Gospel**, which is the declaration of the manifestation of the love of God. As it is written; "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us" (I John 3:16). **It is in the "spiritual understanding" (Col. 1:9) of the Gospel that true perfection is wrought, and we are "changed into that same image, from glory unto glory, even as by His Spirit" (II Cor. 3:18)** It is not that men may be motivated only by the "glorious Gospel of the blessed God" (I Tim. 1:11); there are sundry other means which can be (and are) employed. But they are all deficient - all inadequate next to the Gospel, for they do not bring with them the "fulness of God." **There is transforming power in the Gospel, and therefore the elect are called by it.** As it is written; "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; where unto He called you by our Gospel unto the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thess. 2:13-14). Let none, therefore, vainly suppose that testifying of the work of God within an individual will be more effectual in constraining men Godward than a proclamation of what the Lord hath done for them in and through Jesus Christ. Personal experiences are precious, but they are not Gospel; they are good reports, but not the best reports; they are meant to cause rejoicing, not faith; they are a good sound, but not the joyful sound!"

The Danger of An Experience Centered Proclamation

It may be said of the believers relationship to Christ; "Our wine hath tender grapes" (Song of Sol. 2:15). Great care must be taken not to damage the fruitage of spiritual life with the "little foxes" of foolishness and thoughtlessness. An emphasis on personal experience, however, will do just such a thing - spoil the vine filled with tender - very tender - grapes!

Because there are various "measures" of faith and grace dispensed to the members of Christ (Rom. 12:3; Eph. 4:7), the grace of any one may not necessarily be the grace of all. Further, the experiences of one may not necessarily be incumbent upon all. **No believer must be led to believe**

that his personal life is to be ordered in the precise manner as that of another; and yet, this is what will invariably happen if the proclamation of the Gospel is supplanted by a heralding of personal experience. Not ever the experiences of the saints of old are to become the pivotal point of our preaching! "We preach Christ, and Him crucified" (I Cor. 1:17-22). **He is the Hub upon which all truth turns, and no reality may properly be divorced from His Person.** It is His work and His accomplishments that are the primary and fundamental emphases of the Gospel, for thereby was our salvation wrought. We do not preach Moses, or Abraham, or Elijah - righteous men though they be. On the mount of transfiguration, the will of God on this matter was settled once and for all. While Peter, speaking from an empty head, and not knowing what to say (Mark 9:6), suggested the erection of three tabernacles, wherein counsels with Moses, Elijah, and Christ, might be held (Matt. 17:4) the Father which is in heaven proclaimed the truth of the case; "This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; **hear ye Him**" (Matt. 17:5). In the book of Mark, this observation of that occasion is made; "And suddenly, when they had looked round about, **they saw no man, save Jesus only**" (Mark 9:8), This was the Divine means of exalting His Son above even the prophets, who were but harbingers of Him. "God, who at sundry times and divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us **by His Son**, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds" (Heb. 1:1-2). **All blessings flow forth from our spiritual union with Christ (Eph. 1:3-5). Christ is the common factor in all believers, and consequently the primary substance of their spiritual diet.** While some may feed upon the experiences of others and suppose themselves to be satisfied, I shall feed upon that "Bread of God" which came down from heaven (John 6:51).

The proclamation of personal experiences, on the other hand, provokes emulation, a work of the flesh (Gal. 5:20). We are not called upon to be imitators of Moody, Finney, Ironsides, or others who are held forth so ardently by our contemporaries. Rather, we are to be imitators of Christ. **The flesh is swift to seize upon any opportunity to be like man - emulation!** It is an evidence of inner foolishness, therefore, to feed such a proclivity, for it only detracts from our precious Lord, but also brings with it spiritual impotence. Falling into great error, those who hear and read constantly of the experiences of others, set about to create in their own lives circumstances, patterns of behavior, and thoughts that will cause them to be like those they hear, and after whom they read. A current trend in this direction has to do with "revival" (a very ambiguous term). Sophists, supposing themselves to be wise, set about to create revival by reading of former awakenings in the world, and seeking to recreate the same circumstances that then existed. That all of us have often entertained such foolish notions cannot be denied; but such notions must be crucified along with the rest of the flesh (Gal. 5:13). The whole concept of "revival" that is entertained by reli-

gionists of our day needs to be sifted through the Scriptures - refined, as it were, by the revelations of truth! Many such things are there likewise, which, need to be candidly reviewed in the light of God's word. It is quite possible that many have been entertaining completely false and erroneous ideas about the whole work of God in the earth! (By way of explanation to our critics, we are not opposed to revival - God forbid! We but say that it is the work of God, not of man; that it comes **when** God sends it, not when man wants it; that it is fundamentally a raising from the dead, and thus can only be effectuated by the will of God). Our job is to preach to the dry bones, and pray the Lord of the harvest (Ezek. 37:1-14; Luke 10:2).

The great burden of the Epistles were written by the Apostle Paul to the churches. He had been given grace and authority to edify and build up the people of God (Cor. 10:8). In all of his instruction, little time was expended in relating his personal experiences in the Kingdom - and when related, it was generally for the purpose of substantiating his apostleship, which thing was needful. Further, he did not hearken men back to Pentecost (there be many worshippers of Pentecost today, rather than the Christ Jesus that was **preached** on Pentecost), or to the household conversion of Cornelius. **He never declared that the experience of others was to be the aim of believers** The absence of such references proves beyond any controversy, that **the great events of Scriptures were never meant to be sought experientially by all** - else they would have been proclaimed as such! Paul always set forth Jesus as the hope and life of the believer, and the Sum and Substance of all that he needed or required - yea, "in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:2). **The primary experience set forth was that of the heart** (Eph. 1:17-20; Col. 1:7-9; Eph. 4:19-23; Col.2). **The apprehension of Christ by faith was set forth as the pre-eminent experience of the heart - that which encompassed "knowledge", "wisdom", "spiritual understanding", "joy", "peace", "comfort", etc.** These are things that are of the heart and mind, and they are effectuated by the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ.

It must be the truth as it is in Jesus (Eph. 4:20-21) that constrains us, dear brethren, else when experiences seem distant from us, nothing be found to cheer the heart! Take heed that no man deceive you on these matters!

THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

"He shall glorify Me . . ." - Jno. 16:14

The Holy Spirit is the means whereby man is infused with the life of God, and therefore He is of great importance to the believer. It is written that God hath given us of His "Holy Spirit" (I Thess. 4:8). **Because there is no more personal or intimate part of an individual than his spirit, it is to be understood that God, in giving us His Holy Spirit, has granted unto us the very "Divine Nature" (II Pet. 1:4) and "that Eternal Life" (I John. 1:1).** The ministry of that Holy Spirit, which we have received "because we are sons" (meaning

"sons of promise" - Gal. 4:5-6), is one of great glory - a ministry, I say, which is "rather glorious", as Paul was wont to put it (II Cor. 3:8).

The Holy Spirit is always viewed in association with our Lord Jesus Christ, and we believers must exercise ourselves in maintaining that association in our presentation of His Person. Never is the Spirit disassociated from the Son in redemption, never exalted above the Savior, or pictured as engaged in a ministry distinctive from that of the "Lord's Christ". He is referred to as "the Spirit of Christ" (Rom. 8:9), "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:2), "The Spirit of His Son" (Gal. 4:6), and "the Spirit of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:9). Paul refers to the saints as "Epistles of Christ. . . written with the Spirit of the living God" (II Cor. 3:3). You see, then, how that the Holy Spirit is not to be divorced from Christ - not to be considered as possessing or ministering something that the Son does not minister and do! Those who "receive" Christ, therefore (Jno. 1:12) are those who also possess the Spirit of Christ, for one cannot possess the one without the other! Jesus, speaking of the impartation of the Holy Spirit, declared; "I will send the Comforter" (Jno. 15:26; 16:7), while in another place, speaking of the same event, He declares; "I will come unto you" (John 14:18). . . The point to be seen here is this: **Christ dwells in us through the Spirit, so that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Rom. 8:9).** To have Christ is to have the Spirit, and to have the Spirit is to have Christ. I hear much these days of those who confess that they have Christ dwelling within, and yet they feel that they do not possess the Holy Spirit. Such thought is foolishness, for the Spirit is "THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST". Let none be "led away by the error of the wicked" (II Pet. 3:17) into contemplating the Holy Spirit, therefore, in disassociation from our Lord Jesus Christ!

Jesus proclaimed of the Spirit; "HE SHALL GLORIFY ME!" i.e., "He shall shed light and radiance upon My Person; He shall exalt and extoll My attributes and virtues; He shall occupy Himself with the illumination of My Being." **The Holy Spirit, therefore, was to dispel the natural ignorance of the Lord which existed by displaying the "glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ" (II Cor. 3:18), revealing Him to the hearts of those whom God had "chosen unto salvation from the beginning" (II Thes. 2:13).** In this ministry, the Holy Spirit is **unobtrusive**; He does not draw attention to Himself, but rather points to Jesus. The truth of this is seen in the events that took place on the day of Pentecost. It was there that the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit, and under His influence began to speak "as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-4). This mighty display of spiritual power eventuated in at least two observations; neither of which were directed toward an observation of the Holy Spirit as such. One was this; "we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God" (Acts 2:11); the other was this; "These men are full of new wine" (Acts 2:13). Now I ask you, who was there that spoke of the Holy Spirit there? What person is recorded as saying: "What a wonderful work the Holy Spirit is doing there"? Not even Peter spoke

as such, but rather lifted up the Lord Jesus, proclaiming His death, resurrection, and ascension into glory. He was occupied with the Person of Christ, not a commentary upon the work of the Holy Spirit; rather, **his comments were the work of the Spirit**. When the Holy Spirit sets about to work there can only be two reactions; "This is the good word of the Lord"; or "This is foolishness to me" - there is no middle ground; **indifference itself is merely an accrediting of the messag to foolishness!** Can you see this, dear reader, that the Holy Spirit occupies Himself unobtrusively with the Lord Jesus - not with Himself!

In such a capacity of ministration, the Holy Spirit is never set forth as the object of worship. We are not called upon to worship Him, nor do we have examples cited of people doing so. He rather instructs us to worship God through Christ Jesus the Lord, who is "the Express Image of His (God's) Person" (Heb. 1:3). By way of brief, but meaningful, diversion, **prayers are not to be directed to the Holy Spirit either, nor are songs, or any manner of conversation**. Christ did not die to bring us to the Holy Spirit, but to bring the Holy Spirit to us, and us to God! Prayers, songs, and general conversation directed to the Holy Spirit evidences a very basic ignorance of the glory of redemption, and the significance of reconciliation! It is the Spirit Himself that assists our feeble efforts in offering prayers and supplications to God Himself (Rom. 8:26). It is interesting to observe that among these who claim to especial possession of the Spirit, there is an unbecoming emphasis of the Holy Spirit, which eventuates in the obscurement of Christ's real work of power and glory. However, such is not the emphasis of the Scripture - rather, our Lord Jesus and His work are set forth as the dominate themes of true spiritual revelation, and it is with these matters that the Spirit of truth occupies Himself.

Because it is the Person of Christ that the Holy Spirit exalts and magnifies, it is imperative at this point, to make a few remarks concerning the nature of these attributes. **Christ's character or Being has primarily to do with redemption and reconciliation**. This is how He is to be "set forth", even as the Father set Him forth; "to be the propitiation for our sins" (Rom. 3:23-5). **The love of Christ, His mercy, compassion, power, knowledge, wisdom, longsuffering, instruction, meekness, etc., are all to be viewed in connection with our salvation** - they were all necessary to the implementation of the purpose of God, which was to "deliver us from this evil world" (Gal. 1:4). The approach to Christ which speaks of the relevancy of His Being to "every-day living", etc., is not of God! **Christ's relevancy is only to matters that pertain to redemption and reconciliation**. So far as we believers are concerned, that encompasses the whole of "things pertaining to life and godliness". **The emphasis of the Spirit, therefore, is the declaration of Christ's work as Redeemer and Savior!** The shedding of His blood, His death, resurrection, ascension, subjugation of Satan and all of the evil powers, and second coming in power and glory for those who "look for Him" - these are the matters of which the Holy Spirit speaks. All through the epistles, the Holy Spirit "moved" upon men to

write concerning Jesus Christ and the efficacy of His death. They spoke of the Law being done away by Christ, of the sins of the "children" being remitted through His blood, of the overthrow of Satan, of the removal of enmity, of peace with God, of righteousness and joy - all these matters flow forth from Christ's redemptive work! **Christ's attributes, let it be once again affirmed, are set forth the more gloriously in His atoning work; in the accomplishment of our salvation to the glory of God. We are not to attempt to view Christ apart from our own redemption, for it was therein that all of the fulness of God was manifested in His Person**. A few Christ-exalting passages ought to suffice to demonstrate this fundamental truth of the Holy Spirit's primary interest in the glorification of Jesus Christ.

"But now in Christ Jesus, ye who were sometimes afar off are made nigh by the **blood of Christ**. For **He is our peace**, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, **so making peace**; and that **He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross**, having slain the enmity thereby" (Eph. 2:13-16). Here the virtues of Jesus are set forth in connection with the reconciliation of both Jew and Gentile in one body unto God. His supernal wisdom and power were effectual in such a stupendous work! He drew together by His Own infinite Person both those who had been tutored by the Law, and those who were without law - who had fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23), and whose "iniquities like the wind had carried them away." **When you view the Person of Christ, then, view it in connection with this great reconciliatory work!** Again, it is written; "And having **made peace through the blood of the cross**, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven. And you, that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath **He reconciled**, in the body of His flesh **through death**, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in His sight" (Col. 1:20-22); and again; "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, and took it out of the way, **nailing it to His cross**; and having spoiled principalities and powers He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col. 2:14-15). There, praise the Lord, the great Christ of God is set forth as the Conqueror over our "adversary the Devil, who walketh about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (I Pet. 5:8-9). You see, dear reader, **Jesus cannot possibly be more glorified to we mortals then in the capacity of Lord and Savior, who hath not only triumphed over all that was against us, but who hath so done it as to enable the Father to "cause us to triumph always in Christ Jesus"** (II Cor. 2:14). Other pasages which set forth the ministry of the Holy Spirit in declaring and glorifying Christ are as follows; Eph. 5:2, 25-26; Titus 2:14; Heb. 1:3; 7:27; 9:12-28; 10:12-20; 12:2; I Pet. 2:21, 24; Rev. 1:5, etc. This, then, is how the Holy Spirit sets forth the Christ; **not as**

EXPOSITION OF PHILIPPIANS

by Richard Ebler

one that bears relevancy to the current problems of our day, but as One that has brought us to God (I Pet. 3:12); as one that hath reconciled us to God (II Cor. 5:18-20), and caused us to be accepted by the Father (Eph. 1:2-4). Never does a spiritual mind consider Christ apart from deliverance from sin, reconciliation to the Father, atonement, and the remission of sins! Those minds that are so prone to think of Christ as a mere helper and strengthener for daily duties do greatly evidence the lack of Holy Spirit ministration; for **Christ is best glorified in the role of Redeemer, Savior, and Deliverer!** Let no soul deny it!

The implications of this text (John 16:14) are many, of which we shall but name a few. First, Jesus declared of the Spirit; "HE shall glorify me". This shows to us the utter destitution of the "natural man" (I Cor. 2:14). **Without the Spirit's effectual ministry, Christ should not be seen in His true glory.** It is only that blessed unobtrusive ministry of the Spirit of Truth that causes us to not know Christ after the flesh (II Cor. 5:16), and which enables us to "look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:1-2). **To be spiritually discerning (I Cor. 2:14) is, then, to be under the express tutelage of the Holy Spirit** (called elsewhere that "unction or anointing" - I Jno. 2:20,27). However adept men may be in the presentation of the Lord, however their minds might appear to be keen, no man can truly know Christ until He has been glorified to Him by the Holy Spirit.

Second it is to be understood that the primary activity of the Spirit is ministerial; that is, He occupies Himself with ministering Christ. He is not Himself the object of attention, nor, indeed, does He draw attention to Himself. He always is pointing toward Christ Jesus, glorifying Him. The Scriptures set Him forth as one that ministers (Rom. 5:5; 8:26; I cor. 6:11; Gal. 5:5; 5:22ff; Eph. 2:18, etc.). **When we are admonished to "quench not the Spirit", or "grieve not the Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (I Thess. 5:19; Eph. 4:30), we are to understand that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to always be joyfully received.** This is done by continuing faithfully to "crucify the flesh together with the affections and lusts" (Gal. 5:24). As we "walk in the Spirit", we continue to put off the old man which is corrupt, and put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him (Eph. 4:20-25). **Sowing to the Spirit (Gal. 6:7-8) is that blessed exercise whereby the spiritual appetite is fed and nourished while the fleshly appetite and the old man is mortified and denied its base desires.** To all such as indulge in this holy activity, the voice of the Spirit will be the more clearly heard, and Jesus Christ will appear more fully glorified. It might be here added that the person who walks after the flesh, who does not expend his energies in the crucifixion of his natural desires, cannot possibly see Jesus as He truly is; and thus he will not glory in the Lord, but will "neglect" the "great salvation" which is "in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (Heb. 2:3; II Tim. 2:20). It is, therefore, imperative that the Lord Jesus be kept in our hearts, and that a vision

Chapter One (cont.)

(V. 4,5) "Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;"

Paul has just said that he thanked God upon every remembrance of the Philippians and now tells them in what manner he was accustomed to remember them; namely, before the throne of grace making request with joy for their fellowship in the gospel. This is the best way to be remembered: before the throne of grace. For this will bring the most benefit to the one remembered and also to the one who is doing the remembering.

Also let us note that thanksgiving is a good accompaniment of prayer (Phil. 4:6) because it generates a wholesome attitude before the throne, reminds us of all the blessings already received (which we are apt to forget), silence our flesh, props up our faith, and, most of all, redounds to the glory of God (II Cor. 4:15).

Coming before the throne of grace is a spiritual reality that the saint may consciously enter into. We are to pray to God (Acts 12:5), and be aware that He is listening from the throne to which we draw near by faith. This adds a whole new dimension to prayer, and better enables us to make request with joy, for what else is depicted before the throne of God besides joy? Satan has been banished from the heavenly places where we have been made to sit together with Christ; therefore, let us be lifted up by faith into this rarified atmosphere through the holy work of meditation and prayer that we may dwell on high with Him!

Brother Calvin notes on this verse that "joy" refers to the past while "prayer" refers to the future. "For he rejoiced in their happy beginnings and desired their perfection. Thus it becomes us always to rejoice in the blessings received from God in such a way as to remember to ask from Him what we still lack."

Along with joy the Christian has seasons of sorrow, as Peter saith, "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are

of His glorious Person be kept in our eye. This is the exclusive ministry of the Holy Spirit, thereby making perseverance, patience, longsuffering, and endurance a reality by faith! How we praise the Lord for this glorious ministry of the Holy Spirit, whereby Christ is glorified unto us, and set forth in all of His glorious majesty.

In closing, let it be said that the Holy Spirit is to be considered primarily in connection with His illuminative work; in connection with His exaltation and glorification of the Lord Jesus Christ to the hearts of men. Let others think of Him as an assistant if they will, but I shall glory in His ministry, whereby Jesus Christ has become precious to my heart. I exhort you therefore to a consideration of the Apostle and High Priest of your profession (Heb. 3:1), in glad anticipation that when such consideration is given, the Holy Spirit will speak to your heart and illuminate your minds concerning Him with Whom we have to do! Amen.

in heaviness through manifold temptations" (I Peter 1:6). The cause of sorrow is sin or the temptation to it, for we are troubled on every side by our flesh, the world, and the devil, and if we fall seven times, yet before we rise up again we may endure chastening as sons, which for the present time seemeth not to be joyous but grievous. Now grief has a way of distorting our spiritual vision, as David saith, "Mine eye is consumed with grief" (Psa. 6:7). Perhaps it is for this reason that Paul speaks of having his seasons of intercession in seasons of joy when he may view situations with a sound mind. Herein is much wisdom. Knowing how frail we are, that our frame is as dust, and knowing the power of the carnal mind to trouble us when we would do good, let us order our activities with wisdom. It is best to keep a constant regard to our state of being so as to detect when we are in the flesh. This is not always easy, for sin is deceitful and every man's way is right in his own eyes (Prov. 21:2). But with experience this holy art can be learned, and when one detects he has been brought temporarily into captivity by the carnal mind, then having no confidence in the flesh he can refuse to evaluate situations, make decisions or make commitments.

On the other hand, if the sorrow be godly sorrow (not wordly) then the Lord hath special respect to those supplications also, for he saith in another place, "to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Isa. 66:2). Also, God is especially touched by those who sigh and cry for the abominations that are done in Jerusalem (Ezekiel 9:4). We are often exhorted to be sober (Titus 2:1-6) and are told that those who mourn are blessed (Matt. 5:4), while a woe is pronounced upon those who laugh much in this sin-cursed life (Luke 6:25).

Note that Paul prays for all, not having the faith of Christ with respect of persons, for if we do so, then we are convinced of the law as transgressors (Jas. 2:9). This applies to many areas of our lives. When we deal with saints we are not to despise or neglect the weaker members of the body but bestow upon them the more abundant honor (I Cor. 12:23). When we witness to close friends or relatives, we are not to regard their persons, but teach the way of God in truth (Matt. 22:16). When we deal with our brethren, we must not allow a fleshly relationship to develop, but keep it strictly in the Lord; "henceforth know we no man after the flesh" (II Cor. 5:16).

Paul makes request for their fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now. Compare this with Colossians 1:3,4. Out of fervent godly love he ceased not to pray for them. Let us do the same for one another!

THE DUAL NATURE

The children of the Lord are spiritual schizophrenics; they are enemies and friends of God; regenerate and unregenerate; sinners and righteous; holy and profane; heavenly and earthly. They express themselves righteously to their own joy, and unrighteously to their own discouragement and disgust. That which is holy and regenerate within them is considered by our heavenly

Father as the real person, while the remainder, being repudiated by God, is destined to pass from us, presently being disassociated from us - praise the Lord! It is only in this sense that we are said to be pure and holy before God, even though that old nature which is within us militates against the indwelling Spirit of God. **The Father views us "in Christ". Everything not "in Christ" is classified as "flesh", and cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.** The glory of this whole matter is that God declares that His children are "no longer in the flesh" (Rom. 8:9), even though from earthly perspective we "walk in the flesh" (II Cor. 10:3). Such mercy is to be joyfully received with thanksgiving by all who believe in Christ!

"A GREAT DOOR AND EFFECTUAL IS OPENED UNTO ME"

I Cor. 16:9

It is with a "joy unspeakable and full of glory" that we relate to our readers the recent opening of a great and effectual door unto us for the proclamation of the Word of God. For sometime we have been fervently praying that the Lord would enlarge our tents and borders, and grant unto us the grace to speak abroad the wonderful works of God. The Lord has, by His providence, directed us into the fellowship of one brother Abraham Samuel, a native of the country of India. It is there that he labors for the Lord in His vineyard, sowing the incorruptible seed of the Kingdom. Having spoken to him on the afternoon of April 20, 1968, I was informed that we shall soon begin the printing of tracts in the Indian language. The first tract will be a translation of "GOD AND MAN", a tract which many of our readers have already received. There will be 10,000 copies printed at the first, and distribution will be made in the native villages by devoted brethren of the Lord this summer. The cost for the printing of these tracts will be between \$130.00 and \$150.00. We are trusting the Lord to lay upon the hearts of many of our readers this ministry, that they may fellowship in it financially. Here is an excellent opportunity to devote some of the "mammon of unrighteousness" to an eternal purpose, thus making to yourselves friends of it. In the near future, another tract will be printed which shall be addressed to those in India that have no knowledge at all of the Lord Jesus Christ, Jehovah God, or the Scriptures of the prophets and Apostles. The cost for this printing will be approximately the same. We commit these things to you for prayer and for meditation. If you desire to fellowship in this work financially, then forward your contributions to the address at the front of the paper. All contributions are tax deductible.

As the Apostle Paul declared in I Cor. 16:9 "... and there are many adversaries." Consider the Indian brethren in your prayers and support, for they are worthy. In the near future you will be receiving additional information explaining the work in more detail, that your understanding of the situation might be enlarged, and your prayers more spiritually intelligent. Any further inquiries into this ministry will be joyfully received and answered.

A Word of Caution on Confessing Our Faults One to Another

When novices are in more abundance as teachers within the Kingdom than the elders in the faith, there is a great proneness to a superfluous viewing of the Scripture — much like the spider that walks upon the water, rather than getting into it. The spider would quickly drown, and show its frailty were it to get down under the surface of the water — and so it is with the novice who thinks himself advanced; he must stay upon the surface of the Scripture, lest he drown in the depth of its significance. Now, there are very many abuses that have been brought about by novices sitting in the seat of the learned, and time would be well spent in uncovering these areas in order that the elect be brought to a more perfect understanding. But, I have selected this one area of truth because it has recently come to my attention repeatedly, and great damage has been brought to bear upon some brethren's conscience because of it. It was the beloved brother James who declared; "Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16). That is a precious word to those that are "spiritual", who have truly "tasted of the Lord that He is good." One of the great benefits of the community of the redeemed is that of mutual prayer and concern for one another. Many a child of God has been bettered because he confided in a stronger brother, and thereby brought consolation and strength to his own heart. But, make no mistake about it, this is not to be done because it is a law in the kingdom; nor ought it to be indulged in thinking that it is a cure-all for all that ails various believers. **No portion of Scripture ought to be reduced to a mere traditional emphasis, for then it loses its power and effectuality in the lives of those addicted to it.** There is no magic in this text; it is spiritual truth, and the benefits of it may be enjoyed only as its followers are spiritually involved in it. This is not meant to be a means of personal relief; something like speaking to a carnal psychiatrist. **The purpose of this confession is not merely to get something off of your chest; it is to obtain healing of mind and heart; the realization of the forgiveness of God.** The confession is to be made to a righteous man, who's effectual fervent prayers avail much; this is one who is "walking in the Light as He (Christ) is in the Light" (I John 1:7).

It might appear strange that I should speak a word of caution concerning this truth, seeing it

is so little employed among professed believers today — but I would that you hear what I say to the betterment of your own soul. These truths must be tempered with other instructions of the Lord which tell us of not uncovering the very depths of our souls to men. Hear what thus saith the Lord: "A fool uttereth his whole mind." (Prov. 29:11); "For every man shall bear his own burden" (Gal. 6:5). It was said of the Lord; "But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, for He knew all men". and needed not that any should testify of man: for He knew what was in man" (Jno. 2:24-25). How we ought to seek to emulate our blessed Lord in our own measure in this respect. There is, in man— even in regenerated men — something that lays hold of the base and the forbidden, wrestling against the holy influences of righteousness and the Holy Spirit.

Always in our relationships with one another, this is to be held in remembrance. We are yet walking (in a sense), "in the flesh" (II Cor. 10:3), and therefore spiritual consideration is to be given to the matter, lest we give opportunity or occasion to the adversary of our souls. **In confessing our faults to one another, we must be careful that we do not give an advantage to the flesh, knowing "what is in man". We must remember that the brethren are not yet altogether holy, inhabiting a carnal and sinful body which militates against the higher aspirations of the renewed heart and soul.** Let there be no naivety in this matter, nor assuming that the people of God have no difficulties with the flesh. Let there be the utmost consideration in this respect. No assembly ought to be a place of opening up the fullest proclivities of the heart to evil, but rather a time when truth as it is in Christ Jesus is the major theme, and the proclamation and heralding of the Gospel given the place of pre-eminence. Further, such confessions, when handled properly, are meant to be in order to prayer; not in order to contemplation and meditation. In such times, it ought to be perceived whether such confessions are proper and in order; i.e., whether those hearing them are in a proper frame of spirit to hear them, be concerned for them, and pray for them fervently and righteously. **Again, there ought to be a steering away from meticulous detail. The saints do not have to hear all of the details and intricacies of sin; it is the "FAULT" that they desire to pray for; to strengthen the feeble knees, and lift up the weary hands confirming them in the faith once delivered to the saints.**

Now, I have mentioned these things in part for a reason. **The assembly of the righteous ought to always have as its fundamental center point the truth of God, not the fault of man.** If we exercise no spiritual wisdom in the matter of confessing our faults one to another, we shall have meetings that focus upon man, rather than upon God. Such is neither conducive to the glory of God, nor the edification of the saints. Let none, however, shy away from this commandment of James to "Confess your faults one to another"; but rather let us give heed to it with a spiritual and wise mind, in order that we might give none occasion to the adversary, produce no cause for the weakening of the brethren, nor create a traditional approach to sin that is not emphasized in the Scripture. And again, let all things be done in love. Amen.