

Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the
whole Counsel of GOD

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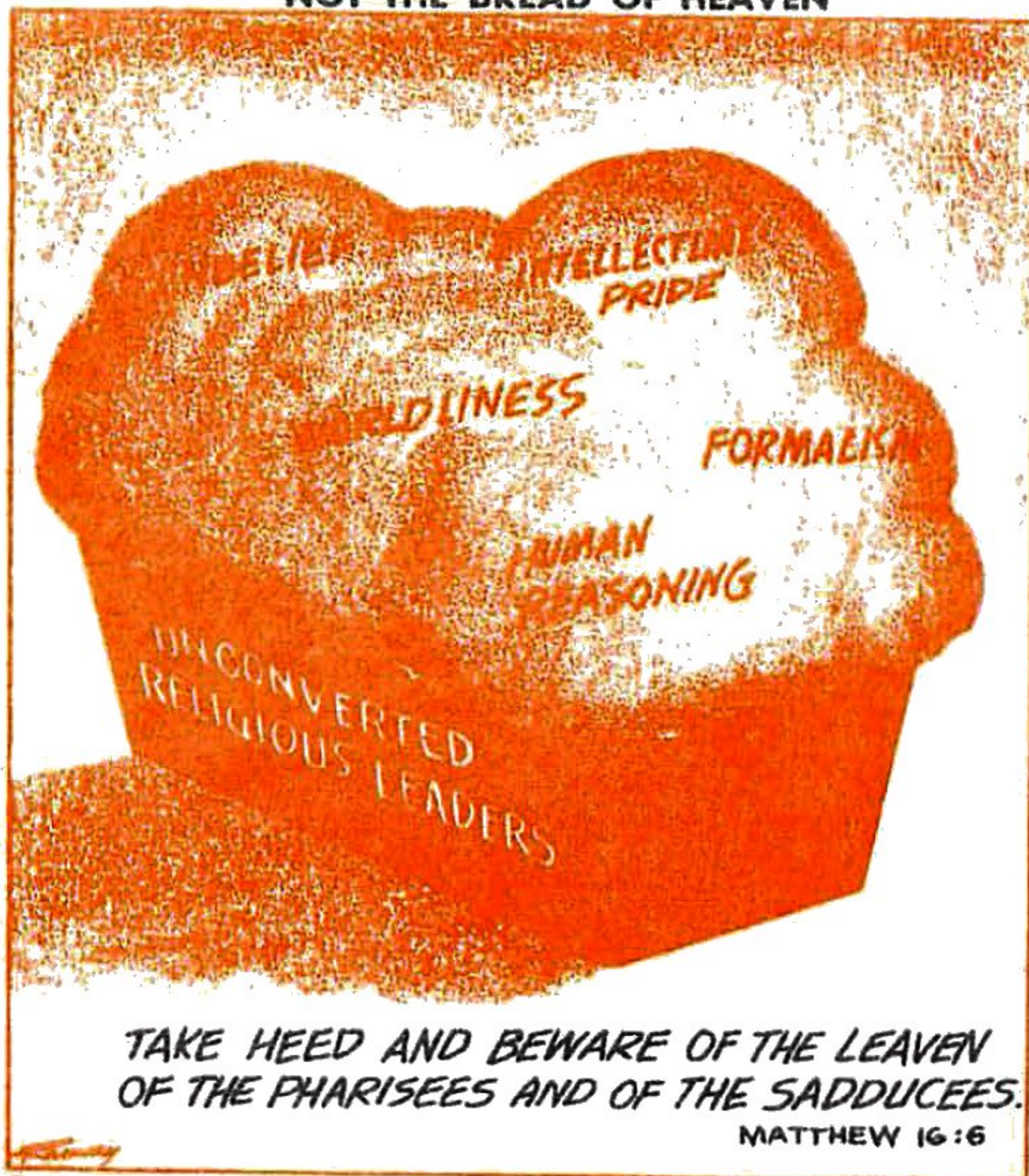


He will be very
gracious unto thee
at the voice of thy
cry; when he shall
hear it, he will
answer thee.
Isaiah 30:19

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NOT THE BREAD OF HEAVEN



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Editor: Gene Hawkins



“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;” II Thess. 2:3

“...that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first,...” is a most powerful and ominous statement which is surely being fulfilled before our very eyes even at this present hour. However, in order to fully understand it, the exact context wherein it is written must be considered. Paul’s first letter to these Thessalonian believers was filled with resounding hope, boldly announcing Jesus’ second advent, asserting that “...the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, ... and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them... to meet the Lord in the air:.. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” I Thess. 4:16-18 The apostle then continues with high praise and commendation for this elite group, declaring that “... of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.” I Thess. 5:1-2 Next, they are exhorted: “...let us not sleep, as do others;... For they that sleep sleep in the night; ...let us, who are of the day, be sober,... For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation...” I Thess. 5:6 -9

His second epistle to this same people brings a decided change in tone, proclaiming that “...it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to **them that trouble you**; And to you who are **troubled** rest with us,...” II Thess. 1:6-7 This then gives rise to the verses immediately preceding our opening text. “Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon **shaken in mind**, or be **troubled**, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.” II Thess. 2:1-2 The inference here is quite clear. Some false teachers had come to Thessalonica, insisting that

Jesus had already come. There is even the possibility that some had produced a fake letter from Paul to prove this assertion, for the apostle plainly warned them not to be "...shaken in mind... by word, nor by letter as from us,..." Evidently some in this assembly had not truly grasped the glorious hope couched in the first epistle and had been deceived into thinking that Jesus had made His final appearance, thus leaving them "...troubled..." and "...shaken in mind..." They surely had in no wise been comforted by his former message. Now their mentor is trying to warn them against deception insisting that Jesus had not come as of yet because "...that day shall not come **except** there come a falling away first... and that man of sin be revealed,..." Paul knew that the antichrist had most assuredly NOT been revealed at the time then present, and thus His coming is still eminent.

4 The specific day of which he speaks is "...the day of the LORD..." which is repeatedly promised throughout scripture and to which Paul alluded in I Thess. 5:2. The day of the LORD is exactly that: The Day Of The Lord! Such a day is in direct contrast to the day of man, which is in effect at this present hour. Consequently, Paul emphatically affirms "...that the day of Christ..." is most assuredly still "... at hand," and it is a direct reference to Jesus Who shall reign as God, for 1000 years after which He shall deliver "... up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." I Cor. 15:24 That 1000 year day of the millennium will, without question, belong to Him.

That glorious era will begin the day that Jesus takes His throne in heaven as seen by Daniel. "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool:..." Dan.7:9 John beheld exactly this same vision when he wrote: "After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald." Rev. 4:1-4 The day Jesus takes His throne in heaven will be exactly the same day when all national

leaders on this earth will be ruling in usurpation, and we may emphatically conclude that Jesus has not at this time taken His throne in heaven. This is still man's day.

According to our text, "...that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed,..." We have used this verse numerous times to show that no revival has been prophesied for these end times, even though some have proclaimed that they would go forth and win this world, presenting it to Jesus on a silver platter. We would emphasize that before the 1000 year day of Christ comes to full-blown fruition, there must rather come "...a falling away first..." and it will not be a temporary decline, with some semblance of revival in between, for this ungodly condition will eventually culminate with the revelation of the antichrist or "...that man of sin..., the son of perdition;" It is imperative for men to understand that this world-wide falling away has been in existence for some time.

The term "...falling away..." literally means a "defection from truth, apostasy." It comes from a word which literally signifies "divorce." Paul also warned of this same day when he wrote to Timothy explaining that "...the time will come when **they** will not endure sound doctrine; but after **their** own lusts shall **they** heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." (fable, fiction, myth) II Tim. 4:3 There may have been a time when some were prone to apply these words only to the multitude of false religious doctrines which have prevailed down through the ages, but Paul's reference to "...they..." and "...their" undoubtedly applies to all men who have now refused to receive the truth of God's Word. This fact is demonstrated by the multitude of manifestations whereby this falling away is clearly visible in every avenue of global society. If there is a "defection from truth," it must of necessity mean that there was a time when men did regard or adhere to truth. Surely most of us can remember a time when there was a certain respect for the tenets of God's Word. There was a time when men were at least governed by conscience, but, in our day, lying and deception to further one's own cause, has become a way of life. The political atmosphere of hatred, and outright rebellion against all authority across the entire globe is unprecedented. Human life seems to carry no value at all in our world, as men have completely

disregarded God's decree that "...thou shalt not kill." There was indeed a time when couples would marry rather than continue in fornication even after children were born. Many of us can also remember when prayer in schools was not only allowed but advocated at various sports events and other school functions, but today it is strictly forbidden. Note also in Paul's declaration above that when men turn from truth, they are controlled and motivated by their own desires or "...lusts..." and then "...they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;" in an endeavor to find a teaching that will justify or vindicate their own desires and choices. The abortion issue has come to the fore in recent weeks due to the nomination of a Supreme Court Justice who is pro-life. It seems that men are absolutely determined to preserve the so-called "right" of a mother to murder her own baby. We have even heard some Christians indicate that men must find some way to keep these unborn children from becoming an undue burden on society. Has anyone ever considered God's novel idea to "Flee fornication..."? This chief apostle to the Church, whose authority definitely reaches down to our day, loudly warns that

6 "...Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication **sinneth against his own body.**" I Cor. 6:18 This falling away has become so rampant that men do not even consider the consequences of sin.

Sadly, many of our day have fallen away to the point that they simply do not want to even hear of anything connected with God's Truth. Men walking after their own lusts would loudly proclaim the "man-made doctrines" of their new teachers, which insist that Christians must be more "tolerant" of those who do not agree with their opinions of godliness in regard to abortion and same-sex marriage. It makes no difference that those opinions come right out of the Scriptures. We would simply ask the question. "If these new lifestyles are so righteous in the eyes of God, as some vehemently proclaim, why is there even a need for tolerance?" Such a question has not been asked, because the answer is, that men have become a part of this "...falling away..." and have literally divorced themselves from the fact that God abhors such conduct and has defined it as an abomination. The bulk of humanity, however, has been convinced down through the ages that if enough people say and believe that something is right, then it must be so. God's Word declares otherwise!

The evidence of the falling away is legion. Catholicism long ago fell away and left behind the glorious teaching that, “Neither is there salvation in any other for there is **none other name** (Jesus Christ of Nazareth) under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:12 Then this same hierarchy not only forsook that unshakeable and irreplaceable doctrine of the faith, they rather filled the void with their own catechism of “Hail **Mary** full of grace...” They continue in their ungodliness calling Mary the “mother of God,...” thus setting Mary on that high plane of superiority even above Jesus, attributing salvation to Mary and The Church rather than the risen Christ. They have most assuredly fulfilled Jude’s prophecy of “...ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and **denying** the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.” Jude 4 We also note that when certain Catholic Priests have been pressed to explain the basic Christian term, “born again,” they simply have not been able to do so.

This same self proclaimed “Mother Church” is currently being rocked by the sex scandal created by priests who have, for quite some time, leveled a massive assault against countless innocent and defenseless children around the entire world. This is most assuredly one primary example of “...turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness...” foretold by Jude. Some may wonder if she will emerge virtually unscathed in this matter, and the answer is a resounding YES! This is not because of her great prowess in denying, avoiding, or negotiating such scandals, but rather because of her designated role in end time prophecy. God’s Word declares that this “...woman Jezebel, which **calleth herself a prophetess**, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols” (Rev. 2:20) will be the same woman presented alive and well in Rev. 17. John graphically describes a religious entity as a woman, and here she is seen “...arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls...” There is no Church on earth which can compare with the riches displayed by the Vatican, nor is there any “woman” or religious body on the entire planet which can claim the political and religious power over people commanded by Catholicism. This latter fact is expressed by the phrase “... The **waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth**, are peoples, and multitudes,

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and nations, and tongues.” The Catholic Church decries being identified as “...MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS...” as recorded in Rev. 17:5, but by her own admission, she is the ONLY one who can boast of the above characteristics. Thus, John shows this same woman sitting, in total control, “...upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns....” Rev. 17:3-4 That beast is none other than the seven-headed, ten-horned political coalition of the end time which will be controlled and governed by Catholic influence.

8 The Catholic Church also proclaims that she is the only Church that can trace her roots back to the early apostles, and she is absolutely correct. Shortly after Pope Benedict assumed office, he boldly declared: “The other communities cannot be called churches in the proper sense because they do not have the ability to trace their bishops back to Christ’s original apostles and therefore their priestly ordinations are not valid.” Since that is true, then she must of necessity be the ONLY Church, against whom the indictment of Rev. 17:6 can be leveled because, even by her own loud boast, she was the only one there! “And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus:...” (during the dark ages) Revelation 18:24 likewise conveys this same condemnation. “And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.” The Church of Rome is very quick to trumpet her **greatness** by all the foregoing and very prestigious facts in regard to her wealth, her expertise and influence in politics, her massive world-wide following, and her command of awe and respect around the entire globe, but those are also the exact same facts which condemn her.

Pope Francis has also emerged as another example of the aforementioned teachers which Paul described in II Tim. 4. Apparently he too is trying desperately to appease those walking after “...their own lusts...” with teachings that will comply with their desires. It has been reported that the LGBT community was thrilled with his election due to his reported sympathetic view of their cause. More recently, his “teachings” seem to be a bit contradictory to those doctrines accepted by the Church. The Guardian issued a report from CNN on May 20, 2018 with breaking news “that while meeting with a gay survivor of clergy

sexual abuse, Pope Francis told the man, 'Juan Carlos, that you are gay does not matter. God made you like this and loves you like this and I don't care. The pope loves you like this. You have to be happy with who you are.' This same article continues, explaining "...that Vatican spokesperson Greg Burke said "We do not normally comment on the Pope's private conversations." If the comments are true, this represents a remarkable shift in official Catholic discourse on LGBT issues.... the pope is expressing a much stronger affirmation of gay and lesbian people than he, or any previous pope or Vatican official, has ever done. Even if the words reported are exactly as the pope said them, they still do not indicate a change in official teaching, but they do represent a major change in pastoral attitude and practice."

Pope Francis also joined the fray in trying to solve the controversy surrounding conventional marriage and same sex marriage, by simply defining the terminology. "Marriage is between a man and a woman. This is the precise term. Let's call unions between the same sex 'civil unions'." These words were spoken at a Youth Rally in Milan in May 2017, and the Pope's comments included this statement, which is also another disturbing fact of the current falling away. "...In books also, children are learning that they can choose their own sex. Why is sex, being a woman or a man, a choice and not a fact of nature?" Though the Pope apparently agrees with the fact "...that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female," (Matt. 19:4) he still seems willing to try and placate those who would deny God's Word. 9

There are also many other examples of this falling away. Most of us have heard of the tremendous success in winning people to Christ during the crusades of godly men like Billy Sunday, John Wesley, and, more recently, Billy Graham. The fact is that we no longer hear of such successful campaigns for the purpose of converting souls to Christ in these modern times. Another stark example of this apostasy is the dramatic decline in Church attendance. It grieves our hearts to hear of Church closings simply because they cannot afford to maintain their buildings. Some of this can be attributed to the home-going of faithful believers, but the sad fact of the matter is that these worthies have faith have not been replaced. It seems that at least some of the younger generation has wanted to find "something on their own," and have forsaken the godly principles of former generations. Many "Mega-Churches" have also sprung up, and

their main attraction has been so-called “Christian Rock Music,” which is designed to appeal to the soulish nature of the youth in order to excite them emotionally. This has been done at the expense of preaching the deep things of God and there has indeed been a departure even from many of the basic tenets of “the faith,” robbing the hearers of that message which God intends to reach the spirit. Some Churches have even boldly declared: “We do not teach doctrine because it is so divisive....we do not want to offend anyone.”

It seems also that some of this younger generation has become a bit disenchanted with even the mega-churches, and have thus adopted the idea that, “I really do not need to go to any Church at all to be close to God” and thus they do not go anywhere. We would remind those of such a persuasion to heed Paul’s admonition. “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: **and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.**” Heb 10:25 Gathering together with God’s people is just one sign in a person’s life that he does “... see the day approaching.”

10

It is so very sad that the small, intimate family-oriented Church has been replaced by massive Churches where there is little or no interaction with other members of the body. Some attendees to these Churches have reported that they do not even know those seated around them, and thus we wonder how they can fulfill God’s order of “...speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted **by that which every joint supplieth**, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”

While all these things are so, we must also understand that society surely dictates whether God’s Word goes forth or not. Even if all the “super preachers” mentioned above were to return and minister in today’s world, they would not be as successful as they once were, due directly to the hardness which plagues the hearts of men in our day. Amos prophesied it as follows: “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD:” Am. 8:11 The primary reason for this prophecy at the time then present was because Israel had soundly

rejected the prophets that God had sent to them. No less is true today. The above examples of this falling way clearly show that men are simply not interested in what God has to say. They, like Israel, will seek their own gods and will not find satisfaction.

We need not be a part of that crowd. It is imperative for us to acknowledge that this era of falling away will without fail continue. None can stop it and it will eventually produce the antichrist. Bro. Smith wrote years ago that, "... some of our day seem to be more interested in who the antichrist will be rather than in the appearing of Jesus!" One major effect of this current falling away is that the second coming of Jesus is rarely if ever mentioned in organized Christendom. Our promise is found in the following verse. "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that **look for him** shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28 Jesus will come again, just as surely as the sun will rise tomorrow, but the key for us is that He shall appear "...unto them that **LOOK** for him..." We have heard some Christians very plainly assert; "I most certainly do believe that Jesus is coming again, but it will not be in my lifetime." That is in no wise the voice of one who is earnestly and daily looking for their beloved Lord to appear. Let us who are of the day not fall into that trap but rather, personally and specifically, claim these glorious promises. "And that, knowing the time, that **now it is high time** to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Rom. 13:11 "For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Heb 10:37 Bless God, the day of the Lord is still at hand for us too!

11

Book Of The Ages

The Book of the ages,
With spiritual power,
Is the Book called the Bible,
The Book of the hour!
Exhaustless its treasure,
Eternal its store.
All the best of the others,
You'll find there - and more!

Anon

The Humanity Of Christ

Morris Dutton

“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.” Jn. 1:1-2

The theme on my heart is the Humanity of Christ. I want to point out some important facts about His birth and humanity. This truth has been ringing in my heart for many weeks, and I believe it is of great importance, for there is much erroneous teaching on the subject. But first, I wish to speak of His eternal, pre-existence with the Father. "In the beginning was the Word." That speaks of His Person. That is His eternal name—Rev. 19:13. "The Word was with God." That proves His Divinity, or that He is Deity. I am glad that my Lord existed even before He was born of the virgin Mary, not as an angel, but as God. He never had a beginning. The Bible sets forth plainly His eternal existence before the ages of time.

12 "And behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son and shalt call His name JESUS." Lk. 1:31 In this chapter, we read of Christ's miraculous birth. Mary knew no man. She was a virgin. When the angel of the Lord spoke to her, he informed her that the holy thing which should be born of her was to be conceived in her by the Holy Spirit. Human reasoning tries to discredit that miraculous fact, yet it happened nearly 2,000 years ago. Human reasoning endeavors to discredit the humanity and the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Men say that He was born as any other man was, and that there was no more value in His blood than in mine or yours. They say that it was impossible for His blood to atone for the sins of the people, that He could not die a meritorious death on the cross, but merely as a martyr. Is it not sad? His conception and birth were supernatural and His whole life was supernatural and miraculous.

The reason this marvelous ministry that we have is such a blessed ministry is that we trust the Holy Spirit. We are able to exalt Christ by the Spirit of God. The birth of Christ was brought about by the Holy Ghost. This befuddles human reasoning. There are undoubtedly many things that we will not understand, but the birth

of Christ was not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit of God. His birth was holy, sinless, undefiled, pure because it was brought about by the over-shadowing of the most high God. We read in Heb. 2:14 concerning Him "partaking of flesh and blood." He identified Himself with sinful flesh. He was made in the likeness of men. He made Himself of no reputation. He did not take upon Himself any special honor. He was found in fashion as a man, yet His humanity was perfect. It was sinless. He became a man. That is the reason that He could sympathize with us in our sinful deformity and frailty. It was necessary for Him to partake of flesh and blood,"that thru death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil." Heb. 2:14 He came unto His own people the Jews. He identified Himself with those who were in bondage to sin, helpless, broken and suffering miserably.

"He was made of a woman, made under the law." "He came to His own and His own received Him not." Thank God, we read in the Word, that "as many as received Him, to them He gave power, or authority, to become the sons of God, to as many as believed on His name." Because of His abasement, and humility, because of the low place that He took, He was crowned with glory afterwards. He was exalted by His Father. He has given Him a name that is above every name. He is the exalted One this afternoon, seated at the Father's right hand.

I cite for you another very vivid picture of the humanity of Christ. He was praying in the garden. There were two wills in the great conflict—His own will and the will of God. When praying there, He said "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me; notwithstanding not my will, but thine be done." He had a battle to fight before He went to the cross. God's will was to be considered in the matter of going to the cross. He had some conflict there in the garden. There was a victory to be won. His own will drew back from being made sin and from being counted a transgressor on the cross. But He conquered His own Spirit and became willing to be forsaken of God to redeem humanity, for they could be redeemed in no other way. "He tasted death for every man," even separation from God, the penalty that every person must pay who does not believe on Jesus Christ. Being in an agony, He "sweat as it were

great drops of blood," as He wrestled with that great problem.

We also draw back from suffering. That is only natural for the flesh. But when the life of Jesus Christ rules in us, it makes us willing to lose all things, to be made comformable unto His death, knowing the fellowship of His sufferings and that there is a victory to be achieved after the suffering is over. The suffering is always before the victory. It is well for us to be given up entirely to the will of God in every phase of our Christian experience, even as Christ was. The path of yieldedness that He took to the cross is our path. The suffering precedes the glory. The suffering is the price of the crown, of the throne. Christ took a lowly place and suffered in the flesh for us. He suffered pain and anguish in His Spirit that you and I might be delivered. He cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?" That was the anguish He foresaw in the garden. He took upon Himself our sins and iniquities and diseases. He bore them in His own body on the tree.

14 Someone asked me, Where was Christ's body when His Spirit was in prison? In His Spirit He went and preached to the spirits in prison, the spirits of believers whose bodies are in the graves. I Pet. 3:19 The body of Christ was in the tomb from the time that it was buried until He was resurrected. Where else could it be? We read in Rom. 8 that the same Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies. The body of Christ was just as dependent upon the Spirit of God for it to be raised as the bodies of the saints of God that are dead in Christ this afternoon. Their dependence is on the Spirit of God to quicken them and bring them forth. Though sown in weakness, they shall be raised in power.

The thief on the cross said to Jesus. "Remember me." He answered, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." His Spirit went and preached unto the spirits that were held captive. We read in Ephesians that, "He led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men." He released those captives by taking them to Heaven. Since that time Paradise is in Heaven. The Spirit of Christ was united with His body, and the Spirit of God raised Him from the dead. He came forth from the tomb as the victorious Christ, both man and God. He is a glorified man. That is the reason He can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities. He is our High Priest. I believe

those imprisoned spirits were looking for His coming. They readily accepted His message. They had gone down in hope of His coming. They did not believe in vain. They did not stagger at the promises of God. The only difference, as that they looked forward to His coming as the Son of God and Saviour. We look forward to His coming as the King and Bridegroom.

Christ's humanity was undefiled, sinless, perfect. But God "...made Him to be sin,..." (or a sin-offering for us,) "... that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." II Cor. 5:21 That tells me that He was without sins but He took the place of the sinner on the cross. He was conceived in the womb of Mary by the Holy Ghost. He was made partaker of flesh and blood, made in the likeness of His brethren. Though He identified Himself with them and became one of them yet He did not become defiled in any measure. He identified Himself with sinners, but He was not a sinner. All men have sinned except this one Man. We live in houses that are sinful. But the very life that lives within this frail tabernacle is born of the Spirit of God. It is deposited in these tabernacles by the Holy Spirit. We have a life that is a victor over sin, over the world, over the devil, a triumphant life. It was tried and tested to the uttermost in Jesus on the cross, and He bowed His head and died.

15

If any one should receive the plaudits of men Christ should, because He died a victor over sin and Satan. He deserves all the glory. It is my privilege to give glory to the name of Jesus. The Apostle Paul says, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ by whom the world was crucified unto me and I unto the world." Gal. 6:14 I want to let men see Jesus Christ in me, that I have been with Him. Isn't it wonderful to be with the Man that came down from Heaven? The Apostle said also, "But this man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood." Heb. 7:24. He was made higher than the heavens, the Man Christ Jesus. He is a glorified Man. Our standing is in this Man Who was made higher than the heavens, and as He stands there He pleads for us. I am happy because there is One Who stands by my side. I have the Paraclete, the One Who stands for me and with me. May God bless these words to your hearts. May they be an encouragement to you.

(Reprint Topeka Camp Sermon 1944)

Know That I Am God

Eva Laura Bond

The faithfulness of Paul to the precious truth of God's word he had learned showed his real Christian character. During his times of imprisonment, he still crucified self with all its earthly longings to listen to Satan, even though persecutions and trials of all kinds beat down upon him. The world would have him to compromise and surrender to it, but his vision of Christ was still greater. How could Paul suffer so and be always victorious? He had learned the truth of waiting before the Lord, of "being still and knowing I am God." He was still before God, prior to the battle, in the midst of his battle and after the victory was won.

We never know God's best for us until we recognize Him in every detail of our lives and this can never be done until we learn to "be still before God." Instead, many try to run from their imprisonments and shipwrecks, refusing to see God in it, when in actuality God is endeavoring to bring out of **16** the Christian life the same thing he received from Paul's — a fully surrendered life, consecrated to the whole truth he found precious to his own heart.

Many problems of life which baffle us and would occupy the place of rest in Him are completely solved when we dare to trust God by laying aside our plans, our activities, our reasonings. God seldom does things as it would seem the natural thing but, more often, chooses the least expected vessel, occasion, place or ability to show the might of his power.

Will you meditate long enough on this precious scripture to let it help you? We know it will. "Be still and know that I am God..." Psa. 46:10 This seems to be one of the most difficult lessons for believers to learn. Man is so independent, proud and prone to make his own way until it is quite boring for him to ever settle himself quietly before his Maker and listen to God, or even take time to see God. Man's work is so prominent to the natural eye that many find it hard to go outside the realm of feeling, sight and natural reasoning—that realm that requires so much of humanity, yet it is beyond

this place that we truly find God. When we get beyond this natural ability, we have finally become still and then we behold our God.

I asked Leroy, 10 years of age, if he would do me a favor. He said, "Yes," so as I began telling him what to do, he began repeating over and over each time I tried to speak, "Yes master I'll do it, what is it you want me to do," etc., etc. Of course, he was doing it as a tease—finally he giggled, became silent, and I listened. This served as a great spiritual lesson to me. You have heard no doubt many people repeat over and over, "Lord, I'll do what you want, I'll go where you want, I'll stay where you wish," on and on these prayers and testimonies go but they never stop long enough to see if God be in any of their fervent desires. Seems some have really fooled themselves into believing it, but do you suppose they think God is also brought into this false state?

In these days, we are pressed for speedy decisions daily until it seems we think God must hurry too. We see Jesus striding gently on the sands of the shore and in the streets of the town. He never had to run to be on time, nor lag to kill time; it always happened on time and so we should strive to be as gentle as He, yet always a fit subject on time. The present days of rapidity make it very trying at times to simply lay aside everything and remember to give thanks and be still. That is the time our vision is illumined, our faith is raised, our hope is brighter and the race becomes of all importance to us. Is it any wonder we are cautioned to, "Be still, and know that God is God."

There are those who have been too occupied, even in religious activities, to see their need of obeying this wonderful command. We read, we study, we visit, we are fully busied with many activities, but in it all we lack one thing if we fail in this—"Be still and know that I am God."

(Taken From "Bonds Of Peace" 1951)

*** If God orders our steps, we will have the faith of God; and this faith will never be defeated.**

REFLECTIONS

... From the Editor

“Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.”
Isa. 40:1

18 It is God Who has seen the need for comfort and has issued this very urgent decree that it should be granted. The context of this declaration reaches down to a time yet beyond this present day as Isaiah cries out “Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins.” This is a reference to that glorious time when Israel will have endured the punishments of the tribulation, having realized that her sins have been pardoned because of the work which their new found Messiah accomplished on the cross for them. The foundation for that incomparable blessing of comfort was laid long ago at Jesus' first advent and thus the prophet announces the ministry of John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Savior. “The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD,...” and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain:” Isa. 40:3-4 All this is preparatory for that time when “...the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,... for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.” Isa. 40:5

Such a time of absolute peace, comfort, and unprecedented prosperity is coming for Israel, but God has also ordered that same glorious comfort for us Gentiles today. Such comfort can only come from God as Paul triumphantly cries out, much like Isaiah, “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation,...” II Cor. 1:3-4 Like Israel, comfort is needed because of tribulation, and God is so very faithful to supply it. Note, however, that the rest of this verse is also filled with God's order for our lives. This God of all comfort imparts that glorious blessing unto us “... that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.” We can only comfort others to the degree wherein we ourselves have experienced His enveloping Hand of

comfort in our own lives.

Psalm 23 presents a classic pattern of how God brings such comfort first-hand into our own lives. Verse 4 specifically states that "...though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, ...thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." He will comfort in any tribulation, but this entire Psalm is fraught with such comfort. It is found in the very Presence and intimate personal relationship with "...my shepherd;..." V. 1. Lying down to rest... "in green pastures:..." brings comfort without measure as we learn by experience the strength and vigor of resurrection life. We are again comforted as He slakes our thirst when "...he leadeth me beside the still waters." V. 2 "Comfort food" is freely administered because "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:..." while comfort for the future comes when we know beyond doubt that, "... goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever." V. 5-6

Paul specifically exhorted us to impart the same comfort which we have experienced to others. That is beautifully illustrated by the Good Samaritan in Luke 10, who ministered to the man that "... fell among thieves..." V. 30. It was this despised Samaritan who "...came where he was... and...had compassion on him..." V.33. He then "...went to him, and bound up his wounds,... brought him to an inn,.. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." V. 34-35 The lesson here is very clear: if we comfort others with the same comfort wherewith God has comforted us, we too may often be required to minister at our own expense.

19

GH

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

We still have plenty Grace and Glory Hymnals available, both piano copies and books for the congregation. Many have enjoyed these deep spiritual songs down through the years for they are literally sermons declaring unto you the whole counsel of God.

Also be advised that our corn crib is full and all of the titles listed are readily available. Once again, we would remind our readers that the book of John is back in print, having been missing for quite a number of years. It is our desire to spread this deep message of Divine Grace to as many as will receive it while we longingly wait for Jesus' return and occupy faithfully until He comes.

The Unoffending Tongue

Evan Roberts

“**B**e not many teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive greater judgment, for in many things we all stumble. If any stumble (offend, A.V.) not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body. . . . Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how much wood a little fire kindleth! But if ye have bitter envying (jealousy) and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. For where envying and strife are, there is confusion and every evil work.” James 3:1, 2, 5, 14, 16.

20 The conversational aspect of the spirit life is so important that every believer should make it an express duty to endeavour to reach the goal of having the priceless virtue of an unoffending tongue. There is the utterance of that word which sets a flame to the evil nature, whether it be issuing forth from the nature itself, or by the interference of Gehenna—James 3 :6, Lit. Gr. There is also a stumbling in word, which although it set not the nature aflame, is a boasting against and lying against the truth. This subject of the use of the tongue, whether it be in conversing with one individual or in teaching a congregation, has an important relationship to the spiritual life. Not only should a man endeavor to stand individually clear before God, but he should take great care that he (1) "offend not" others with his words, and (2) that he "stumbles not" in misleading others with wrong utterances.

Hypocritical Listening To Truth

Let prayer be made for the removal of hypocrisy out of the mouths of those who fear God's truth. Also for removal of duplicity and treachery; so that there shall be no traitor within God's camp. There are those who when listening seem to acquiesce in everything, but inwardly they are eagerly watching for any word whereby they can afterwards make mischief regarding the truth, and the speaker of the truth. Let God make such persons true in word,

thoroughly honest and straightforward. If they do not believe in the truth spoken let them say so directly to the speaker, and not in his absence. Let them not praise him in his presence and condemn in his absence, for this is of that wisdom which is devilish. In conversation concerning another believer made in his absence he is often blamed for pursuing a certain course, but when he is present the speakers have not the courage to tell their thoughts to him himself. This causes disunion, for it is not in accordance with justice. It is our duty if we think a believer to be out of God's will to warn him once and warn him directly and then to leave him to God, so that the consequences may rest upon his own responsibility. Let there be honesty in the church, and let the fears that others have concerning a truth be uttered to the one who proclaims that truth and not to others indirectly in the hope that what is said will eventually reach the one concerned. May cowardice be removed from the church as well as the fear of delivering the truth of God.

Gossip Creates An Evil Atmosphere

May all evil conversation about God's saints be destroyed. If a believer be wrong the only right way to converse about it is for prayer that the wrong should be removed, and NOT IN GOSSIP WHICH CREATES AN EVIL ATMOSPHERE. Let us beware how we speak about the faults of others, lest we soil ourselves, and one another, causing a separation in the spirit between ourselves and the failing one. Believers should so walk after the Spirit that they can at once detect when necessary conversation about another man's fault becomes poisoned and foul like the ointment that had the fly in it. The evil nature relishes speech concerning others' faults, but the spiritual man gets fuel for prayer because he speaks only desiring to restore such a one. When conversing about such and such a fault of another, let each one ask himself as he speaks: "Am I keeping within the bound of desiring to restore that one?" If he find himself outside that limit and his conversation having nothing directly or indirectly to do with such a restoration, he should seal his lips and go no further, because evil conversation can bring forth nothing but evil. The only lawful reason for speaking of the fault of another is for the purpose of restoring that one, but if the conversation is the product

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of the natural man it is soiled and evil in the sight of God.

Pure Conversation About Others

When conversing about another believer's faults, let these two tests be applied: First, let no word be said in his absence which could not be uttered in his presence. And secondly, let not any sentence, any charge, any remark be made, nor any wrong tone of voice or spirit be manifested, but that which could be uttered or shown in his presence. If the word or tone needs to be altered when he is present, then the evil word has been spoken and a wrong spirit manifested in his absence—words which have caused the evil nature to boil over and to speak against the truth. Those who hear us speaking about others should be able to say, "That is the right word and that is the right spirit in which to speak, and that is the way in which I want to do it." Conversation about the faults of others is a delicate thing and needs great care. Many of those who speak about the faults of others pretend—or say—it is for "prayer," when it is only to feed the evil of their carnal nature. The believer should beware lest he feed his evil nature with
22 gossip.

There should be **CLEAN CONVERSATION** both as regards word and spirit. In conversing about the faults of others, our mind should be opened to see every precious thing in their lives. If in speaking of their faults we forget the virtues, we lay ourselves open to a subtle temptation, which results in our feeling a great gulf of separation between their spirit and ours. It is our duty to defend others in conversation. We have to defend others as we defend ourselves. One person may bring a charge against another, but there should not be a taking sides with one against the other. It is our duty to see that justice is done to each one, defending each other—the character, the reputation. For this let each one live the life that another can defend. When the little finger suffers, the whole body suffers also. Let us look on each other as members of one Body.

Death-Bringing Poison

The Apostle James speaks of the misuse of the tongue as a "death-bringing poison," and of "an unrestrainable evil" —James 3:8, Lit. A. U. If evil thoughts are kept within ourselves they

only do evil to ourselves, but once they are uttered, the area of the mischief has been enlarged; they add to the momentum of the evil as one passes them on to another. While kept inside ourselves they poison our own spirit and our own mind. When the evil thought is a misjudgment, then we misread the deeds of others (which may be pure) through the poison or evil thought, and thus put a cleavage between ourselves and them, which brings severance in the spirit of love. We should watch for "clean conversation" especially when speaking of the faults of others. The conversation and its manner cannot be overestimated. If a lie be spoken, the devil sees to it that it is well circulated, and he seeks to seal the lips of the one who is going to speak the truth.

The Rebuke of Blessing

In the face of all the training and discipline that a believer may have had on this point, he will need to watch himself most carefully **LEST WHEN HE IS FATIGUED IN BODY,** he yields to the wrong spirit. Extreme care should be taken that we speak not from an aggravated spirit. We can deal with sin only when we ourselves are in great calm. If we fail in this, then we should tarry until we can speak in purity and in gentleness. If we feel unrestrained in spirit and desirous of immediately uttering rebuke, and this be given way to in a harsh voice, then in correcting others we fall into the same snare ourselves. We must avoid a meddlesome spirit and yet give the reproof and the correcting word. In the absence of the person, the temptation is to magnify his fault and boast and rouse oneself against him, and in his presence be a coward.

Believers may be free to talk about the faults of another in his absence, but in his presence they may say, "I do not like to," or "I do not feel led to." May that be removed. May they be bold and brave to utter truth. But if a man desires to show that another is wrong, he must prove it to him. He may have sufficient facts to prove it to himself, but he must also be in possession of the facts to prove it to the one concerned. (Compare Gal. 2:11-13, Prov. 28:23 and 16:19, R.V., also Matt. 8:15). Until then, he must remain silent. It is also true that the man himself may not be ready to be told. That means we have always to prepare him

by prayer as well as pray that we may be prepared to transmit the truth. We must resolutely refuse (Rom. 6:13) to say the wrong word, never yielding to the temptation to give way to a loose spirit—Prov. 25:28; 16:32, also 19:11 R.V.Margin.

24 It is the tempter's hour to prepare for a future attack. Let us beware of the snare. True, we may slip, but that must not be our criterion of conduct. If there is a slip, condemn the word the moment it is said, and as quickly as it is detected say, "That word was wrong. I should not have said it." The drive of circumstances and a burden on the spirit, may have given occasion for the slip, but the apologetic spirit is there and the quick recognition of wrong and the apology for it. But it is not so much watching WORDS that are needed as the RADICAL RENOVATION OF THE MIND. It is not watching the tongue in any particular conversation, but it is as if the Apostle said: "See to it that you NEVER AGAIN SPEAK FROM THE OLD NATURE, but always from the new and to that effect take hold of all the Divine power in order to carry out the renewal." To bridle the tongue is not a physical action, but a moral one, and the spirit must be so empowered by Divine life that the evil nature cannot express itself through the body in misuse of the tongue.

(Reprint 1944)

PERFECT SIGHT

Here I see but dimly;
I shall then see face to face
He who died to save me
By the wonder of His grace.

Now I sometimes wonder
When I do not understand,
But He draws me closely to Him
By His gentle, loving hand.

Here I only know in part;
Then as I am known,
And when the veil is lifted
I shall see Him on His throne.

—Beulah Clark

THOSE KIDS OF OURS

Dorsey L. Crow

The relationship that some parents have with their children is tragic. Some children seem to think that "being stuck" with anybody else in the world would be better than being stuck with their parents. They call them "old man" and "old woman," and seem not to have the slightest desire to be children. This is to say nothing of those parents who see their children as "little imps," who are "ruining their lives and wrecking their home," as one mother told me.

Some parent-child relationships remind me of the story I heard about the poor old hen on the farm that sits on duck eggs. When the ducks are hatched, it is a tragedy for the hen but comedy to the bystanders. The ducklings go where they please, utterly indifferent to the hen's frantic clucking and cackled alarm. They do not understand the hen's language, and she does not know whether they are happy or suffering pain. They eat what she forbids, and refuse what she recommends. They never follow the hen; she always follows them - at least to the edge of the mud puddle where the ducklings stand on their heads in the water, and the hen is threatened with a nervous breakdown. When they become waterlogged and sticky with mud, they dry themselves against her breast, and are kept warm and protected by her. It is a one-way relationship - she is compelled to be their mother, but the ducklings never even approximate the chickens of a hen. And to top it off, there is neither a rooster nor a drake anywhere to be found. Funny? Not when this story is applied to parent-child relationships.

25

We are living in a day when parents curse their children, and children curse their parents. They take each other to courts of law. They maim and murder each other. More crimes are committed within the circle of kinfolks than any place else.

"And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household" - Matthew 10:21,36.

"O God, restore right relationships in our homes in the Name of Jesus."

(Reprint 1977)

THE RAPTURE AND THE REVELATION

A.S. Copley

“**A**nd to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” – II Thessalonians 1:7,8.

A brother inquires, saying, “How can the popular belief in the pre-tribulation rapture be reconciled with the above citation?” The brother imagines that the above verse teaches that the Church will be raptured at the end of the tribulation period when the Lord shall be revealed from Heaven. It does not teach that at all. It shows plainly that some saints at least will be resting then – Paul for one, and others with him. He says, “Rest with us.” Where will Paul be resting then? Certainly not in the grave; in Heaven, of course. This
26 citation confirms the teaching of I Thessalonians five, that some believers will be taken to Heaven before the others. The Apostle distinguishes between those who are awake, sober, and watching, and “others” who are asleep. These two classes are before us today. Some saints are intently waiting and looking for the Lord to come; but many more are indifferent to His advent. These latter are the “others” who are asleep. In the comforting words of our text, we behold the intimation that Paul is addressing those who will be asleep or halfhearted when he and those in perfect fellowship with him will be raised and caught up to meet Jesus in the air. If not, why does he speak to them as though they were another company distinct from those with him? The Lord’s “mighty angels,” or “the angels of His power,” will be the saints – members of the Body of Christ. Compare Rev. 19:14. They will have been resting in Heaven many days before the Lord is revealed. The Church must be

revealed with Christ; hence, the rapture must take place before the revelation can take place.

The brother thinks that I Cor. 1:7 – “waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” – contradicts our hope of a pre-tribulation rapture. In II Timothy 4:8, Brother Paul looks beyond the revelation to the crown promised to him “at that day,” literally, “in, or on, that day.” The statement of I Cor. 1:7 is an exception. The usual expression is – “waiting ... for our Lord.” The brother compares the word “meet” in I Thess. 4:17 – “meet the Lord in the air” – with Matthew 25:1,6 and Acts 28:15. He thinks that because we meet the Lord in the air, He will be coming toward the earth; and that after our meeting, He will continue to descend and we with Him. Matthew 25:10 declares that the Bridegroom will return into the marriage chamber after meeting the wise virgins – “They that were ready went in and the door was shut.” In Acts 28:15 we learn that certain persons came from Rome to meet Paul at the Appii Forum. Does anyone suppose that they went on further away from Rome and permitted Paul to go to the metropolis alone? That is bad logic indeed. The words of I Peter 1:13 are no contradiction whatever. Peter wrote to Israel who did not look for the coming of Jesus for the Church, but they looked for His revelation. If we do not hold Church truth distinct from Kingdom truth, we fall easily into more than one muddle.

The book of the Revelation of Christ to John makes clear that the rapture will take place a long time before the revelation. The Philadelphia over-comers will be **KEPT FROM** “the hour of temptation (trial),” because they will be with the Lord according to I Thess. 4:13-17. They are seen in Revelation four and five in Heaven with the Lord. The great company of countless tribulation saints, will be **TAKEN OUT OF** the

great tribulation. Rev. 7:9-17. Then will follow the three and a half year reign of antichrist, and the attendant calamities and judgments. The great harlot will be judged – Revelation eighteen. Then the marriage of the Lamb will take place in Heaven. All these things will precede the revelation of Jesus Christ. Revelation 1:7 – when “every eye shall see Him” – cannot be fulfilled until the whole Church is raptured. The Church must be with Christ in Heaven when He shall be revealed in flaming fire fulfilling “the great day of His wrath” – Rev. 6:17; 11:18; 19:15. She must be associated with Him when “He doth judge and make war” – Rev. 19:11. “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?” – I Cor. 6:2

(Reprint 1939)

“SECURE IN CHRIST”

Secure in Christ, blest Lamb of God
Who died to set me free.
And in His body bore the rod
Designed for such as me.

Secure in Christ, when foes assail
And try to make me doubt.
I'll trust in Him who will not fail,
Nor ever cast me out.

Secure in Christ, when days are dark,
And I but dimly see.
Some day to glory I'll embark,
And ever with Him be.

Secure in Christ, 'Till I shall stand
Before His shining face;
And ever dwell in that blest land
For all those saved by grace.

Secure in Christ, Oh praise His name,
My song shall ever be,
His blood with power still the same
Gives me security.

Anon

“I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, ... according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, ... and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses. For he said, Surely they are my people, ... so he was their Saviour. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: ... and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.”
V. 7-9

Our current chapter forms a beautiful correlation with II John where two elect ladies are presented. “The elder unto the elect lady and her children, ... The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen.” II John 1:1&13. The designation of “... the elect lady...” of V. 1 should in fact be “an” elect lady, for John indeed makes reference to two distinct “elect” ladies in this little one chapter book. The first of these ladies is a reference to Israel who would be the “favorite:--chosen, elect,” of God as the wife of Jehovah. “For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.” Isa. 54:5 John’s second “elect lady,” would be the Bride of Christ, who is taken out of the Church, most assuredly the “elect sister” of Israel. 29

Isaiah 63 is centered around John’s first elect lady, as he enlarges on the same benefits to Israel found in II John. “And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.” II John 1:5 Isaiah’s language in the aforementioned verses is almost verbatim, as he too sounds out the message of divine love concerning “... the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, ... the great goodness toward the house of Israel, ...” along with “...the multitude of his lovingkindnesses.” Not only so, but just as John warns emphatically of “... many deceivers...” and “... antichrist, ...” declaring: “... he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds,” (V. 7-11) so also Isaiah begins

this dissertation warning of judgment waiting for those who would dare come against Israel. “Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.” V. 1 The term Edom is a reference to Esau, symbolic of the flesh and of the nations who will be gathered against Israel in the end time. The word “Bozrah” means “sheepfold,” suggesting the religious nature of such nations, and the very spirit of antichrist which is a virtual counterfeit of The Real Messiah, both for Israel and the world. Thus the next question inquires “Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?” V. 2 This is a graphic picture of Jesus, Who will pour out His righteous wrath against those nations who come against His People Israel. He then answers the question, in regard to His blood-stained apparel, declaring triumphantly, “I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.” V. 3 Verses such as these, are a direct reference to the Battle Of Armageddon wherein Jesus will fully pour out all His righteous indignation and fury against all that are antichrist, when “... the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.” Rev. 14:20 It most assuredly shows that, “... the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.” V. 4 Jesus will ensure severe punishment against all these nations, or Edom, but at the same time He will guarantee the redemption of His Chosen People.

“And I looked, and there was none to help;...” meaning that there was none to help Israel. This will be the case in the end time when all the “friends,” of Israel will forsake them and they will be forced to stand completely alone. Verse five continues with Jesus wonderment “... that there was none to uphold:...” We are surely persuaded that, The Lord knows full well none will be able to help Israel, but this nation must come to that realization, and

when they do, This Majestic Messiah will be able to proclaim, "... therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me." Israel must realize that their help cometh from none but The LORD before He will finally be able to pour out His wrath upon their enemies and truly redeem them unto Himself with His "... own arm..." He Alone will be able to fight the battle, "And I will tread down the people (nations) in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth." V. 6

"I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses." V. 7 These words seem to have been spoken by Isaiah, acting as a spokesman, and indeed an intercessor for the rest of the nation, as he renders "...praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us." This entire nation will one day know by glorious experience the tremendous manifestation of God's love and multiple kindnesses toward themselves, and they will follow Isaiah's same example of such praise after they have become a new creation in Christ Jesus by claiming His Promise in their behalf. "For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour." V. 8 This is a far cry from the testimony of this unrighteous and deceitful people down through the ages, the difference being that "... they are my people..." They have now been born again, and have discovered the truth of which John wrote, and thus their walk in truth and love show forth "...children that will not lie:..." because "...he was their Saviour." The next portion of our text magnifies the glorious reason as to why all this change has been wrought!

"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." V. 9 This deep innermost sentiment of The Redeemer for His Own People, the Jews, is evidenced throughout the scripture, but none more poignant than the account in Luke 19 "... when he

was come near,... the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.” Matthew also expresses Jesus’ deep “affliction,” due to Israel’s complete lack of spirituality, along with their refusal to take the necessary steps for reconciliation. “Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, **and ye would not!**” Matt. 23:36-37 This same scenario was actually repeated countless times throughout their history as God so graciously followed the pattern recorded in the latter part of this verse when He delivered them, again and again, from their enemies. “... the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.” God was gracious and merciful to them during all those “... days of old,” but they simply did not respond and gather themselves together unto Him as Jesus intimated.

Isaiah records that same attitude of rejection and unbelief emphatically crying out: “But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.” V. 10 God did most assuredly become “... their enemy...” at times and He did fight against them, giving them over into the hands of various enemies, trying desperately to turn them to repentance. Scripture is very plain that God will employ those same tactics during the tribulation in an endeavor to bring Israel to their knees and bow before The Messiah. Once again the pattern here in our text will be implemented. “Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put his holy Spirit within him? That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name? That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble? As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused him to rest: so didst thou lead thy people, to

make thyself a glorious name.” V. 11-14 This is a record of how Israel did, at times, remember their beginning and recall the days when God’s Presence was among them as He brought them across the Red Sea and through the wilderness, eventually bringing them to their “rest” in Canaan. Now, Isaiah cries, “Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory: where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me? are they restrained?” V. 15 This is exactly the same path which Israel will follow during the devastating days of tribulation when all else has failed them. God will finally achieve exactly what He set out to do: turn the hearts of this rebellious nation back unto Himself. They will finally claim, and cling, to the fact that, “Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O LORD, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting.” V. 16 It is undoubtedly true that their fathers, Abraham and Israel, or Jacob, would not even recognize them, but their appeal goes far beyond natural blood lines. Israel, as a nation, will finally look to The LORD as their Father and Redeemer, magnifying His Name Alone, but at the same time apparently “blaming” Him for their plight. “O LORD, why hast **thou made us to err** from thy ways, and **hardened our heart** from thy fear?....” Their experience here is actually a scriptural principle illustrating the fact that God does assume responsibility in this matter, because He has forced them to a decision. This is the same pattern evidenced in Ex. 10:1. “And the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: **for I have hardened his heart**, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs before him:” We know this does not mean that God sovereignly forced Pharaoh to rebel against Him, but rather that He forced him to decide, one way or the other, whether to let the people go as God had commanded, or not. When the Egyptian Monarch refused to comply with God’s Desire, He declared “... I have hardened his heart...” Likewise, God has, and most assuredly will, force Israel to choose His Way or continue in their ways of hardness and rebellion. The report in the latter part of this verse is encouraging, for they now cry out, “... Return for thy servants’

sake, the tribes of thine inheritance.” V. 17 This is exactly the path that the faithful remnant will follow during that awful time of Jacob’s trouble, and God will most assuredly be entreated of them as the tribes of this nation do become literally “... thine inheritance.”

Furthermore, “The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.” V. 18 The “it,” which these people have finally possessed, is His inheritance, and is a reference to the entire land of Israel, which has been trodden down by their adversaries throughout Gentile Times. The “sanctuary” is especially emphasized here, and is a direct reference to Jerusalem, which is at the center of a great controversy in our day. There are multiple factions who try to lay claim to this city, but it belongs to God, as a part of His Inheritance, and none shall take it from Him, and indeed, “... the people (Israel) of thy holiness have possessed it.” The “people” then lay claim to the fact that “We are thine: thou never barest rule over them; they were not called by thy name.”

34 V. 19 That fact is also gloriously borne out in scripture. God did not choose the rest of these nations, nor were they “... called by thy name.” That distinction belongs to Israel alone, as other writers also attest. “For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.” Zech. 2:8 Moses also declared that, “He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.” Deut. 32:10

This chapter thus closes with a glorious consummation for John’s “... elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth;” II John 1.

*“When as a child, I laughed and wept,... Time crept.
When as a youth, I dreamed and talked,... Time walked.
When I became a full grown man,... Time ran.
When older still I daily grew,... Time flew.
Soon I shall find in traveling on,... Time gone.”*



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