

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 FIGMENTARY VIEW OF A PURE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

There seems to be a generally faulty view among religious enthusiasts concerning the Apostolic church; one that sees it as being exceptionally pure. Due to this mistaken notion some are engaged in what they call the "restoration movement", which is designed to "restore the New Testament church." The early church, in such instances, is held in inordinate esteem while the "Lord Christ" is reduced to a secondary position. While I deplore any degradation of the saints now perfected in spirit (Heb. 12:23), it seems imperative to me that we so proclaim the case so as to deliver men from man-worship and the uncomely trait of honoring men "above that which is written" (1 Cor. 4:6). *The Lord Jesus is primarily a Savior from sin; that is His fundamental ministry; not the establishment of a church order, or autonomous fellowships, or anything of the sort.* All of this is a mere subterfuge to detract the minds of men from the main issue — their natural alienation from God and the atonement wrought in Christ Jesus' blood. *Christ's ministry is seen chiefly in that He sustains His church, interceding for them and summoning them to a higher walk that is disassociated from sin* (1 John 2:1-2). Too, man, though regenerate, retains all of his old proclivities and lusts in the person of the "old man" (Rom. 6:6; Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:9), theologically called the "Adamic nature". Though one has been "born again" (Jno. 3:3-5), slothfulness and spiritual retardness will show unbelievable expression through the old nature. *Unless the believer "keep under his body" and "bring it into subjection" (1 Cor. 9:27) sin and transgression will be seen to flourish in his life to the deprivation of any evidence of salvation and the rise of legitimate doubts concerning the hope of glory.* Thus do we read in Scripture of the most remarkable sins in the early church; sins which appear almost unbelievable to the religiously sophisticated individual. Remember that the early church was hewn from idolatrous rock and lifted out of a morally atrocious society. Many of the tendencies of those early believers were not broken over night, and were diligently confronted and dealt with by the apostles. Make no mistake about it, sin was never condoned or glossed over, however, in those early times. Believers were apprised of the fact that none who engaged in immoralities and transgressions would enter into the Kingdom of God; neither, indeed, had they any inheritance in it (1 Cor. 6:9-10; Eph. 5:5). Though moral purity did not always exist in the apostolic church, no perceiving person thought impurity of any sort to be a light matter. No apostle sought to lull the early disciples into complacency by ignoring sin and disobedience. The new birth and justification were never meant to be an alibi for sin; and deliverance from the law was never considered

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The Word of Truth

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to justify the indulgence of the flesh. Sin was always condemned and sinners rebuked! So, in our proposition that the early church was not altogether pure, I by no means intend to minimize the enormity of sin against Jehovah. I rather seek to here demonstrate that **purity cannot be stimulated by the false premise that early believers were altogether pure, nor can holiness be encouraged by proclaiming essentially untrue dogma. It is only truth that makes free (John 8:32,36), not man's concept of the truth.** Below are listed some of the transgressions that were found in that early church. This list is certainly not intended to reflect disdainfully upon those saints of old, but rather to set forth the glorious truth that God's grace abounded where sin did abound, encouraging the hearts of all who truly seek to serve and please the Lord.

1. Extortion and lying (Acts 5:1ff)
2. Murmuring brought about in the distribution of daily food to widows (Acts 6:1ff)
3. Divisions; people in the fellowship calling themselves after men (1 Cor. 1:11ff)
4. Envy and strife within the congregation (1 Cor. 3:3)
5. Fornication in the fellowship, with one living with his father's wife (1 Cor. 5:1 ff)
6. Brethren suing one another at the law (1 Cor. 6:1ff)
7. Causing weaker brethren to stumble by thoughtless and careless living (1 Cor. 8:1ff)
8. The questioning of Paul's apostleship (1 Cor. 9:1ff)
9. Contentions within the body ((1 Cor. 1:11)
10. Heresies found within the church (1 Cor. 11:19)
11. Disorderliness in the assembly (1 Cor. 11:1ff)
12. Drunkenness at the Lord's Table (1 Cor. 11:21)
13. Christ preached as not having risen from the dead (1 Cor. 15:1ff)
14. Some teaching that there was no resurrection at all (1 Cor. 15:32)
15. Preaching circumcision in order to salvation (Acts 15:1, 24)
16. Preaching that the resurrection was already past (II Tim. 2:18)

17. Teaching some to commit fornication (Rev. 2:14,20)

18. Observance of new moons, days, months, times, and years (Gal. 4:1ff)

19. Worship of angels (Col. 2:18)

20. Stealing (Eph. 4:28)

21. Turning the grace of God into lasciviousness (Jude 4)

22. Teaching what they ought not for filthy lucre's sake (Titus 1:11)

The difficulty with the contemporary church is not its ignorance of the Apostolic church and its order, but its ignorance of the only true God and His Son Jesus Christ. The same message that was preached to the early church for corrective measures is what must be preached to the church today; "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself . . . be ye reconciled to God" (II Cor. 5:18ff). **The redemptive work of Christ must be expounded; the efficacy of His death and resurrection, and the acceptability of His accomplishments to the Father which is in heaven (Isa. 53:1-12; Ephesians 1 & 2, Colossians 1 & 2).** These were the foundations upon which the Apostles made their appeal to the needy souls of yesteryear. Justification by faith, the election of grace, the sanctification of the Spirit, faith in the blood, etc. — these were matters which summoned men heavenward, for they were themselves proclamations of perfect accomplishments. **Let us remove from our minds any notions of a perfectly pure apostolic church and rather focus our minds upon a perfect redemption and salvation in Christ Jesus. Let our hearts be ravished with the work of Christ, the plan of the Father, and the vicarious atonement which hath been wrought in our behalf.** Occupied with such eternal matters we shall find our hearts being taught by grace to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world" (Titus 2:10-12).

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Satan's Delusionary Hypothesis

Our Adversary, which "walketh about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (I Pet. 5:7-8) has a basic hypothesis which he promulgates among the inhabitants of the earth with great perseverance and consistency. It forms the basis for all of his cunning delusions, and may be adapted to all strata of intellectual and moral development. Regardless of the level of apprehension an individual has attained unto, either in the flesh or in the spirit, Satan has cunning wiles and trickery whereby deceptions are leveled at the victim. **These attacks of soul may be effectually withstood only by faith,** for "faith is the victory that overcometh the world" (I Jno. 5:3-4). In the development and "increase" of our faith, it is imperative that we be brought into a fuller realization, however, of the nature of Satan's foundation. Without the comprehension of that, we shall inevitably fall into his snare. All of Satan's work is based upon this delusionary hypothesis; **That the sensual and the observable are the fundamental, the pre-eminent things!** Satan always builds upon this premise! All forms of cultural, moral, intellectual, and religious delusion find their ful-

fillment in this tenant of the evil one! Those that are rooted in the earth (being grounded there by their own lusts and natural desires) are ostracized from the Lord, have become His enemies, and are ensnared hopelessly in a matter stronger and more tenacious than themselves. Those that are risen with Christ are to faithfully aspire to those things which are above (Col. 3:1-3), forsaking the things that are beneath in exchange for the unseen realities of the "heavenlies". All of Satan's quests are opposite of this. Because he is the prince of this world (John 14:30) his activities have the peculiar mark of worldliness or earthiness. He entertains no affinity at all with eternal realities, with the truth, or with that which liberates the spirit from the encumbrances of earth. His aim is to make us "friends with the world" (James 4:4); to become rooted and grounded in our affection to this "present evil world" (Gal. 1:4).

The attitude of the rich "fool" prevails about us today, and especially in our country. It was he that asserted; "This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and will build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and all my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry" (Lk. 12:18-19). Here was one that had expended all of his intellectual and spiritual powers in the accumulation of earthly possessions, rather than merely possessing riches, **the riches had gained possession of him.** In complete oblivion of eternal things, he pitched his tent in Sodom, and dwelt in his heart upon the earth. The current of the temporal had caught his spirit, and enslaved therein (without consciousness) he became content. This was his condemnation, for he had exchanged his soul for the tinsel of this world — that which is neither satisfying to the spirit nor lasting in essence. And what saith the Lord unto him? "Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" ((Luke 12:20). Here we begin to see the reason for this fool's actions; he was under the delusion of Satan. He took precisely the same course of the evil one and consequently was given the same reward. Satan, being the "strong man" of the earth, shall eventually have his whole house "spoiled" by the Lord Jesus Christ and his brethren (Matt. 12:29; Dan. 7:22). All of the energies of Lucifer are but temporal; his dominion temporal; his enjoyment temporal. **The entire rule which he presently occupies in our sight shall be finally wrested perceptibly from him and given to the saints.** Then his possessions shall become ours, and we shall "inherit the earth", praise God, which is now his sphere of rule. He has played the role of the fool, and all that hear him in their spirits are fools in essence! The current trend in the world, the grasping spirit which grips the hearts of the multitudes, is all evidence of the swiftness of the flood which he has cast out upon the earth (Rev. 12:15). It is not a sign of intellectuality, or of scientific advantage, or of changed cultural mores that are for the better. This people of the earth have been caught up in the gigantic sway of "the prince of this world", and their hearts have been ravished by that which is transitory, temporal and fleeting. Scarcely a person exists that does not

place an inordinate value upon the seen. Lives are shaped and moulded by the tangible and by the sensible. Values are all determined by that which can be observed with carnal senses. Satan has thus "deceived the whole world" (Rev. 20:3; 18:23; 12:9) and brought men into the course that ends in the "ditch" (Matt. 15:14) — the end of that course which is pursued in blindness to eternal verities.

To all of these things the average "fundamentalist" and religious enthusiast can say a hearty "Amen" — but that is the very thing that concerns us. This same form of earthiness has prevailed the sphere of religion, and men have merely embraced the world under a different label while calling it "godliness". Great value is placed upon the seen, upon the visible and tangible; that which can form as a foundation for institutionalism, etc. Yea, Satan is the head of this sort of religion; yea, he is the very author of contemporary Christianity — the most conservative of it — in our land! Who can deny that spiritual moods are set, for the most part, by that which is sensed and observed. Great stock is placed in such matters as visible responses to invitations; great financial achievements; structures; programs which bear sensible results to the outward man; manifestations of the Spirit which may be perceived with the natural senses, etc. These are all evidences of the ensnarement of the evil one; he has deceived the whole "church" (professing church) of our day, and our hearts do "sigh" for the abominations that we see in Jerusalem (Ezek. 9:4). What can we say when we know in our spirits that the hearts of men are not excited by the proclamation of liberating truth unless it is attended by some sort of mundane and sensible accompaniment? I have observed time and time again that the truth is not seen as the freeing factor in churches; it is not that which is besought for liberty. Sight and vision, sense and feeling; that is the thing. The test of a spiritual and exhilarating fellowship is the response and the output that is experienced at that meeting. Everything from responses to armenian invitations, to manifestations of self-interpreted spiritual gifts are considered evidences that the meeting has been a resounding success. Whether or not the truth as it is in Christ Jesus (Eph. 4:20ff) has been perceived by the spirit is irrelevant; whether or not the sound of the Gospel has gone forth, and the report given, is seen as having no real bearing upon the case. Greater insight into the Lord God of hosts, wisdom and spiritual understanding (Col. 1:9-11), growth in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (II Pet. 3:18) — all of these are considered small matters. The people come and the people go, their understanding unfruitful in the knowledge of God (II Pet. 1:8). The apprehension of the "mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ" (Col. 2:2) is not to be seen, although it is to be admitted that there is an "appearance" or "show of wisdom" to be found in the "voluntary humility" and in "will worship", and the "neglecting of the body" (Col. 2:23). But rise into the "heavenly places" and speak of the character and perfections of God; how "all things are of Him and through Him and to Him" (Rom. 11:36), and at once you rise over

their heads. Leave the sphere of seen works, and rise into the realm where the "works were finished from the foundation of the world" (Heb. 4:3), speaking of things that are not as though they were (Rom. 4:17), and the look of flesh confronts you, and true earthiness is shown forth. Little is known of that "Kingdom which cannot be shaken" (Heb. 12:27-28) and of the "heavenly things" that have been cleansed with that better sacrifice and blood (Heb. 9:23). **The grand purpose of God, which shall be realized in the dispensation of the "fulness of times" when He shall "gather together all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth" (Eph. 1:10), is a virtual mystery to the most orthodox and illuminated of professing Christendom.** It is the sensible of which they speak. Some speak of church attendance, of campaigns, of institutional achievements, while others who purport to be even more spiritual speak of gifts, of healing, of tongues, of baptisms, and of the laying on of hands. We do not question the reality of these things of which they speak — that is not the point here. It alarms us that they have no more to relate than this; nothing that will feed the soul and arm it for the attacks of the evil one. All of these have become ensnared by the wicked one, and in a most subtle way; they have become rooted to the earth, and their religious walk is limited or enlarged in accordance with the indulgence of their natural senses in the matter. But we want no part of such a religion! It is too earthy! Too conditional upon my own natural indulgence. I rather delight in the apprehension of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus; of the knowledge of the mystery which was hid from ages and generations, but is now made manifest to the saints (Col. 1:26). **The great and unfathomable purpose of God is brought to the heart in the power of the Holy Spirit, and implanted upon it becomes the source of joy and righteousness and peace experientially.** It is declared in the Scriptures that "Whom the Lord foreknew (an equivalent term with "election" — Acts 2:23; I Pet. 1:2) He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the First-born among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestinated, them He also called; and whom He called them He also justified, and whom He justified them He also glorified" (Rom. 8:29-30). That is the great plan of salvation — a five point plan of salvation; (1. Foreknown (2. Predestinated (3. Called (4. Justified (5. Glorified. It is as sure as God Himself, and was issued forth in Sovereign good pleasure. It shall not fall to the ground, nor shall the Executor of it "fail nor be discouraged" (Isa. 42:4). **An individual's growth in the Kingdom is to be measured by his degree of apprehension of these great truths, for therein is revealed the righteousness of God from faith to faith (Rom. 1:17).** It makes little matter how much an individual declares that he has experienced, if his understanding is clouded to the eternal mysteries of the Kingdom he is "of the earth earthy" (I Cor. 15:47). These are actually rooted in this world, their confidence resides in this world, and they are basically and fundamentally ignorant of God. They have been duped by Satan, and are taken captive by him at his will (II Tim. 2:26).

The grand objective of the Lord in our redemption is to bring us into an experiential relationship with Himself and His will or covenant. Thus do we read; **"Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself" (Eph. 1:9-13).** "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of full assurance of understanding, to **the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ" (Col. 2:2);** "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and **increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col. 1:10).** This is the "spiritual understanding" and "knowledge of His will" of which the Apostle speaks in Colossians 1:9; it is discernment into the purpose — yea, the "eternal purpose" (Eph. 3:11) — of the Lord God in Christ Jesus.

I am aware that some of our sophisticated friends and acquaintances will retort that "knowledge puffeth up", and therefore that what I have said is incorrect and faulty. But, that is only because they "wist not what to say". Thereby they confess undeniably their own participation in the grand delusion of Satan, and their own basic worldliness. It is not this type knowledge in the spirit that "puffeth up", nor is that what our beloved brother Paul is speaking of in I Corinthians 8:1. He is there speaking of the abstract knowledge of this world; of intellectuality held in contradistinction to the spiritual knowledge of the Lord. This is a knowledge that is not revealed, but which comes forth from the efforts of the flesh. It is, on the other hand, through the "knowledge of God" (which is the apprehension of and fellowship of His mind and purpose) we "escape the pollution of the world" (II Pet. 2:20), have grace and peace "multiplied" unto us (II Pet. 1:2), and become partakers of "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (II Pet. 1:3). This knowledge is our treasury (Rom. 11:33), as is that which the Lord desires in you above all else (Hosea 6:6). All of Satan's activities, on the other hand, are designed to interfere with this knowledge; to obscure the "mind of Christ" (I Cor. 2:16) from your heart! We are to engage in spiritual warfare against all such attempts of the wicked one, "casting down everything" that "exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, bringing into captivity every thought unto the obedience of Christ" (II Cor. 10:5). This knowledge is the factor that brings about true humility, for those that have "known the mind of the Lord" in their measure can no longer think highly of themselves. Away with those that attempt to hide this precious truth by making excuses for their failure to apprehend and know Christ and His will! Too often have I heard professed believers excuse their basic ignorance of eternal things with denominational platitudes. It is not comely! **Those that see not these things actually have little or no fellowship with God, for the Lord does not fellowship with His people apart from the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.** That, dear reader, is the sphere of fellowship — occupy it! Let not Satan obscure it from your heart by giving you the sensible and the tangible. It is a miserable substitute!

Commentary on Philippians by Richard W. Ebler

Chapter One (cont.)

(vs. 25,26) "And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith; that your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again."

Paul speaks of his confidence in Divine providence that God would do what was best for the church, and confidence that it was more needful for the Philippians that he abide in the flesh awhile longer before departing to his reward. This, then, was a discernment of God's will through familiarity with His usual way of working. Such a familiarity is only acquired through prolonged exposure to the pure word of God, mingled with an intimate experiential union with Him over the years. Soon the mind becomes so saturated with God's word that one begins to think like God. His affections become our affections so that we cherish the things pertaining to the kingdom. His cause becomes our cause so that we mold our lives around the edification of the saints. With a vision of these realities before us, our decisions become easy to make and we have less confusion over what God's will is for our lives. Paul was able to say with certainty, "having this confidence I know I shall abide. . . ."

Such terms of certainty are seldom heard among Christian circles today concerning the Lord's will for their future lives and ministry. Perhaps it is because they try so hard to make decisions that they actually hinder themselves and minister indecision to themselves. There is a trend among Christian youth groups to emphasize how to make decisions. Many paperbacks are published which give little secrets and tips on finding God's will for one's life. This emphasis is never made by the apostles. It casts one upon his own understanding and cannot minister peace and assurance. Actually, our minds are to be principally occupied with God (His person and work as seen in the whole of Scripture) and not with our circumstances. This promotes faith and a sound mind so that decisions can be made more easily. Victory is attained by indirection. It is God with whom we have to do. Apostolic emphasis is the great need of our day.

It is true that there were times when the Lord gave Paul a special revelation concerning the sphere of his future ministry as in Acts 23:11, but Paul was not exempt from the usual exercises of faith that the saints undergo. Even the apostles chose Matthias by lots, rather than demand a voice from heaven. We must learn not to tempt God, but only go so far as our faith can carry us.

Abiding and continuing with them implies that Paul may have later been delivered from his imprisonment in Rome and restored to the churches for a time. There is need of a settled ministry for the steady furtherance of the saint's faith through a regular ministry of the word (Eph. 4:10-14).

This faith is the fountainhead of joy. We are filled with all joy and peace in believing (Rom. 15:13) as our faith is nourished upon stable truths; namely, that Christ really did die for our sins, that our home in heaven really is secure, that he which

hath begun a good work in you shall perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, that all things do indeed work together for good to them that love God, that the steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord, that Christ now reigns and will soon appear, that our election is of God. All these things bring great joy apart from one's circumstances.

Joy in the Lord is an emphasis of Scripture as well as of this very epistle. The reason is that the joy of the Lord is our strength (Neh. 8:10). Some have the opinion that there is something sinful in being joyous and something meritorious in a long face filled with so-called piety. It is hard at times to accept the fact that God wants us to rejoice, not in carnal jesting (Eph. 5:4), but in holy joy in the Spirit (Phil. 4:4). They had already rejoiced to hear him first bring the gospel to them (Acts 16:1-3). Now Paul wants their rejoicing to be more abundant. No matter how far we have advanced there is still room for improvement.

At first glance to a carnal observer, Paul would seem to be guilty of vainglory when he says in effect "Here I come! Get ready for a blessing!" But he is actually boasting in the Spirit. Personality or personal gifts in nature have nothing to do with this. Paul is stating truth about God's work within himself which enables others to glorify God in him and rejoice in the benefit of his presence. In another place he says that this rejoicing in one another is mutual between himself and the saints (II Cor. 1:14).

God has many blessings for his people and a good portion of these are distributed to them as they fellowship in one another's presence. This is why one of the apostles wrote "I trust to come unto you and speak face to face that our joy may be full" (II John 12). Let us never cease to highly prize and cherish the fellowship of God's true sheep. Here is a prime source of strength and safety for our souls. It is ordained of God for our good.

I am not speaking of nominal churchmen, but of true sheep. This is another reason why fellowship with true brethren is doubly precious: because truly godly people are very rare and a few in number, even as it is written, "few are chosen," "few there be that find it" (the way that leadeth unto life) and "Fear not little flock, it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Matt. 20:16, 7:13, 14, Luke 12:32). Thus it has been in every age.

If the reader is perhaps the only member of his church who is truly serious about the things of God, I would urge that you begin praying for one truly godly person with which to fellowship. Remember Paul's words "I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you" (Philemon 22). Then, rather than make a futile attempt to reform a whole institution, obey the Lord who said "Let them alone" and "from such turn away" (Matt. 15:14, II Tim. 3:5). Withdraw yourself from dead, stifling church services which distort your thinking and abate your zeal. Gather together with "two or three" other seekers of truth and of the "God of truth" (Matt. 18:20, Psa. 31:5). Meet together in your home regularly for unhindered

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Laboring and Thirsting

by Brother Wm. Mosby Wright

As I study to show myself approved unto God, this old country writer needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the "Word of truth." Truly it is a gifted pleasure to visit with those who are thirsting for the springs of living water. How sweet to drink of joy with a wayworn traveler who may be fainting from fatigue. Life for the believer may be likened to a river that is running out to sea; nevertheless, when we are washed in the truth we have a cleansing and assurance that reaches beyond the end.

Jesus, during His personal ministry upon the earth, did many things on and in water. This seems to be typical of the spiritual ministry that He still sustains toward His people. There is still something about His teaching that is good for the health of those within the fellowship-circle of that water. We simply cannot do without it. "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, shall not lose his reward" (Mark 9:41). And so it is, the cleansing stream sends refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

We need all of God's strength to write for the Lord's printed page. This old right hander gives all the praise to God when he is writing for Jesus' publications. We, as Christian messengers, can do a lot of laboring by preaching through the printing of THE WORD OF TRUTH, and I do try absolutely as a Christian writer to "buy the truth and sell it not; also wisdom and instruction, and understanding" (Pro. 23:23). Writing and laboring for God is a free will offering, by His grace.

There is such a thing as inspiration for thirsting readers, and I want my ministry of Christian writing to be a labor, toil, sweat and tears for the betterment of the sheep of the Lord. I write for Jesus because of the love He had for me, and the eternal sum of the whole total if His glorious righteousness. From time to time this writer gets dry for the water of life, and it seems so far away. But, in the end I find the rivers of enchantment, just like David; "The Lord leadeth me beside the still waters. But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but, the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into life everlasting" (Jno. 4:14).

When laboring, we are to be found faithful, strong, and inspired by the example of our Lord and His apostles. There is something cowardly about people who refuse to drink of God's living water! And it is equally as sad to reject it when it is brought to us by the servants of the Lord. The very life of the believer comes by God's grace, and this is made clear by reflections upon His living water. "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Christ" is the testimony of Scripture; "This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth" (I Jno. 5:5-6). God's word is still water to the soul, and the Lord, parabolically speaking, comes by it to our hearts.

We should have strong insights into the mighty power of the truth, and our mind loaded and filled with strong examples of His Divine Plan. This will come by our whole-hearted involvement in His commandments and precepts, as we are strengthened by His Spirit in the inner man. Jesus bore the pain and the plain truth, learning obedience by the things that He suffered, and it seems to me that we are to fear the Lord and keep His commandments in the knowledge of this. This is a sort of labor movement of know-how for all Christians. The truth still lives, and those that are toiling on life's dust way growing tired, weary, and thirsty, shall find in it a refreshing stream of living water.

When we are heavy laden, we desire to become involved with other believers in the river of life; to communicate with those of like-precious faith. God loves, so to speak, to see our faith in action. Testimonials come from our laboring and praying; of one more days work for Jesus. Amen! I thought you would agree. We find that the strongest type of spiritual labor requires the need and help of other brethren to grow in the knowledge. Furthermore, "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14). These are things that are understood by the sheep who find that sweet blessedness in dwelling together in unity (Psa. 133). However, as the Spirit speaketh expressly, in the "latter times, some shall fall away from the faith". They will lose their love for the Divine work. How we ought to be stirred up to earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints (Jude 3), and to adhere to the pattern that is set before us in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In view of all that I have said, laboring for God really speaks of our being concerned for the welfare of people, and of our desire to please the Lord in all things. We are not free to serve any society that is seeking our labors for their own purposes. God's concern must be the motivation, which is far better than gold. It is true that the wicked prosper in earthly things, but they have no treasures laid up for them in heaven where moth and rust doth not corrupt and thieves do not break through and steal. When the treasures are laid up in heaven, the heart will be there also — blessed experience of faith! Thus do we actively lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven (Matt. 6:20).

One of the important things that we are to remember is that when we are laboring and thirsting "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). We should be so gracious and full of light that all who desire to know the truth, and have received a love for it, will be attracted to us in the Spirit. "Ye are the light of the world . . . A city that is set upon a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick" (Matt. 5:14-15). Too, those that are thirsty require the pure water, not a substitute. Bless God, God moves the waters and plants His footsteps in the sea, and free to all is a healing stream. Let each of us realize full satisfaction in the Lord and His Word for our thirst-of-soul; and may all of His people be found truly laboring and thirsting. Amen.

Uncommon Phrases in Scripture

One of the devastating effects of Babylon is the loss of Scriptural terminology. So very few religious devotees speak in words that the Holy Ghost teacheth, being so unfamiliar with them as to object with them when they are used, actually being found to fight against them. A "nomenclature of churchdom" has been put in the place of a Divine one, and men now speak in a way that cannot be understood by those whose hearts and consciences have been moulded by the Scriptures. **Spiritual concepts may properly be conveyed only in "words that the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual (things) with spiritual (words)"** (I Cor. 2:13). It is essential that in the propagation, therefore, of true spiritual conceptions, our language be framed properly. I have found that learning to speak not merely in Scripture terms, but in Scriptural **conceptions** has greatly facilitated my own understanding of the Kingdom. Of course, there have been some unsavory aspects to the appropriation of this knowledge in that it has driven an inconceivably large wedge between myself and my former associates. But be that as it may, the truth is worth such forfeitures, I strongly recommend to you a zealous course of action in this matter. To aid in the development of a proper vocabulary with which to convey spiritual thoughts, I have listed here several rather uncommon phrases found in Scripture. Not all of them are infrequent, and all of them are major in the development of proper thoughts "pertaining to life and godliness". Time will not be spent here in the expounding of the meaning of these phrases; that will be a good exercise for you. It is enough at this point to observe candidly and honestly the extreme rarity of such language in the church of our day — virtually any church of our day. The question must be raised by honest inquirers; "Why are these inspired phrases so foreign to my ears?" Exercise, dear reader, your spirit now; examine to see if these phrases bring offence to your spirit. All of them were given by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness (II Tim. 3:16-17).

1. "Election of grace" (Rom. 11:5)
2. "Ordained unto eternal life" (Acts 13:48)
3. "Believed through grace" (Acts 18:27)
4. "Spirit of faith" (II Cor. 4:13)
5. "Hearing of faith" (Gal. 3:2,5)
6. "Sanctification of the Spirit" (II Thess. 2:13)
7. "The faith of Christ" (Phil. 3:9)
8. "The faith of God's elect" (Tit. 1:1)
9. "The joy of faith" (Phil. 1:25)
10. "Patience of hope" (I Thess. 1:3)
11. "Joy of the Holy Ghost" (I Thess. 1:6)
12. "Justified by faith" (Rom. 5:1)
13. "Righteousness without works" (Rom. 4:6)
14. "The law of faith" (Rom. 3:27)
15. "The faith of God" (Rom. 3:3)
16. "The righteousness of faith" (Rom. 4:13)
17. "Children of the promise" (Rom. 9:8)
18. "According to election" (Rom. 9:11)
19. "Fitted to destruction" (Rom. 11:22)
20. "Riches of His glory" (Rom. 11:23a)
21. "Prepared unto glory" (Rom. 11:23b)

22. "Law of righteousness" (Rom. 11:31)
23. "Word of faith" (Rom. 10:8)
24. "Spirit of slumber" (Rom. 11:8)
25. "Reconciling of the world" (Rom. 11:15)
26. "Standest by faith" (Rom. 11:20)
27. "In heavenly places" (Eph. 1:3)
28. "Predestinated unto adoption" (Eph. 1:5)
29. "Accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:6)
30. "Riches of His grace" (Eph. 1:7)
31. "Mystery of His will" (Eph. 1:9)
32. "Counsel of His own will" (Eph. 1:11)
33. "Spirit of wisdom and revelation" (Eph. 1:17)
34. "Eyes of your understanding" (Eph. 1:18)
35. "Old man with his deeds" (Co. 3:9)
36. "Election of God" (I Thess. 1:4)
37. "Rich in faith" (Jas. 2:5)
38. "The trial of your faith" (I Pet. 1:7)
39. "The end of your faith" (I Pet. 1:9)
40. "Calling and election" (II Pet. 1:10)
41. "The elect's sake" (Matt. 24:22)
42. "Love in the Spirit" (Col. 1:8)
43. "Spiritual understanding" (Col. 1:9)
44. "Longsuffering with joyfulness" (Col. 1:11)
45. "The Kingdom of His dear Son" (Col. 1:13)
46. "The Image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15)
47. "The dispensation of God" (Col. 1:25)
48. "Riches of full assurance" (Col. 2:2)
49. "Treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3)
50. "Rudiments of the world" (Col. 2:8)
51. "The handwriting of ordinances" (Col. 2:14)
52. "This present evil world" (Gal. 1:4)
53. "Apostleship of the circumcision" (Gal. 1:8)
54. "Frustrate the grace of God" (Gal. 2:21)
55. "Ministereth to you the Spirit" (Gal. 3:3)
56. "The curse of the law" (Gal. 3:13)
57. "The hope of righteousness" (Gal. 5:5)
58. "The marks of the Lord Jesus" (Gal. 6:17)
59. "The day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30)
60. "Children of disobedience" (Eph. 5:6)
61. "The day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6)
62. "The bowels of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:8)
63. "The fruits of righteousness" (Phil. 1:11)
64. "Supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:19)
65. "Evident token of perdition" (Phil. 1:28)
66. "Fellowship of the Spirit" (Phil. 2:1)
67. "Service of your faith" (Phil. 2:17)
68. "Companion in labour" (Phil. 2:25)
69. "That I may win Christ" (Phil. 3:8)
70. "Fellowship of His sufferings" (Phil. 3:10)
71. "Enemies of the cross of Christ" (Phil. 3:18)
72. "Whose God is their belly" (Phil. 3:19)
73. "Our vile body" (Phil. 3:20)
74. "Knew the grace of God in truth" (Col. 1:6)

Surely no honest soul will declare that these are common phrases amidst the church-world at large. Hardly a soul, indeed, that is even vaguely familiar with them. These were picked at random. You may open any book of the Scriptures and find an unending list of such terms; foreign to religious zealots, all of which claim an interest in the eternal Kingdom and a personal knowledge of the Lord Jesus. **It appears plain to me that the reason for the strange absence of these inspired phrases in the pulpits of the land is simply that they do not contribute to the general functions and purposes of the churches.** They have no place in the pro-

gram, and convey no thoughts that would prove beneficial to the building of the institution. However, these terms are vital to an understanding of the Kingdom of our God and Savior Jesus Christ. They form thought and concept, and bring about an understanding of the true nature of things. Let each of the children of God seek with their whole heart to "buy the truth and sell it not". Also, to learn to speak in "words that the Holy Ghost teacheth", and not in words that "man's wisdom teacheth". One cannot but help noticing the glaring difference between the words and phrases that have been enumerated and such as follow; "Faith commitment", "Sunday school teacher", "Sunday school superintendent", "world evangelism", "child evangelism", "soul-winning clinic", "song evangelist", "assistant pastor", "missions", "faith pledge", "New Testament church", "New Testament pattern", Bible believing", "born again Christian", "carnal Christian", etc. It ought to be clear that any organization seeking to perpetrate its own name and enlarge its own boundaries will inevitably choose a nomenclature that will be conducive to that end. Therefore this whole new structure of speaking has arisen. We, however, of THE WORD OF TRUTH are glad to confess that the Scriptures and the concepts developed therein are what satisfies our hungry hearts, and therefore having the same spirit of faith, we also so speak.

A Sister With Perception Writes

"The world is in such a turmoil, for wherever you turn there is sin, and so much in the open—so easily seen. People calling evil good and good evil, ever denying that there is a living God, pushing aside a Savior's love that would bring them peace within, salvation and eternal life with the Father. Demonstrations and riots, strikes, wars, confusion, and hatred because of the color of ones skin. O Satan, thou seemeth to be ruling over all things on this earth; but we who are of like precious faith know that the Lord Omnipotent reigneth. We cannot say that God reigneth only in the heavens, or that He reigneth only in the sea, that only in all nature there He be: but "consider it in thine heart, that the Lord is God in Heaven above, and upon the earth beneath; there is none else." Praise the Lord.

The world has a saying, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush; give me what I can see with my eyes, give me what I can touch with my hands, that which I can hold now. Who cares about salvation and eternal life with God! I cannot hold these things in my hand. Maybe there is a heaven

and a hell, but I can't see or touch them. So give me the things of this life, eat drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die." Well, the world can have this world, but I say as the song writer has said, "Take the world, but give me Jesus." The things of this life shall soon pass away; no more shall I roam the earth beneath, no more shall I walk where evil has been; so eat and drink, O world, for thou art dead already; but I shall live on throughout all eternity with my Savior. Praise the Lord!

Sometimes I wonder in my soul, Why doth He love me so? For such a sinner as I am, so wretched and so vile within; but then He tells me in His word that Christ His Son was sent for me to die upon mount Calvary. But why O why doth He love me so that to this cross my Lord would go, to set me free from all my sin, to justify and bring me into sweet peace with Him? O what love He hath bestowed on me, and O how I rejoice to know that God doth love me so. Yet in this life His great love I may not fully understand, yet when Christ comes again and I meet Him face to face, then all things shall become clear unto me, and I shall praise His Name throughout all eternity.

Sister Beverly Brunner
Oakley, Illinois

PROSAIC THOUGHTS ON GRACE

When once the soul has tasted of true grace
Nought of this fleeting world doth satisfy.
The tinsel cheap which shrouds its crumbling
walls

Has no attraction anymore.
Beyond the sensible, eternal things are seen —
Unshakable reality that rules the nether-world.
Such vision quick dispels the anxious thoughts
Which rise when earth doth dominate.
The heart, enraptured with this contemplation
high

No longer sets a value on the temporal,
But rather sucks from flinty rock
A honey soothing to the aching soul.
What! Shall Grace now be exchanged for that
Which militates against the knowledge of the
Lord?

Shall I, a child of Grace, retire to miry clay
To lay in filth and squalor?
Nay, I sore disdain such putrid places;
Filled they be with stinch of earth and vileness
Twice condemned by God:
Once in His fiery Law these things denounced,
Once more when Grace didst teach me them to
deny.

That my flesh is prone to such as I do hate,
I readily confess with element of shame —
But, 'tis not I that follows after such as that!
I loathe such things as tend to hide the real —
That quick obscure reality that frees.
And yet, that Grace which teaches me to hate
those things,
Doth also grant that sin be not imputed,
Although in my members it doth now reside.

(From page 5)

prayer and Bible study so that real progress can be made in the faith. A regular systematic reading of such Reformed writers as Matthew Henry, John Calvin, Martin Luther, John Bunyan, Charles Hadden Spurgeon, and any of the Puritans is highly recommended.