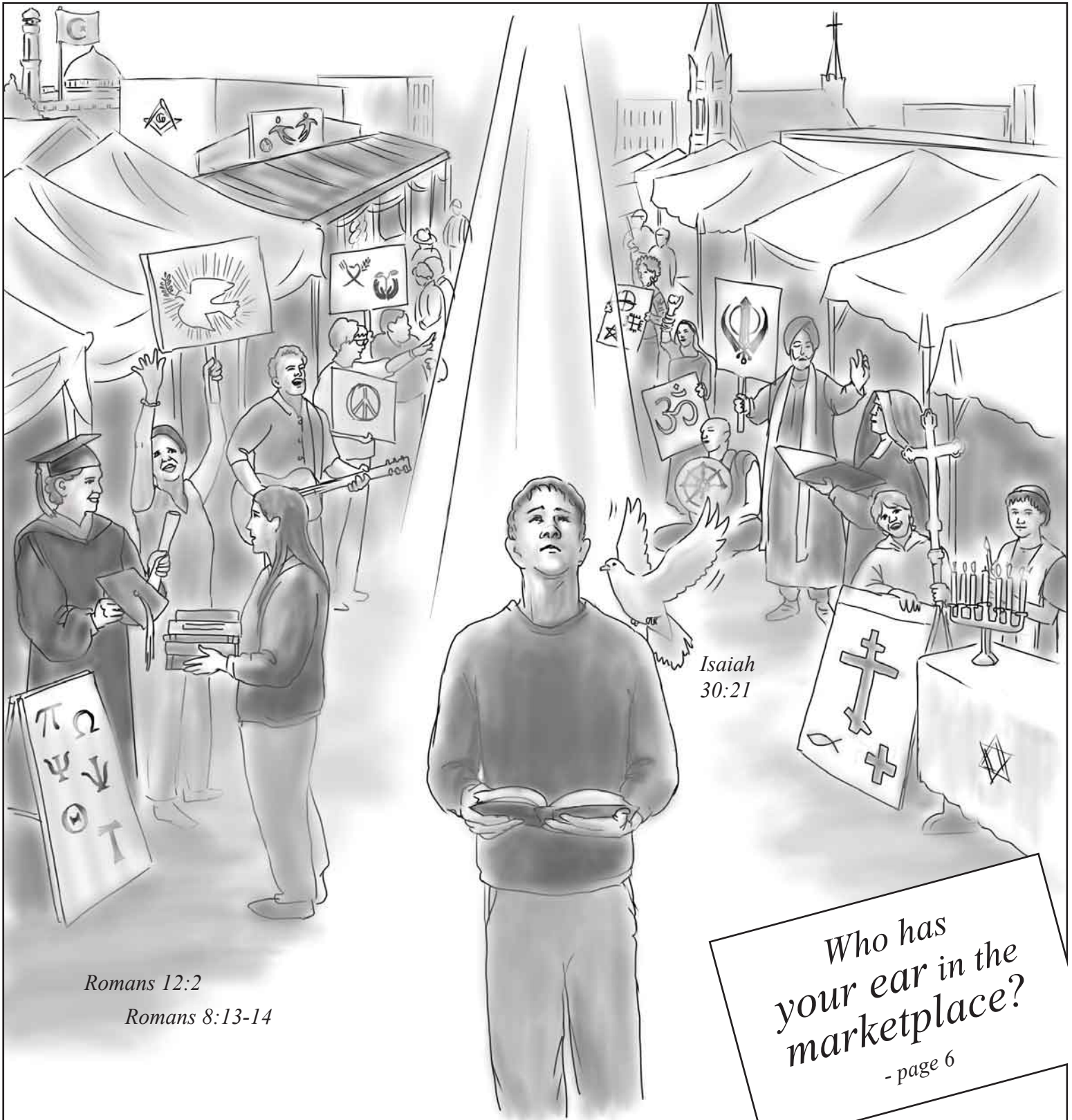


FOUNDATION TRUTH

Number 30
Summer 2012



Isaiah
30:21

Romans 12:2
Romans 8:13-14

Who has
your ear in the
marketplace?
- page 6

Dear Reader

“This may be your last issue!” How often have you received a message like that—perhaps from a mail order business, hoping to stir you up to more shopping with them, or a magazine trying to jolt you into paying renewal fees. We tend to become hardened to such appeals, since we are bombarded by so much input from so many directions in our lives.

But this really might be your last issue, after all. We currently have no intention to stop publishing, but my time down here may be over before we can get another issue put together and mailed. The time for this particular ministry might come to an end before another issue is prepared. Your time down here may be over before we can get another issue out. The Lord may return before we get another issue out. *“If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.”* ^{Jas 4:15}

Life here on earth is temporary, uncertain, and yet very important. We are on probation, making the choices that determine our eternal destiny. Our *“long home”* is not here. The concerns that people express about either humanity or some other force destroying our planet and ending life here are misplaced, because they are focus on a temporary existence anyhow.

“But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away. But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.” ^{1 Cor 7:29-33}

Brother Paul was talking about marriage and singleness, and expanding somewhat on the benefits of the gift of singleness; but now he gets to the fundamental need of our lives down here—to not waste time on the things that will pass away. Every earthly joy and care is temporary—the joys are gifts from God, to appreciate and

be grateful for, but we need grace to not be possessed by them or abuse them. The cares of this life do truly exist while we are here in the body, but the Lord loves us, and so Brother Peter charges us: *“Casting all your care upon him: for he careth for you.”* ^{1 Pet 5:7} Then we can care *“for the things that belong to the Lord,”* whether married or single, strong or weak, full of responsibilities or finding ourselves off in a little “backwater” where nothing important seems to be happening. God is not calling us to bear the weight of His work on the earth, but to participate in it as happy, obedient children. Because the time is indeed short, *“let us labour therefore to enter into [His] rest,”* ^{Heb 4:11} ceasing from our own works and participating in His.

Until the next issue (if the Lord will), grace and peace be with you.

Love and prayers,
The Editor

About Us

We want to be of assistance to those who desire to live for God and make heaven their home, and we want to work with the Holy Spirit in stirring and awakening all others to the great necessity of doing so.

Foundation Truth is meant to be of general interest, but different articles may be of particular interest to different members of the family, but we look to the Lord for direction on what to include, and the structure may vary from issue to issue.

We publish *Foundation Truth* by faith, its only support being free-will offerings that God lays on the hearts of His children to keep this ministry supplied. If the Lord lays it on your heart to contribute, please make out any checks or money orders to Richard Erickson—we have difficulty depositing any monies made out to *Foundation Truth*.

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Note that letters received may be considered for publication unless requested otherwise.

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TIMELESS TRUTHS PUBLICATIONS was founded with the purpose of spreading the timeless truths revealed in God's Word. We publish literature that encourages folks in walking the straight and narrow road that leads to heaven. Our chief corner-stone is Jesus, and with our focus on Him, we try to avoid putting too much attention on any person or persons. If you are interested in knowing more about us and what we believe, feel free to contact us.

In addition to *Foundation Truth*, we also publish *Treasures of the Kingdom*, "Casting Up a Highway for the Children of This Generation," a quarterly magazine for children ages six to twelve.

Back issues of our periodicals, including the former *Dear Princess* magazine, are available at our website, timelesstruths.org, as well as a growing collection of hymn sheet music and online books, tracts, articles and sermons.

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edited by Rick Erickson and others

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his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits."—Prov. 16:2

"All the ways of a man are clean in

The plans I've made
all seem great to me
If all goes perfect
I'll be glad as can be
The thoughts I have
are good and fine
Just some don't agree
part of the time
The way I try to live
is the best in town
It looks like the rest
are living low down
But today I had trials
that ruined my plans
Someone disagreed
and upset all my "cans"
Topped my castle
of dreams and ideals
I'm left in the mud
while my brain fairly reels

Where is success
on a day like this?
When my best is flattened
and the mark I've missed?
Here the heavenly word
to the soul that is tried:
"I'm weighing your motives
and the spirit inside.
Your dreams are too small
for the plans I have made.
Will you humble your pride
and call for My aid?
Are you willing to yield
to the part I assign?
Embrace your high calling
and trust the Divine?
Here is rest for your soul
and a clear mountain view
Where the LORD alone
is the Great, Pure and True."

THE WORD OF TRUTH

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. - 2 Tim. 2:15

"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me." Mt 15:8

Please, comment on this verse in detail. When we live as God reveals to us, we are persecuted by the religious world, even by those calling themselves the Church of God. Is our love to God to be an act or a life to live? Please, do not misunderstand me. I have an idea as to how I should live, but the issue is, am I supposed to act like I do not know God so as to fit with the mass? For example, paying hospital bills for people to show our love for them; lying to cover some preacher's sin; presenting somebody as saved when I am sure they are not saved; joining the masses in violent protests; etc.

Reply:
Dear brother, we had better not live like those folks spoken of in Mt. 15:8. They were hypocrites, who made the commandment of God of none effect by their tradition, and Jesus said of them, "**But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.**" vs.9 As to the idea of doing things that we know are wrong or untrue: "*Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.*" 2 Cor 8:21 This scripture directly addresses handling finances, and it certainly applies there and elsewhere, too. "*But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.*" 2 Cor 4:2-3

"Am I supposed to act like I do not know God so as to fit with the masses?" God forbid. It is contrary to everything that

God stands for and consequently we stand for. "**If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.**" After Jesus told us of the certainty of persecutions and how we should take them ("*rejoice and be exceeding glad*"), He said, "*Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*" Mt 5:13-16 To soft-peddle the gospel in the way you have asked me about would certainly un-acquaint people with the right salty savour of a life lived for God according to the gospel. It would certainly be hiding the truth of the gospel under a bushel; it is to dwell in the depths of a cave instead of on a hill. "**Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.**" You may say, "Well, they see, but they do not glorify." That is just it. We must hold it until they do, if they ever will come to that point.

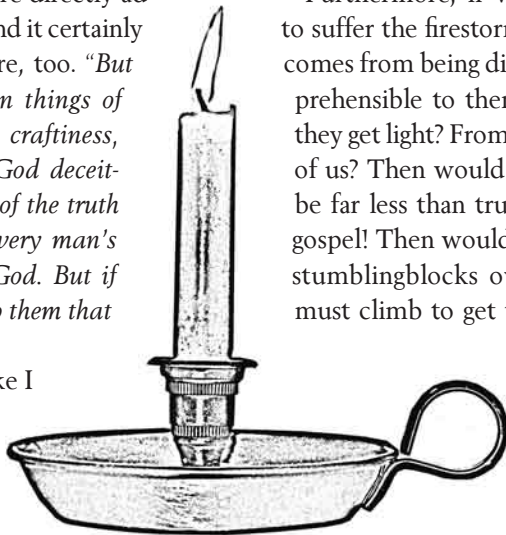
Furthermore, if we are not willing to suffer the firestorm of reproach that comes from being different and incomprehensible to them, just where will they get light? From God, independent of us? Then would we be revealed to be far less than true examples of the gospel! Then would we be exposed as stumblingblocks over which sinners must climb to get to the cross! If we

present such a linsy-woolsey picture of holiness and purity to them, then we

add to their confusion, becoming part of the problem, rather than a sample of a divinely-delivered people. God forbid! "*For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God.... Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*" 1 Tim 4:10,12

All who encounter you should be able to say in their hearts, "So this is how Jesus does...." Would Jesus pay the hospital bill?—*did* Jesus pay the hospital bill for the woman who gave everything she had to the doctors for twelve long years? I tell you, *nay*. He has something better than that. Peter said, "*Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.*" Acts 3:6 Would Jesus lie to cover some preacher's sin, presenting somebody as saved when they are not? Shame on the devil! No, Jesus never lies. What a slander! "*Let us do evil, that good may come?*" Rom 3:8 God forbid. Would Jesus join the masses in violent protests? "*My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.... My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path.*" Pt 1:10,15 "*Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.*" Isa 42:1-2

Oh, my brother, if the saints won't be saints—at all times, in all places, both privately and publicly—then who will be saints? "*For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.*" 1 Pet 4:17-19



Tried by the Lord

The Lord tries a perfect believer according to his peculiar make-up and condition in life. Hence the instruments of His trying may often be the very opposite in different persons, and in different periods in life. He puts one soul to a test by giving it riches, and another by giving it poverty, and sometimes He tries a believer by giving him both these experiences at different times, to see how his soul will behave in the opposite extremes.

He sometimes gives a soul excessive joy, and to another excessive sorrow, to see how faith and obedience will act in each case. He sometimes gives one apparently more work than he can do, and deprives another of work, in order to test the hidden principle of patience and fidelity in each case. He sometimes gives an abundance of friends, and sometimes makes one stand alone, seemingly friendless, but in both instances He is proving the secret life of the soul in a way we do not begin to comprehend. At one time He may flood the mind with excessive light on heavenly things and then, at another time, allow everything, both in nature and grace to seem a blinding mass of gloom. At one time He may allow us to be eminently successful, and then turn the scale and make all our life seem a failure. As in nature there are excessive floods, and then long droughts, so God's dealings in the realm of grace partake of the same features as His physical providence.

As in making good watches, the mechanism is put in ice, and then in fire, until the movement will be correct in either severe temperature, so God deals with the hearts of those He dearly loves, that by all sorts of opposite and apparently contradictory dealings, He may prove the delicate mechanism in the fountains of holy character. While one extreme will put to a test certain principles of the soul, it requires just an opposite treatment to test other parts of Christian character.

Another way the Lord tries a saint is by giving him bright visions of the possibilities of life and service, and begetting within the heart a sweet and uncontrollable desire to do a certain service for the Lord, then binding the soul in utter helplessness, and giving it

no facilities for accomplishing its high and heavenly longings. In reading of the lives of Bible characters, and the burning prayers expressed in the Psalms, and seeing the lives of holy people, this feature of experience is largely expressed. A great eagle in a cage, with his eye piercing the great spaces of heavenly blue, which seems to invite his wings, is a picture of this form of trial.

Another form of trying the soul is leading it into an unlimited abandonment to God, by which it renounces its own liberty, and plans, and hopes, and fears, by which it entrusts itself unspeakably to the guidance of the Lord. Then, after all this, the Lord seems to entrap such a soul and take advantage of its unlimited consecration by putting it into awful circumstances, and loading it down with burdens that seem too heavy to bear, and getting it into a prison house of sorrow and trouble, and at the same time rendering it absolutely helpless. Many a soul has been amazed with a mysterious fear and grief at this form of trial, not knowing that such trial is the very thing that seals the consecration, and causes it to actually experience the very thing it agreed to, and that this position of going through, of utter abandonment in real knowledge, is what proves the soul's perfect fidelity to God.

Another phase of trying the perfect believer, is the monotony of spiritual life which never belongs to any of the fresh and early stages, either in justification or sanctification, but is one of the features in a life of perfect faith. This monotony of the spiritual state is not to be permanent, but it is a phase of testing the grace of perseverance.

There come periods to the most perfectly consecrated soul when it must push its way through a sameness of things, and over dreary, monotonous plains, where the thoughts, and emotions, and prayers and duties are like a tiresome treadmill, day after day, week after week, and month



after month, in which there come no new visions, no fresh gushes of prayer, no bright thoughts of heavenly beauty, and everything in religion seems to be dull and tiresome. This experience will prove just exactly the quality of energy in the soul, and if it can push bravely on through these monotonous portions of the journey, it will sooner or later come into a place of new and manifold riches of divine things.

The best of souls have had another kind of trial—being led to do a work for the Lord, a work which called forth all the energy and painstaking care of devoted love, and sometimes a work that required all of one's money, or health, or influence and, after all, to see hardly any fruit of his labour or expenditure. Many of the prophets were tried in this way, and the Psalmist speaks of those "who sow[ed] in tears," *Psa 126:5* and then lay down in the field of toil and fell asleep in Jesus, waiting for the time of the harvest when they shall return with Jesus, bringing their golden sheaves into the kingdom festival.

These are some of the many ways in which God makes Himself a trial to His loved ones. How slow we are to learn of God Himself. The apostle speaks of a believer as first being full of love, and then abounding in all fruitfulness, and then beyond this "increasing in the knowledge of God." *Col 1:10* But how can we know God except by His direct and thorough dealings with us?

—G. D. Watson; from *A Pot of Oil* ➤



The Dancing
and Mourning
of the
Children in the
Marketplace

AND THE GOSPEL



“And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?

“They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.

“For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

“The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

“But wisdom is justified of all her children.” ^{Lk 7:31-35}

These are children, the men of this generation, who take their activities and themselves very seriously. Then, as now, they had their own thing going, and were so far from being open to light from heaven, that they responded petulantly, being easily annoyed, to the messengers of truth sent by God to them. And the gist of their response? “You will not join in with us. *‘We have piped unto you, and you have not danced. We have mourned to you, and you have not wept.’*”

Here is rejection of God, indeed! Here is revealed a great lack of the fear of God. In our generation, too, as in the Lord’s when here on earth, we find many playing at religion as they see best. They are sitting in the marketplace, advertising and trolling for converts. They call to one another—they

recognize one another and view each other as competitors, with equal opportunity to gain listeners.

When God sends His servants to them and to the souls they attempt to attract, they respond with scolding criticism. They don’t care for any of them—John the Baptist or the Son of Man or any other man or woman taught of the Holy Ghost. They find fault with all. They complain of how *their* efforts are unrecognized or respected.

Most natural children have a sense of being children, of not being adult, a sense of the reality of their immaturity and childlikeness. But now and then, we find some so caught up in the imagination of their play that they seem insulted when an adult does not recognize their version of reality. A few will put their childish games on the same level as adult reality. “This [really] is my house. I *must* cook this meal so my child can have something to eat.” The adult looks at the doll and sees it as a doll. The adult looks at the play house and sees it as the plaything that it is. The adult looks at the “food” and sees it as only the product of imagination. The adult looks at the child

and sees the child as a child. There may be some value in the play for the child as a child, but when the child begins to insist that this is reality and puts the childish play on the same level as adult reality, then the adult recognizes the child is being a child, and that the child has no appreciation of the reality of adult life.

Think of it! Men *playing* at religion. Jesus said to the woman at the well, “*Ye worship ye know not what.*” ^{Jn 4:22} Oh, that men would put away *their* childish things! That they would seriously and humbly hunger for truth and spiritual reality! That they would drop the air castles of religious imagination, inspired by fleshly assumptions and fleshly conditioning, and abhor the deadly simplicity of arranging things as they see best, rather than being led into all truth by the Holy Ghost. Most people are proving they are playing at religion. “*And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*” ^{Rom 12:2} This renewal from above and the transformation which comes from the renewal is necessary for the proving of what is the will of God.

Think of it! Men playing at religion.
Jesus said to the woman at the well,
“Ye worship ye know not what.”

Now, in the fear of God, we must be sober-minded (realistic) about the children playing in the marketplace and calling to one another. We must see this activity for what it is. We want no part of the net of the man that flatters his neighbor (Pr. 29:5); yea, “*a flattering mouth worketh ruin.*”^{Pr 7:21} When all things are examined and exposed on the great Final Day of Judgment, we want to have the testimony of the apostle Paul, “*neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know... God is witness.*”^{1 Th 2:5} We are not of the same spirit as those dancing and mourning in the marketplace, calling to one another, for our hearts have been taught of true worship and pure religion by “*the same anointing [that] teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.*”^{1 Jn 2:27} Therefore, “*as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.*”^{1 Th 2:4} “*But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.*”^{Gal 1:11-12} We dare not enter into this irresponsible, untaught-of-God approach to sacred things. Jesus did not enter into it. John the Baptist did not enter into it.

These people are there—right in the marketplace. God has suffered their presence in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates. Immortal human souls are exposed to their influence and enticement. God has positioned Wisdom there, too, in the form of the Holy Ghost, who strives with and shines light upon every man that comes into the world; and God has permitted wisdom-not-from-above to tempt and offer many inducements. The many ways of less-than-true-worship are permitted to persuade and deceive. Thus God has ordained a filtering of the human race, separating the precious from the vile, proving the hearts of men, trying and pulling upon the reins of the soul. Reaping as we have sown applies here; so does justice and fairness.

In the marketplace, the Father seeks those who will worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24). How many worshipers are not *true* worshipers! How narrow is the way and strait the gate! How

few there are who find it! How many seek to enter in, but cannot! How many turn from the way into which the Spirit of God prompts, saying, “*This is a hard saying, who can hear it?*”^{Jn 6:60}

Therefore the backslider in heart is filled with his own ways.

Therefore cunningly devised fables are invented and amazingly intricate and deceptive dances—full of meaning and symbolism to the inventors, but not of the Lord’s devising. A dance: spiritual activity in physical form. Some are ridiculous; some are lewd, immoral and wicked (such as the dance of the daughter of Herodias, the adulteress, before the adulterer, Herod—which brought about the murder of John the Baptist); other dances are interpretative and sophisticated, ballets and operas of human imagination and dreaming—choreographed high-mindedness. Others are very orthodox, full of Pharisee discipline—stern,

In the marketplace, the Father seeks those who will worship Him in spirit and in truth.

even grim. Human interpretations of life, expressing exuberance and grief.

Some of these childish dances are new and freshly devised, while others are nearly as old as mankind. For there are many, many who do not wish to think or ponder on the path of their feet, and they adopt such mantras as:

“It was good enough for Father,
And it’s good enough for me.”

This avoids the all-important question: Does God approve? This path requires the swallowing of an enormous assumption, namely, that one may worship as one pleases, that one has a right to use one’s existence as one sees fit to do in religion. It flies in the face of, “*Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.*”^{Psa 26:2} Thus said David in the court of Saul, the man who was rejected of God, but continued to dance and mourn as he, Saul, saw best in the marketplace. When this man Saul called to David to join in the king’s way of life, the man of

God replied, “*I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers. I have hated the congregation of evildoers; and will not sit with the wicked.*”^{Psa 26:4} Nor did the God-fearing man say this in vain, for the Lord helped him and made a way for him. **He did not have to participate in the “dance” of the wicked king; God had something better for him.** The same pressures of the people were around David and against him as Saul experienced; the same Philistines were against him, but the outcome of David’s life and administration was entirely different from the outcome of Saul’s life and administration.

There is nothing childish in the response of mankind to the gospel in one respect. “*We will not have this man to reign over us.*”^{Lk 19:14} “*He hath a devil.*”^{Lk 7:33} “*Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!*”^{Lk 7:34} Here is rebellion; here is rejection; here is slander.

Men love their own ways so much that they reject the gospel out of hand—many seem to give hardly any serious consideration to the voice of the Spirit of God or to the solemn warnings of the Word of God. They lightly dismiss profound truth—which they will face again at the Day of Final Judgment. We read nothing of serious consideration on the part of Dives about the example of Lazarus, put before him right at his very gate—**until in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment.** But until then, Dives danced and mourned as he saw fit, while Lazarus followed the way of God.

“*And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.*”^{Jn 3:19-21} ➤



TELL WHAT HE'S DONE FOR YOU

Learning to Walk in Divine Trust

I want to share how the Lord has taught me about trusting Him with our bodies. The subject was really confusing to me as a child. I was taught that God was the One that we should pray to when we were sick, and that we didn't take medicines. But I developed the impression that when we were seriously in trouble, we would go to the hospital. I know that my parents didn't intend it that way, but that's what I thought. For instance, when I was seven or eight I split my knee open and we went to the hospital to get stitches. The situations that they prayed about didn't seem so impressive, and so I don't remember them. But even though I grew up without much faith in God, I did love the Lord.

When I began doing foster care, the State required that I take the children in for regular medical treatment. It seemed to me that the medical treatment didn't work very well. A child came to my home with really severe ear infections, and the ear treatments prescribed for her didn't work. So I swapped over to what my mom had done for nursing care. I used a hot onion, and that worked really well with her. I wanted to trust the Lord for myself, but since these were not my children, I wasn't really faced with the issue of trusting God for them. It became a real big struggle in my heart, however, when I went through the process of adopting one of these children as my daughter. I knew that I had to face the issue of divine trust concerning my care of her, but it all seemed inconsistent to me. Some of the scriptures on the subject just didn't make sense to me, and I didn't really know why our family and congregation did what we did.

A few months after I was married, I got very sick. At the time, I was in probably the best health I've ever been—I was eating very healthfully, losing weight, and exercising regularly. In fact, my daughter and I had just finished a four-mile walk up and down the steep hillside we lived on. I came in feeling great, but that all changed within ten minutes. I started vomiting horribly, and in the following week, my health deteriorated to where I couldn't even turn over on one side.

The Lord talked to me a lot about trusting in Him at that time. I knew that, as an adult, I had complete liberty whether or not to go to the hospital. We were having a lot of pressure from my husband's dad, but it really didn't weigh a lot on me—it was much more the question of where my faith was. There weren't any simple remedies that I could take, and I couldn't keep anything down, anyway. But in my praying I realized that really wasn't what I wanted to do—I wanted to hold on to God. I wanted what He had.

I don't remember all the details now. For a few days I couldn't sleep because of so much intense pain. Toward the last, my family was praying almost every hour, just for relief from pain so that I could get a few minutes of rest or sleep. During that time two sisters came to help me. I was beginning to get dehydrated, so they tried to find some supplements to help me keep food down. But I knew in my heart that this wasn't what the Lord wanted me to do. With all the questioning of things in my growing up, I couldn't pin it down and tell you why it was right or wrong to take those things—it just wasn't the thing to do. The Lord made that very clear to me.

The trial went on for six days, and I was so ill that my parents thought that I might be going into a coma, because I was fading in and out. I remember that last evening when I prayed, "Lord, You know exactly what's wrong inside"—it felt like there were bones being crunched and things breaking—"Would You put me back together? You know exactly what's wrong with me." I was at a point of total trust. I didn't want to figure it out. The intense pain had lasted so long that I just wanted to give it all to God. And He helped me drift off to sleep.

The next morning when I woke up, everything was different. I was well. I'll never forget the wonderful feeling of just hopping out of bed. Before that, I couldn't even turn over. I must have had some very intense internal bleeding, because I hadn't been able to bear for anyone to even lay fingers on my abdomen. I haven't experienced anything close to how horrible that was, since that experience.

A couple of weeks later I had a heart attack. That was intense as well, but short. My husband came home from work in the middle of the night, and everything had been just fine, when I suddenly felt this huge, crushing weight on my chest. I was sweating profusely and felt like I was being crushed. My husband called our pastor's family for prayer, and the Lord gave relief and healing to the point where I could start singing within a very short amount of time. Before God touched me I could not speak at all. I felt like I was dying. I literally felt like I was just slipping away. And I was so grateful that no one was rushing me to the hospital. I was not trying to do anything or change the circumstances. I had the knowledge that

I was in the center of God's will at that moment—and that is what made the difference.

To this day I really can't explain it clearly when people ask me, "What is divine healing?" or "What if this situation or that situation comes up?" But I have put my trust in the Lord—He knows what to do, He knows how to handle it. And I know I don't want to do anything to hinder that.

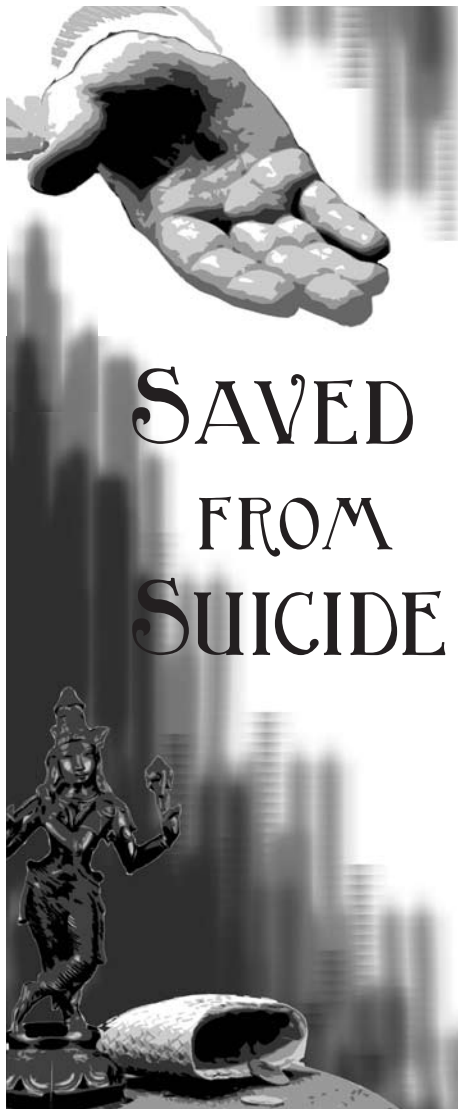
One time when I was sick with asthma issues, I called for prayer, and when prayer had been given, the asthma symptoms were unchanged but I was filled with grace to bear the trial. God's ways are always best. Even if we can't understand them at the time. I spent a lot of time in my adolescence trying to

figure it out, often trusting in going to the coast (for the pollen-free air) when I had allergies. I find the Lord does give us liberty to do things, but He wants us to put our trust in Him alone.

Last fall I was very sick with asthma again, after a summer dealing with a lot of asthma and allergies. The Lord had not directed me to do anything particularly about the attacks until this time. Then He brought strongly to my mind that I could put hot onions on my chest to help relieve my breathing. It was a blessing—there's no other way for me to describe it. I did not think, "Wow, why haven't I been doing this all the time?" I just realize that the Lord blessed it at that specific time. It didn't cure my asthma, either—it gave me relief and encouraged

me. It was such a blessing to be right in the center of God's will and hearing His voice directing, instead of trying to figure out, "Is this going to work?" or, "Is it okay for this to work?"

In giving my afflictions over to the Lord, and not trying to figure it out in terms of what is a "medicine" (that is, trusting in man) or what is a "natural remedy" (that is, co-operating with the Lord in nursing care), it's not always going to make sense to others what I do. But I just want to trust the Lord completely and give it over to Him. I find that this trust must include the health of my family and children as well. There is great peace in just trusting God and giving Him the perplexing details of each situation. There's nothing like that! ➤



SAVED FROM SUICIDE

I was born in a Hindu family. My father, mother, brother, and I used to worship idols. But God, by His great grace and according to His eternal plan, has brought us to this faith. Now all four of us are living for Jesus.

When I was studying in 1st standard, my father was working in a bank. He started a business which became a loss, and so he became a debtor. The debt was very great and we were unable to repay it. The creditor's demands were so urgent that my father thought of committing suicide with the whole family.

At that time one of my uncles, who was converted to be a Christian, came to know about it. He spoke to us, telling us not to make such plans. He said that we have only one hope, that is Jesus, and the only way is to go to Him and He will solve our problems. Before that my father had been opposing the Christians. But our uncle said to give Jesus a chance to work in our life, and my parents decided to go to church and see what would happen.

And God started to work slowly in our lives. My parents came to know that Jesus is the true God. They had been very pious as Hindus, but now they began to worship the true God

and left all the filthy worldly things. God helped them to know that He had given this problem of debt to save our souls. Then they yielded themselves to God's will.

At that time I and my brother were small. After my father lost his job at the bank, my parents left us in our grandpa's house while they went to a distant place (because of the creditors) and worked there. They both attended the church regularly. They did some poor job and were happy. When they wanted to come and see us, they came and went by night because of the creditors. We were happy to know about Jesus at that time.

After one year, by God's mercy, my dad got his bank job again and was transferred to another state far away. So he took his family and came here, to Hassan, near Bangalore. And here we have learned this state language and studied. I'm still studying here myself. And slowly He helped us to repay all our debts. Above all, God gave fellowship with true saints here. He is preparing His bride church for His soon coming. In this state there is very little Christianity. I request you to pray for this country. ➤

—a sister from India

How Does the Spirit of God Change Our Conditioning and Natural Way of Thinking?

The Imperfection of the Most Spiritual and Our Great Need of Continual Divine Guidance

I am experiencing a wave of devout gratitude and thanksgiving as I write these words. I am so thankful that *“the kingdom shall not be [and has not been] left to other people.”*^{Dan 2:44} I am not only deeply relieved that it has not been left to me, but I am equally thankful that it has not been left to any people—even the very finest and most spiritual of people. *“Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity.”*^{Psa 39:5} There is not a single exception to the statement of divine truth. *“Every man... at his best state. Surely, ‘O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.’*^{Jer 10:23}

This gratitude to God does not arrive from a morbid, suspicious skepticism of the motives of the most outstanding men and women. Many have gone far beyond what I have; many excel in many ways. There are brethren who have sacrificed, labored, given up far more than I have ever envisioned. There are smarter men; there are humbler men; there are men with more power with God in prayer, who can preach and teach far better than I. Others more gifted, others who love more—the list goes on and on. But God is so far above all of us together at our very utmost that I rejoice in Him. Praise His name for the marvelous condescension, the unsearchable love and good will, the tender tenderness, kindness, and pitifulness! *“Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.”*^{Psa 103:13-14}

By the help of the Holy Ghost, we want to consider some of the hard ques-

tions about Christianity—and we want to profit by the answers to those hard questions. Good brethren—brethren who loved God and served Him in all good conscience, as far as we can understand—are revealed as fallible human beings. They were led of the Holy Ghost, but they were not led in such a way as to strip them of their humanity. It is possible for us to exalt brethren beyond what is appropriate; it is possible to puff them up in our minds to a place that will not stand up to scrutiny. Brother Paul wrote to the Corinthians, *“And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.”*^{1 Cor 4:6} This is a much needed lesson for us all—**not to think of men above that which is written.** And with that scriptural point, we would repeat the point-blank statement

This is a much needed lesson for us all—
not to think of men above that which is written.

from the Bible: *“Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity.”*^{Psa 39:5} These words were written by inspiration of the Holy Ghost through the prophet David, and he prefaced them thus, *“Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee.”* That which impresses us deeply does not impress God at all. Experience upon experience, over the years, seems fairly weighty to us—so much has been learned, etc. But God is from everlasting to everlasting; He inhabits eternity. What man even scratches the surface of what God comprehends? It would be fair to say that several lifetimes would make a man of much more understanding than just one lifetime. If there was

a child of God who had lived on earth from the beginning up to now, that person would certainly have a deeper depth of experience than anyone else, but, of course, there is no such person. At *our very best state, we are still altogether vanity.* All that is eternally-valuable about us is mentioned in this scripture: *“we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”*^{2 Cor 4:7}

One of the first things that the gift of knowledge imparts to us is that we do not know a lot. We are glad to say that the responsibility of the holding of the truth is not placed entirely in our hands, for we are not big enough to hold it. You may say, “But the Bible says for us to occupy until He comes!” (Lk. 19:13). And, *“the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.”*^{Dan 7:18} And, *“it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”*^{Jude 1:3} Yes, we have our part, and that part is to cooperate and obey the One who can

hold it. In this, *“we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building.”*^{1 Cor 3:9}

God allows good evidence of our inability (our humanity) to emerge, as seems best to the wisdom of The Most High. I can see the verification of the truth in Psa. 127:1-2 in the lives of the most spiritual brethren that have ever lived. I can see it and acknowledge it, be humbled by it, or I can deny it and puff someone up beyond what is written—with attendant evil results.

God allowed Peter to make a misjudgment about the very truth that God had revealed to him. This brother was reproved publicly by a brother who had, before he was saved, distinguished him-

self by persecuting the church of God and blaspheming. The account is given as follows: *“But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.*

But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?” Gal. 2:11-14

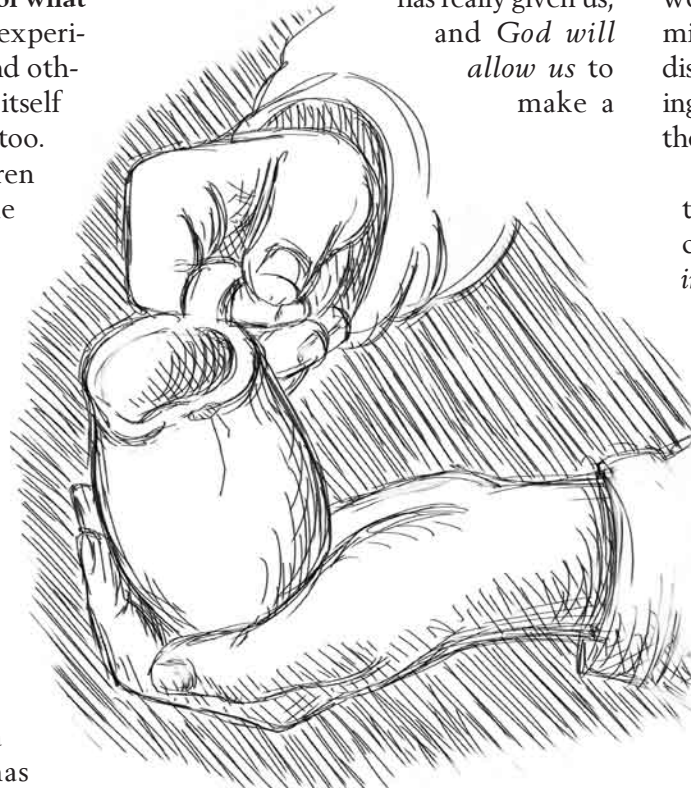
Some have thought that Peter sinned against light by doing as here described, but there is no evidence of impurity of motive. No doubt, Brother Peter thought it wisest to act as he did, and the full consequences of the action came as a surprise to him. Perhaps, he was even feeling uneasy about the wisdom of withdrawing from the Gentiles, when he was reproved. **The full effect of what God had revealed to him** in his experiences with Brother Cornelius and others was still slowly manifesting itself to Brother Peter and to others, too. But looking beyond the brethren involved, and considering the matter from nearly 2000 years later, we readily see that God is bigger than people and knows what He is doing. As Brother John said, *“God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.”* ^{1 Jn 3:20} As Brother Paul puts it, *“For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.”* ^{1 Cor 13:9-10} This is not a matter of *how spiritual* we are. (Who is the *greatest*?) It is a matter of how much God has

revealed to us, and what we have done with it. It is an easy matter to miss the scope of what God is doing, and it is certain that we will miss the full impact of all the truth (for we know *in part*) **unless God helps us grasp all that He wants us to grasp.** *“For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.”* ^{Rom 12:3} It

It is sober thinking, indeed, to realize how dependent we are on God, and how we cannot add a single cubit of stature to our spiritual height by the most intensive discipline and carefulness.

is sober thinking, indeed, to realize how dependent we are on God, and how we cannot add a single cubit of stature to our spiritual height by the most intensive discipline and carefulness. What we have, we have **through the grace given** unto us. *“According as God hath dealt to every man.”*

Now, except the Lord help us, we will certainly go astray. And except we get very quiet and still, we will add something in our thinking to what God has really given us, and *God will allow us to make a*



mistake which will result in building with wood, hay, or stubble. This will be consumed by the fire: *“Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.”* ^{1 Cor 3:13-15}

One of the effects of God thus dealing with us, is to keep us prostrate in the dust before Him. We must follow the example of

Jesus: *“And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”* ^{Php 2:8}

Now we would deal with specifics with several dear brethren, who though unquestionably the Lord’s and much used of God, made profound mistakes in certain matters. In speaking and writing of these matters, we would consider our own humanity and our great need of divine help and guidance, too. They were *allowed of God* to make these mistakes, and we are *allowed of God* to discover them and to witness the burning of the wood, hay, and stubble from their history. With our examination of their mistakes, we want to consider that the gold, the silver, and the precious stones in their lives *are not burning* and *will never burn*. This is both a humbling matter to us and a matter for rejoicing. Our wood, hay, and stubble will burn, too. And our gold, silver, and precious stones will prove what is good, acceptable, and perfect—the will of God.

We would direct the reader to the continuation of two different articles: “Perspective—The 1880 Evening Light Reformation”; and “Perspective—Rejection of the 1880 Evening Light Reformation.” ➔



In the previous issue, we began to address the subject of errors made by some of the prominent brethren in the 1880 Evening Light Reformation, and the tendency of people to look at and lean on the instruments God uses instead of God Himself. We examined what D. S. Warner taught in the booklet *The Age to Come*, in which he attempted to explain Rev. 20:1-3 by asserting that Satan was effectively bound by the gross darkness and superstition of the time when apostate religion dominated the earth, because it gave him few souls to deceive or destroy, as they were already in darkness. We stated that the correct understanding was that one of Satan's "great tools for wrecking mankind was bound"—paganism.

Walking in the Light as He Is in the Light

"God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.... If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." ^{1 Jn 1:5,7}

"O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD." ^{Isa 2:5}

As we look at Brother Warner's writing on this subject, we see a great reaching and searching for light as to the prophecies of the history of the New Testament church. He knew the millennium doctrine was wrong, and his teaching on the falseness of that theory brought him into questions about such subjects as the exact meaning of many Revelation prophecies. He attempted to answer those questions, but some of those answers were just plain wrong. He simply didn't have light on those areas.

It wasn't just Brother Warner who was mistaken about the nature of the binding in Rev. 20:1-3. If we examine a chronology of reformation writings published between 1890 and 1906 that mention this passage of

scripture, we see that **the general assumption of the ministry was that the bottomless pit referred to hell (*gehenna*), and that the serpent, "which is the Devil, and Satan," ^{Rev 20:2} was the father of evil himself**, rather than being representative of a power so associated with and used by him (as Rev. 12:9 states it, "*that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan*").

There were reasons why a right dividing of the Word of God on the second coming of Jesus and the nature of the kingdom of God had not happened during the centuries since the great apostasy of A. D. 270.

The millennial doctrine obscures and blurs the New Testament teaching of a great, general, physical resurrection of all the dead at the coming of Christ. It diminishes the glory of the spiritual Kingdom of God in the heart now by locating a fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecies of the reign of Christ and His people on the earth in the future, and with that distortion of the truth, it offers a second chance to be saved after the coming of the Lord.

This false millennial doctrine is directly responsible for the deferred hopes of millions, who trusted that they would have another chance to get right with God in a supposed age to come. The doctrine has comforted millions of others with the idea that spiritual unity cannot and will not be realized to the extent that the Bible teaches until such a golden age has come.

The stronghold of this false doctrine is Revelations 20:1-10. The very name of the doctrine (Millennium, the thousand-year reign) is taken from the thousand years

mentioned in this passage of scripture. Any attempt to refute the false millennial doctrine must deal with this text, and **the millennial doctrine is based on the binding of Satan a thousand years**. In other words, behind one false doctrine is another false doctrine—a **false understanding of the nature of the devil, both his origin and the nature of how God deals with him**.

It is the two-fold nature of the deception on this point that so effectively hindered so many dear and precious saints from comprehending truth on this line for so many centuries after it was lost in the darkness of the great apostasy from the morning light of the gospel. For there have been many men and women of God who have loved Him devotedly over the centuries, and their writings and lives are an inspiration to those of us who come after them. Why did they not uncover the truth on these lines? Why was this teaching from the Word of God so hidden for so long?

The answer to this question lies in the nature of the burden of the times that we live in. The Spirit of God does not try to systematically and thoroughly indoctrinate us with answers to everything that there is to know spiritually, but He does bring us all that we need to know to deal with the burden of living victoriously with what we have on hand. If you were to bring Brother John Wesley back now and ask him, "Why didn't you get light on the nature of the church of God that Jesus built?" he would probably reply something to the effect that God didn't deal with

him very much about that. *Why didn't God deal with him about that?* Well, the short answer would be that it wasn't time for that particular truth to be bought out in restorative work of gospel light in Brother Wesley's lifetime. There needed to be considerable restorative work on entire sanctification to lay a foundation for further light. We tend to underestimate how very much other men have labored and how much is involved that we may enter into their labors (Jn. 4:38), and we greatly underestimate how inter-related all truth is, and how difficult it is for under-

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active work on entire sanctification to lay a foundation for further light. We tend to underestimate how very much other men have labored and how much is involved that we may enter into their labors (Jn. 4:38), and we greatly underestimate how inter-related all truth is, and how difficult it is for under-

standing of it to be re-obtained when it is lost. If we reflect on how long God took to establish a foundation of truth throughout the Old Testament for the first coming of Christ (who came in “*the fulness of time*” Gal 4:4), it should help us to understand the long, arduous effort to reveal light sufficiently for men to grasp and appropriate in a practical way for current need.

The first tendency of the Evening Light brethren was to interpret the binding of the devil in Revelation 20 as an actual imprisonment of the father of evil. This posed several questions. How was he bound? When was he bound? We will here notice several Bible descriptions of Satan.

“*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.*” 1 Pet 5:8

This doesn't sound very good, does it? Watch out!

Think realistically, soberly! The devil is *loose*, walking around and devouring people. Thus Brother Peter warned the saints.

“*When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.*” Lk 11:21-22

Again, we see an *unbound* Satan here. He is “*a strong man armed*,” keeping his palace with his goods in peace; i.e., holding a precious human being in slavery and possession. But, praise God, “*When a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him....*” This is my Lord, who came to destroy the works of the devil and take from him his armor wherein he trusted. The wonderful result is a soul set free, delivered from the power of the enemy of mankind and the enemy of God. Praise God! I serve One who is **stronger than the devil!** But we see that Satan is not bound from enslaving people; he is in the business of caging and holding people. Yet our Lord is in the business of delivering the devil's captives on a one-to-one basis. This is how our Lord described what the devil was doing and what He Himself was doing.

This is the dilemma that faced the brethren in Brother Warner's time: *when did/will Satan go out of business?* When did/will he “*deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years*

should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season?” Rev 20:3

The brethren comprehended that they were in the last days of the last days.* Behind them lay a long line of church history; before them was the final judgment. They realized that the kingdom of God was now (Lk. 17:21; Rom. 14:17). What they did not yet realize was that the doctrine of fallen angels, including the supposed fall of the chief angel, was not Biblical either, and they **attempted to reconcile the scriptures with the light that they currently possessed**. How could they do otherwise? Centuries before, the brethren of the Morning Light attempted to reconcile their understanding of circumcising with the

In due time, the Spirit of God got it over to them that it was circumcision of the heart that mattered, not circumcision of the flesh

transforming full salvation of the New Testament. In due time, the Spirit of God got it over to them that it was *circumcision of the heart* that mattered, not circumcision of the flesh; and that this fact was indicative of the whole shadowing of the Old Testament. But it took time for their hearts to be enlightened. The progression of light on the subject of circumcision is readily visible in Acts 15, all the way to Gal. 5:1-6. There were many of the brethren in the church who only dimly realized the facts, but the Spirit of God was leading unerringly to the understanding that “*in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.*” Gal. 5:6 This was the truth; this was light from heaven. Fleshly circumcision did not avail anything. Those who resisted and fought against this were actually resisting light from heaven.

In February, 1890 (dates are obtained from *Familiar Names and Faces*), Brother Warner and others published the book, *Bible Readings*. H. M. Riggle authored a scripture outline for this book on the subject of “Satan.” In the first point of the outline, he lists 1 Jn. 3:8 with the description, “He sinned against God.” The scripture reads, “*He [the devil] sinneth from*

the beginning.” Note the difference in tense between Brother Riggle's comment versus the scripture. The scripture presents the devil as an ongoing transgressor, “*from the beginning*”; while Brother Riggle puts it in the past. Under the topic, “Angels,” (the author of this outline is not identified), the description is given, “Some angels have sinned,” with the scripture references 2 Pet. 2:4 and Jude 6 listed. (I do not have a copy of the book as first published in 1890; I have a copy published in 1902.)

In 1890, Brother Warner and others also published *Holiness Bible Subjects*, arranged by H. C. Wickersham. This book refers to Rev. 20:3-6 with the following description, “Other expressions made use of in the scrip-

ture in reference to the nature of this punishment. [hell] 1. The bottomless pit. Rev. 20:3-6.”

In 1893, the book *Biblical Trace of the Church*, by William G. Schell, was published. (We have

emphasized the statements dealing with the binding of the dragon.) After quoting from the passage of scripture in Rev. 20:1-9, he states:

No prophecy of the Bible is, perhaps, so generally misunderstood as the above. It is supposed to teach a thousand years of universal reign of righteousness upon the earth; when nothing of the kind is hinted at. This is truly a mysterious prophecy, which requires the aid of the Holy Spirit to interpret. The misconstructions of commentators upon it, have, perhaps, established the millennium doctrine in the minds of many. Some who have been unable to see a millennial reign in any other part of the scriptures, have seemed to see it here. The Encyclopedia Britannica asserts that it is the only text in the Bible teaching the millennial thousand years. The New Testament teaches that the world shall wax worse and worse right up to the coming of Christ; so there is no room for a millennium *before* He comes. It is further taught in the New Testament that the coming of Christ will be the instant of the resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked: the general judgment; the rewarding of the righteous in heaven; the banishment of the wicked and the destruction of the earth. So there can be no millennium *after* He comes. The doctrine of the millennium is, therefore excluded from the Bible, and is a mere tradition having its origin in Cerinthus, the most noted heretic of the first century.

*For support of this understanding of prophecy, see issue #19, “The Voice of Prophecy.” Also, *The Revelation Explained*, by Frederick G. Smith.

A Song from Solomon

Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? Sng. 8:5

My dove, my undefiled is but one. 6:9-10

1. Who is this that com-eth from the wil - der-ness, Lean-ing on her well - be-lov-ed's arm,
2. Who is she that look-eth as the morn - ing, Clear-er than the moon's ce - les - tial light,
3. Who is she that stand-eth on the moun - tain, Sing-ing to our hearts a song of joy,
4. Who is she, the fair - est of ten thou - sand, Shin-ing with the bright-ness of the sun,

Sweet-er than the fra - grant rose of Shar - on, Win-ning all our hearts by her charm?
Bright-er than the sun's ef - ful-gent glo - ry, Ban-ish-ing the dark-ness of night?
Fair - er than the li - lies of the val - ley, Pure as gold re - fined from al - loy?
Queen of love, and choice one of her moth - er? She, my un - de - filed, is but one.

Refrain

Bless-ed bride of Christ, we now a - dore thee; Treas-ure of our hearts, we hymn thy praise;

Church of God, we love thee and no oth - er; In thy courts we'll wor-ship all our days.

Without Spot and Blameless

Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things,
be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. 2 Pet. 3:14

1. I'll rise at ear - ly morn - ing hour, With first ef - ful - gent* rays,
2. While proud in heart, at bright mid - day, Can find no time for prayer,
3. And when the pleas - ant eve - ning air Is dusk - y with the night,
4. With God's ap - prov - al on my soul My bod - y sinks to rest,

While na - ture's song - sters in the bow'r, Send up their Mak - er's praise;
My thoughts shall soar from earth a - way, To heav - en, bright and fair:
My soul shall turn to God in prayer, In heav - en's gold - en light;
No doubts nor waves of trou - ble roll A - cross my peace - ful breast;

I'll bow be - fore my God so dear, And tar - ry till my heart shall hear
A - round the fam - 'ly al - tar knelt, My heart with grat - i - tude will melt,
I'll lin - ger at the great white throne, Un - til the thoughts of God are known,
And through the night that hand so mild Pro - tects from storms and bil - lows wild

The Spir - it's wit - ness sweet and clear: "With - out spot and blame - less."
Till blest as - sur - ance shall be felt, "With - out spot and blame - less."
And He shall claim me for His own, "With - out spot and blame - less."
His help - less, trust - ing, lov - ing child, "With - out spot and blame - less."

But what about the thousand years in Revelation? Let us examine it carefully. In the first place we observe that it is not a reign of men in the body, but of *“the souls of them who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God.”*^{vs.4}

We further see, that they had not during their life upon the earth *“worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark”* upon them; hence we conclude that they lived in the early part of the Christian era, before the beast made his appearance. [*This conclusion does not necessarily follow from the verse; the implication is stronger that they lived during the time of the beast.—Ed.*]

In another chapter the Revelator sees these same souls under the altar, and heard them cry *“with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell upon the earth?... And it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants, also, and their brethren, that should be killed, as they were, should be fulfilled.”*^{Rev 6:9-11} These souls were resting, hence we understand that this vision also applies to their thousand-years' reign with Christ. We also see in the above that the thousand years lies between periods of martyrdom; and that those who reigned were the victims of the first, awaiting the death of those of the second.

But are those thousand years past, or are they yet to come? Let us turn again to the twentieth chapter and make a further investigation of this subject. We find the devil was chained during that period (v. 3). Of course none would take this to be a literal chaining, for a spiritual being could not be thus confined. In what sense was he chained? By reading a little further, we find his chaining was a deprivation of the privilege of deceiving the nations (v. 3). We observe, also, that at the expiration of the thousand years, the devil is loosed for a little season; during which he gathers the forces of Gog and Magog together to battle against the saints, and is defeated by fire from heaven. Verses 7-9.

The fire from heaven signifies the coming of Christ, 2 Thess. 2:8; hence the devil is loosed from his thousand years confinement, a little season before the second coming of Christ. The fact that the Gog and Magog forces are already uniting proves that the thousand years are past [see footnote on pg. 13]. But can we find anything in this chapter pointing to the commencement of the thousand years? Let us see. We have seen that it was the souls of the martyrs

of the early days of the Christian era who reigned. Hence we would suppose that the thousand year period begun soon after their martyrdom. This must be the case, for we have seen that they are already in the past.

We have now laid the foundation, and will proceed to show the exact interpretation. The thousand years were the darkest part of the papal reign, A. D. 530-1530. **During that period there were very few Christians upon the earth, hence the devil was deprived of the privilege of deceiving them, and in this sense was chained.**

The reformation at the close of the thousand years brought forth a host of redeemed people, thus restoring to the devil the opportunity of doing what he could at deceiving them. In this sense he was loosed. The awful persecution inflicted upon the church in apostolic times was, during those thousand years, greatly abated: but it was poured forth afresh, and with greater ferocity, at the outburst of the Reformation. Hence it is seen that the thousand years as we have located them above, were in fulfillment to prophecy, an intervening respite from persecution.

The reader will note that the binding of the devil is presented in exactly the same terms as the statements of Brother Warner in his tract, “The Millennium Doctrine Refuted,” as quoted previously. This is an accurate picture of the level of understanding that the saints of the Evening Light Reformation possessed then on that point. The understanding was false, for if anything, the dark ages of Catholicism were one of the most fruitful ever for the devil in terms of deceiving and damning human souls. The subject was viewed from the standpoint of *saved souls to be deceived*, rather than *human souls to be deceived*, and it ignores the fact that all of earth's population starts out in life as innocent of transgression before God until each sins and is guilty. Behind the ignoring of this fact stands *the influence* of a false doctrine that the devil was once an angel in heaven.

In *The Gospel Trumpet* edition of January 31, 1895, we read:

Please explain 2 Pet. 2:4. Was it ever possible for an angel to sin and be cast out of heaven? Was Satan ever an angel of glory?

Answer: We receive the above record as the true origin of Satan. Jude bears testimony to the same thing. *“And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”*^{Jude 6} These two scriptures state the case very plainly. These angels *“sinned,”* were *“cast down to hell.”* They *“kept not their first estate”*; that is, did not continue pure and holy as God created them. And losing holiness they also *“left their own habitation.”* According to Peter they were cast down; according to Jude they left their own habitation. Both were true: they left of choice, but it was God's presence, power, holiness, and glory which made the place unendurable for them. In this sense God cast them out, and yet they left. Doubtless, it was in the same way that Adam and Eve were expelled from the Eden of God's presence. And here is a good lesson for us all; an illustration of the fact that without holiness, no man shall be able to see and enjoy God.

When we consider the facts as stated by these two inspired writers, that these angels were in heaven, and that was *“their own habitation,”* there can be no doubt of their having been once holy angels; for heaven was not created for devils, nor was hell prepared for any one but *“the devil and his angels.”*^{Mt. 25:41}

This record of the origin of Satan and his emissaries is consistent with sound reason. First, God is the creator of all things. But evil spirits exist. Therefore they must originally have been of God's creation. But since like produces like, a holy God could not consistently have created that which is

unholy and sinful; therefore those evil spirits must have been created holy, and afterward became sinful, kept not their first estate, their original purity.

*Brother Warner
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one time in heaven.*

Now this is proof beyond any doubt that Brother Warner and other saints in 1895 believed that the devil was at one time in heaven. As one brother (who believes that the devil *was* once a pure angel in heaven) remarked in discussion on this point, “Even the pope of Rome

did not dare to such impudence [of believing the devil was not a fallen angel]. If we are not mistaken, such an impudent and false teaching did not exist earlier, before the twentieth century." A full and complete analysis of what the scriptures teach on the origin of evil is too lengthy for this writing, but we willingly concede that most of the nominal Christian world, including the pope, taught that the devil was created a holy and pure angel and had fallen. Most of the nominal Christian world also taught an earthly thousand-year reign of Christ, too. It was natural enough for Brother Warner and others to think in terms of their conditioning and to regard these errors as true. But when they began to realize that the millennial doctrine was error, it was not readily apparent that the millennium was based on another error concerning the origin of evil. This is what led to the unsustainable statements about Satan being bound during the long reign of Catholicism, whereas in fact, he was not bound at all, but was going about devouring and deceiving, even as he is today.

One of the main effects of the false teaching that the devil was in heaven was to anchor the millennial fallacy. For centuries, the scriptures in Rev. 20:1-3 were understood to refer to a future thousand-year reign on earth, with Satan bound. The scriptures in Rev. 12:7-9 were also part of the deception. Any attempt to interpret these scriptures in any other way than a imagined millennial reign had to confront the fact that the dragon—the old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, was not actually the devil himself, but a tool of the devil. To get light on the millennial-reign deception, one had to face the other false doctrine about the origin of evil. Light on the history of the church of God necessarily led to light on the incorruptible nature of heaven and the fact that the devil was never in there. **Both** of these false doctrines had been held for centuries—and **both are connected**. The false understanding of Satan underlay the false earthly millennial theory.

Lactantius was appointed as head of rhetoric at Nicomedia in about A.D. 300 by Emperor Diocletian. He converted to Christianity and served Constantine as tutor to his son, Crispus. Here is what he wrote about the supposed thousand-year reign:

When the thousand years of the kingdom have ended—that is, seven thousand years [from the creation of the world]—Satan will be loosed again. Being sent forth from prison, he will go forth and assemble all the nations which will then be under the dominion of the righteous.... Then the last anger of God will come upon the nations and will utterly destroy them.... The whole race of the wicked will utterly perish. There will no longer be any nation in this world except the nation of God.... Thereafter, there will be no war—only peace and everlasting rest. But when the thousand years are completed, the world will be renewed by God and the heavens will be folded, together. The earth will be changed and God will transform men into the likeness of angels.... At the same time, the second and general resurrection of all mankind will take place. In this, the unrighteous will go into lasting punishments.

We see from this quote (and others could be produced) that the millennial theory was received and believed at the time of the rise of the first beast—Catholicism. It actually had its roots in the Jewish idea of an earthly kingdom when the Messiah would come. And right with this deception went its twin falsity. We will quote from Origen of Alexandria (A.D. 146-211), another writer of this period:

Regarding the devil, his angels, and the opposing forces, the teaching of the church is that these beings do indeed exist. However, the church has not explained with sufficient clarity what they are, or how they exist. Most Christians, however, hold this opinion: that the devil was an angel and that, having become an apostate, he induced as many of the angels as possible to fall away with him.

Note that, though "most Christians" believed that the devil had been an angel in heaven, there must have been a few in Origen's day who *did not believe this*.

But now, moving across the centuries from the 200's to 1885, it became increasingly evident to the brethren of the Evening Light Reformation that the devil himself was not bound during the long period of the first beast (Catholicism), and therefore, there *must* be another correct understanding of the binding of the dragon (called "*the Devil, and Satan*"). In 1896, the year after Brother Warner's death,

his book *Salvation: Present, Perfect, Now or Never* was published. We quote:

We see...that the millennial theory was received and believed at the time of the rise of the first beast - Catholicism. It actually had its roots in the Jewish idea of an earthly kingdom when the Messiah would come.

Reader, are you a candidate for heaven and eternal glory? Then mark well the conditions upon which you must take your crown, without which you must sink to an awful doom. How think you the gates

of heaven will be guarded against the entrance of unworthy characters? We read of no mighty angel, who, with all-penetrating eyes shall examine those who would enter there. How then will the purity of heaven be protected? Find an answer in 2 Th. 1:7-9: "*And 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: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*"

At the same time we are told He will "*be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe.*" ^{2 Th 1:10} So let it be known once for all that all who are unfit for heaven will be driven back to hell "*from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*" Though heaven's gates stand wide open before all men, no person will enter with a stain of sin upon his soul. No unholy man can endure the presence of God and his divine glory. The hottest place in hell is a relief to the soul unsaved and out of Christ.

A wit once said in a New York paper that he dreamed a certain man, prominent in his circle, had died, and approached the gates of heaven, where he was told, "YOU MAY COME IN, BUT YOU WILL NOT LIKE IT."

A mighty truth was unwittingly uttered by the thoughtless sinner. **Oh, that the Almighty may make men to consider that heaven is worse than hell itself for all who are not of heavenly temper!** Oh, how sad and sickening the sight of our present evil world, and its awful destiny so near! The masses who profess the Christian name, know they are sinful and unholy, and yet hope to stop sinning when safe in heaven. We used to hear them sing with much animation,

"If I only get to heaven,

If I only get to heaven,

If I only get to heaven when I die."

They hope to see the beautiful gate ajar for them, and if they may only be permitted to slip into the golden city, imagine they will be all right. Oh, how awful will be their disappointment! The very holiness of heaven will drive them back in terror. Jesus knew very well that men would base their eternal happiness on merely getting into heaven, and has given us a parable to show all men how such a faith will terminate. He tells of one who came in without the "*wedding garment*"; but he did not enjoy it. He was speechless, and was bound hand and foot, and cast out into outer darkness; "*there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*" ^{Mt 22:11-13} Nothing but the spotless robe of perfect holiness will make heaven a heaven for you. "*Be not deceived; God is not mocked.*" ^{Gal 6:7} **None but the pure in heart can enter there and see God in peace.** Yea, in the light of God's truth we cry aloud and say unto all, you must be as pure as heaven to enter and enjoy that holy place. And, thanks be to the God of all grace and mercy, SALVATION will put you in that condition and preserve you ready to enter and enjoy all the glory of heaven.

These statements of Brother Warner agree wonderfully with the following scripture, "*To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.*" ^{1 Pet 1:4} Nor can it be scripturally proven that heaven has not **always been incorruptible and undefiled.** We see plainly that "purer light" was coming fast on the very nature of heaven, and that the nature of this light of truth **proves definitely that Satan could never have been in that holy place,** for "*there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie.*" ^{Rev. 21:27} There never has been and never will be.

The next publishing of the Evening Light saints that pertains to the binding of the dragon was in 1899. In *The Kingdom of God and the One-Thousand-Years' Reign*, by H. M. Riggle, the great dragon is correctly identified as **paganism.** The correct interpretation of the dragon in Revelations is expounded.

As before proved, **the dragon represents Paganism, or Rome under the Pagan religion.** Now, if by the dragon be meant Beelzebub himself, then we are led to the conclusion that the great apostate Spirit is a monster having seven heads and ten horns, and also that he has a tail, with which he drags after him the third part of the stars of heaven. **God never created such an angel, nor can it be proved that Satan now has such an appearance.** The appellations "old serpent," "devil," and "Satan" must, therefore, be understood figuratively. Paganism is called "the devil," because its religion was purely of devilish origin. Paul says that "*the things which the Gentiles [heathen nations] sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils... and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye can not drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils.*" ^{1 Cor 10:20-21} It is called "Satan," which is a Hebrew word signifying "adversary," from its great opposition to and persecution of the Christian church. It is also called "*that old serpent... which deceiveth the whole world,*" from its subtlety against the Christians, and its causing the whole Roman world, as

Paganism held the highest position on earth when Christ appeared to save the world. But he who is called Michael, because he is like God, he and his angels (messengers-ministry) waged war against this dragon in his high places.

far as it was in its power, to embrace the absurdities of Paganism. At the ushering in of this gospel dispensation, Paganism was the universal religion. Even the Jews as a nation had accepted it; forsaking the God of their fathers, they were worshiping idols. Rome held universal sway. Paganism held the highest position on earth when Christ appeared to save the world. But he who is called Michael, because he is like God, he and his angels (messengers, ministry) waged war against this dragon in his high places.

Being victorious he proved to the world that Paganism had no right to such a high seat. Therefore Christ cast him down, and set up his kingdom instead.

It is said that "*the dragon fought [opposed Christianity] and his angels [Paganism's adherents, messengers or advocates], And prevailed not [were not able to conquer that kingdom which 'broke in pieces' and 'consumed' all others]; neither was their place found any more in heaven [Paganism no longer held the highest throne of honor.]: and the great dragon was cast out [Christianity prevailed].... And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ.*" This represents the glorious triumph of the gospel over heathen darkness in the beginning of the Christian era, the victory Christianity obtained over Paganism, a song or triumph of the church of God over heathen idolatry. "*And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb... and they loved not their lives unto death.*" Here is given the reason why the followers of Christ prevailed at this time against all their adversaries. It was because they fought against the dragon in the armor of God. "*They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb,*" by proclaiming salvation to sinners through Christ crucified, and by their continual intercessions at the throne of grace for the conversion of the heathen world. All this they did at the peril of their lives.

It is further said that when the dragon saw he was cast down, "*he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.*" This refers to the Pagan persecutions against the church. When Rome saw her religion crumbling and falling before the increasing light of the gospel which was rapidly filling the earth, she tried to save herself by slaughtering the Christians; but this only increased the work of God, and watchfires were kindled in every land. The then known world was being rapidly girdled with salvation, which caused heathen Rome finally to totter and fall. Next the woman fled into the wilderness "*for a time, and times, and half a time.*" This wilderness is the same as that spoken of in v. 6, which was before proved to signify the great apostasy. In v. 6 it is said that the woman remained in the wilderness "*a thousand two hundred and threescore days,*" which, as before proved, signifies 1260 years. Here it is said she remained for "*a time, and times, and half a time,*" or three and one-half times. A time signifies a year (Dan. 4:23,25). Three and one-half times, then, equal three

and one-half years, or forty-two months: and counting thirty days to the month according to the Jewish calendar we have 1260 days, or [prophetic] years. It is further said that *“the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”*^{v. 17} *“The remnant of her seed”* refers to the few who faithfully stood for the truth down through the dark ages. The dragon, being conquered (cast down) and his power broken by Christianity, became wroth at the woman, or church, and through his son—the *“beast”*—made war against the remnant of her seed.

After continuing to discuss the nature of Catholicism (the first beast) and the second beast (Protestantism) after it, Brother Riggle continues:

We will now turn to Rev. 20: 1-3—*“And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit... and after that he must be loosed a little season.”* Upon this scripture theological speculators have sat until the world is full of opposing theories. Most Millennial teachers admit that the book of Revelations is highly symbolic, but when they come to the twentieth chapter they all contend it must be interpreted literally. **Observe, dear reader, how closely Rev. 20: 1-3 agrees with Rev. 12:7-10. It was the dragon that was bound by the angel—the dragon with seven heads and ten horns (Rev. 12:3-4).** There is but one dragon spoken of throughout the book of Revelation, and that dragon represents Pagan Rome. The appellations *“old serpent,” “Devil,”* and *“Satan,”* in these texts have already been considered. The casting down of the dragon in Rev. 12 is identical with his binding in Rev. 20. The angel which came down from heaven and bound the dragon was Michael the archangel, i. e., Jesus Christ. He has the keys of death and hell (Rev. 1:18). **The great chain with which he bound the dragon was the gospel of the kingdom.** Christ, with the eternal truths which He advocated, both in person and through His apostolic ministry, bound the religion of Paganism, and hurled it from its lofty position to the great abyss from which it emanated.

“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall

It was not the actual devil that was bound during the long, indefinite period of a thousand years, but a certain instrument of the devil that was bound - paganism, the red dragon. Now he is loosed for a season and making a comeback.

be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”^{v. 4-6} The thousand years in these texts (like the one hundred and forty and four thousand in Rev. 7:4; 14:1, and the twelve hundred and sixty days in Rev. 12:6; 11:3) are not to be understood literally. They signify a long period of time. *“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them”*—the glory of Christ’s kingdom before the apostasy. Through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, multitudes were raised up from a dead state in sins to life in Christ. This great host, thus quickened into life in the clear morning of the Christian era, composed the first great spiritual resurrection. Through full salvation, they were made kings and priests unto God; and sitting upon thrones of love they reigned *“in life”* over sin, Satan, and disease. *“And judgment was given unto them.”* The righteous judgments of God executed by the apostolic church against the works of darkness. This caused Satan’s kingdom to fall *“like lightning.”* But soon the apostasy came. The clear light of truth was largely extinguished by the darkness and superstitions that filled the earth. An awful beast power reigned for twelve hundred and sixty years. This was Popery. During her reign about fifty-five millions of God’s people who would not *“worship the beast,”* namely, submit to her doctrines, were put to death. Next came the religion of Protestantism, when an image to the first beast was made.

During this long period of time, the kingdom of God was largely hid under the

human rubbish of men. The reign on earth ceased, and the only reign enjoyed by God’s people during that *“thousand years”*—long period of time—was enjoyed with Christ in Paradise. The thousands who had taken part in the first resurrection, before the great apostasy, together with those mentioned in the fourth verse who lived true to God during the reign of the beast (Popery) and his image (Protestantism), many of whom were *“beheaded for the witness of Jesus,”* as soon as they died, were caught up unto God and to his throne and reigned with him in a disembodied state. While on earth the reign of God’s people ceased, they still continued during that thousand years to reign with Christ in Paradise. But, thank God, the time has come that God’s people again reign upon earth. Daniel with prophetic eye looked down to the end of the apostasy and saw the *“Ancient of days”*—the old apostolic times—returning.

And he said that *“judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom.”*^{Dan. 7:21-22} Hallelujah! That time has come. A mighty host is being gathered out of the apostasy; while thousands of the *“rest of the dead”* are being quickened into life. These stand upon the sea of glass (pure word and holiness of God), and have victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name (Rev. 15:2).

It was not the actual devil that was bound during the long, indefinite, period (the prophetic thousand years), but a certain instrument of the devil that was bound—paganism, the red dragon. Now he is loosed for a season and is making a comeback.

In 1902, *The Gospel Day* was published. Brother C. E. Orr writes concerning this subject:

We will now ask the reader to read the only text that speaks of a thousand years. This is found in Rev. 20:1-10. If you will open your Bible and read, we can by the help of the Lord show you that this cannot possibly mean a thousand years of Christ’s reign upon the earth after his second coming. This language is figurative. Satan is an evil spirit and cannot be bound with a literal chain. After the thousand years have expired, Satan is to be loosed, and shall deceive the nations. After Christ reigns here a thousand years in righ-

teousness, shall Satan be loosed and deceive the nations? Who can look forward to such an end with joy? How do you know but you will be one that will be deceived? If you are building hopes upon a millennium, you are already deceived, and this deception is among the deceptions which are to come after the thousand years. This thousand years is in the past. This may be a startling statement to one who has been educated to believe in a reign of Christ in person here upon the earth in some future age of a thousand-years' duration.

Reader, will you please notice that the devil, and Satan, that was to be bound a thousand years, is also called the dragon? Now the Scriptures do not always mean Beelzebub when speaking of Satan. Jesus, upon one occasion, because Peter was remonstrating with him concerning his death, said, "*Get thee behind me, Satan.*" Christ did not mean to say that Peter was the devil, but he addressed him as Satan, because the devil was using him as an instrument to persuade the Savior to escape the death He came here to endure for all. So Satan and the devil spoken of in Rev. 20:2 does not refer to the personal devil, the prince of evil spirits, but to some great power antagonistic to gospel light and truth as revealed in the church of God.

Now we feel ourselves under obligation to the reader to give him the correct interpretation of this binding of Satan a thousand years, and of his being loosed at the end of that period. The term "*dragon*" is used to represent a state power, which gives power to some religion antagonistic to the religion of the Bible.

However the original and real fundamental dragon power was Rome, when she supported a heathen religion, and when the world, on the whole, was so under the seducing charms of idolatrous worship that it knew not the one true God and his relationship to man. The Syriac New Testament, in speaking of this dragon in verse two, says, "*Who seduced the whole habitable world.*" The binding of Satan refers to some time when the delusive charms of heathenish worship were largely cleared away, and there became a greater universal knowledge of the true God. At the end of that thousand years, or long period of time, which time we have reached, the true God and the pure religion will be lost or unknown to the generality of mankind, and heathenish rites and customs and

ceremonies will be the universal religion. Do we not read that at the end of the thousand years Satan shall again deceive the nations? We understand by this that the world on the whole shall be reveling in the delusive seductions of a lewd, lustful, idolatrous religion, making the times like it was in the days of Noah. Let me again say we are now entering these times, and this world is swiftly passing under awful and blinding delusions. So great are the delusions that, if possible, the very elect should be deceived.

We understand by this that the world on the whole shall be reveling in the delusive seductions of a lewd, lustful, idolatrous religion, making the times like it was in the days of Noah.

The religious teachers of today on the whole are in ignorance concerning the binding of Satan. We will give you a sample of the ignorance of these teachers. In the *Gospel Messenger* of March 25, 1899, the Querist Department in answer to a question asked concerning the binding of Satan, said: "Satan will then be bound, cast into the bottomless pit, and there will be a chance to convert the unrighteous and lead them to accept Christ as the Savior."

A subscriber in search of knowledge asked the Querist Department to give a scripture to prove the last clause. He received this answer: "It seems to us that it is one of those self-evident views that needs no proof. If the Bible teaches otherwise, let us have the chapter and verse. The Querist Department does not pretend to know everything."

There are many other chapters and verses that teach otherwise. "*Now is the day of salvation.*" "*How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?*" The wicked shall be resurrected to damnation (Jn. 5:29).

We will also quote from *The Cleansing of the Sanctuary* (1903), by D. S. Warner, and completely posthumously by H. M. Riggle. After quoting from Rev. 20:1-3, they write:

This scripture, no doubt, has been more speculated upon than any other in the Bible. It is used as a foundation for all the multiplied absurdities and diversities of false doctrines respecting a fancied millennium future. Many precious men and women, in order to prop up a corrupt theory, in their

blind zeal will set aside the plain testimony of New Testament scripture and literalize this text. But no such thing is hinted at as a future literal reign upon earth. If the reader will closely compare Rev. 20:1-3 with Rev. 12:7-11 he will observe that the same event is referred to. The angel which came down from heaven is Michael, the archangel, the Lord Jesus Christ. He had the key of the bottomless pit; for he testifies, "*I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.*" Rev. 11:18 The language of this text is highly figurative. The dragon here referred to is the same as that in Rev. 12; viz., pagan Rome. There is but one dragon brought to view in the book of Revelation, the dragon with seven heads and ten horns

(12:3). That dragon represents Rome under the pagan religion. The appellations, "*Devil, and Satan,*" are applied to this hellish power both in Revelation 12 and 20.

We have before observed why these terms were applied to paganism. Because its religion was purely of devilish origin, and because it was the chief instrument through which the devil deceived the whole then-known world. When this power ruled the earth, and its religion was universal, Christ the archangel came down from heaven, set up His everlasting kingdom in direct opposition to this dragon power, and with the great chain of His eternal gospel, He bound the religion of paganism and hurled it from its lofty position to the great abyss from which it emanated.

The one thousand years signify the long period of time when paganism as a religion was largely extinct. "*And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them.*" Rev. 20:4 John saw this after the angel came down, and while he was binding the dragon. Like Rev. 12:10, this refers to the triumph of the early church over heathen darkness; the glory of Christ's kingdom before the apostasy. Through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, multitudes were raised up from a dead state in sins to life in Christ. This great host thus quickened into life in the clear morning of the Christian era, composed the first great spiritual resurrection. Through full salvation they were made kings and priests unto God; and sitting upon thrones of love they reigned "*in life*" over sin, Satan, and disease. Judgment was given to them. This refers to the righteous judgments

of God which filled the early church.

Thus, in brief, we trace the church through her first great conflict with ecclesiastical powers, and behold her sweep onward with triumph over all her foes. As we follow her to the end of the world, we give a history of events which should awaken a deep interest in the minds and hearts of all.

In Rev. 20, it is stated that at the expiration of the thousand years the old dragon would be “loosed a little season.”^{v3} “And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.”^{v8} This dragon power was bound by the gospel of Christ, and hurled from its lofty position to the great abyss from which it emanated (v. 1-3). This, as before proved, was accomplished in the morning of the Christian era. At that time hundreds of thousands were saved through the blood of Christ, and raised to spiritual life. That great host constituted the first great spiritual resurrection. They reigned in life, and Christ’s kingdom triumphed upon earth.

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”^{1 Jn 1:7} How much it means to “walk in the light”—and what grace and humility from God is needed to do so!

We look at Brother Peter on the mount of transfiguration, and we hear him saying, “Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.”^{Mk 17:4} We are glad he said, “if Thou wilt.” For today, we do have three tabernacles in that area of the world, three religions all fighting with each other—nominal Christianity, Judaism, and Islam—and we see the results of Peter’s proposal for three tabernacles. But God helped Peter, those with him, and all the rest of us to know that God wants us to hear His Son only. God kept Peter from making a horrendous mistake. But then Paul tells us, “When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with

him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?”^{Gal 2:11-14} We see that Peter made a bad mistake, yet God allowed it to happen. God could have prevented Peter from making that mistake, but God allowed him to make it. This humble brother, who really loved God, was destined to be called the first pope and eventually to be reputed as infallible by an apostate ministry. But we see that God put a restraint on that tendency of sinful man by allowing this incident of Peter’s fallibility to be recorded.

The Evening Light Reformation of over a hundred years ago had its heroes and its villains in the minds of many. It has been followed by tens of thousands of minds and hearts in various spiritual conditions, pulling, prying, imagining, making honest and not-so-honest mistakes. There are people who look upon Brother Warner’s writings with a reverence that should only be given to Jesus. We respect the brother greatly, but we recognize that he was a man of like passions

There are people who look upon Brother Warner’s writings with a reverence that should only be given to Jesus. We respect the brother greatly, but we recognize that he was a man of like passions as other men of God.

as other men of God, and we do not want to think of him “above that which is written.” God saw fit to use him prominently, but he (and I believe I can hear him saying, “Amen!”) would be quick to affirm that he was only an earthen vessel. It does not take away from the spirituality of his walk with God or the many solid and profound things he taught, to face the fact that he made a mistake in the writing under discussion. Now he sees no longer through a glass darkly.

Some brethren, who hold Brother Warner in a dangerous reverence, think it slander to contradict his work, but none of us are exempt from the Word of God. Whatever I

say must stand the test of time, the scrutiny of others who love the Lord, and in the end God Himself will render final and absolute judgment.

Many have wondered why the Word of God was written as it was. Doctrines are not clearly put forth in a systematic way in many cases. There are obscure texts that seem to teach certain things, and it is not a simple matter to “rightly divide” many subjects of Bible truth because of the way in which they were recorded. Why? Why did God have it presented as He does? “For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.”^{1 Cor 3:19} The context extends the same thought: “Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.... And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.”^{1 Cor 3:18,20} If you are not humble in your heart—a fool for Christ’s sake—the Word of God is dangerously misleading, even deceptive. Why did God make the world with the appearance of age? Did He prepare a snare for the worldly wise—an outlet of seeming wisdom for their unbelief? There will be many a deceived soul who will be enlightened at the judgment—too late! Many an unbeliever or religious professor

feels that it is not fair of God to approach things this way, as though God was required somehow to “play” by their rules, their ideas, of what is fair and right. He has made a way for men to know the truth, and He hath made it so it cannot be truly known any other way. “He hath showed

thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”^{Mic 6:8} “Yet the children of thy people say, The way of the Lord is not equal [fair]: but as for them, their way is not equal [fair].”^{Eze 33:17} But, “If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land.”^{Isa 1:19}

“The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.... Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.”^{Psa 139:10,12}

—To be continued ➡



In the previous issue, we addressed the teaching of Beverly Carradine, a holiness minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church. This brother rejected “Come-Out-IsM,” which he defined as encompassing those that withdrew from all denominations, decrying this as “ecclesiastical lawlessness.”

In the Free Methodist Church, Elmer E. Shelhamer (1869-1947) went even further, and defended the entire concept of sectarianism. It would seem that he was resigned to divided Christianity because of the natural diversity of humanity. He admits that the church of the New Testament was not like this, but seems to imply that it was only a matter of time until it became as professed Christianity was in his day, and is yet.

Furthermore, Mr. Shelhamer would have us believe that true spirituality consists of an acceptance of the divisions and walls between God’s children. He teaches us that no division actually exists between those who are really, truly, cruelly divided, for “the possessor of perfect love necessarily jumps over the walls of sectism.” And in the book *False Doctrines and Fanaticism Exposed*, Mr. Shelhamer defends the position of respecting and not tampering with the divisions between God’s children. He does this by branding all efforts against sectism as the same (although they were not), and especially by claiming that they all taught *no government at all*, that is, spiritual anarchy. By this distorted definition, withdrawal from the sects of men becomes withdrawal from all churches whatsoever, including the one that God made; thus no-sects is branded as no-churches. Basically he says that division is inevitable; any effort to leave the current divisions will only succeed in making a new one. He says:

Of late years many have seen the formality of ecclesiasticism, and in their unwise efforts to correct it, have swung to the other extreme, and advocate the abolition of government, or anarchy in religion.

Mr. Shelhamer would have us even believe that the church that Jesus built was a sect—one among many.

In *False Doctrines and Fanaticism Exposed*, Mr. Shelhamer has presented us with the classic position of someone who refuses to accept light from the Bible. It begins with (1) the blurring and misrepresentation of a definition. (2) The rejection of light continues from unbelief. Finally there is (3) a mass condemnation of the people and of the results of following the enlightenment.

As another example of this classic path of rejection of light, we find that those who teach sin-you-must, invariably (1) confuse the definition of a sinless life with a mistake-less life. Then there is the assertion that Jesus is the only person who was faultless, and that (2) being faultless is beyond human attainment. Then the rejection of the concept leads to (3) the condemnation of all who profess 1 John 3:6, etc.

Mr. Shelhamer twists the meaning of *sect* to *group*. Then he ignores the distinction between God’s group and the groups of men. Underlying his opposition is a *profound unbelief* that it is possible for men to live spiritual enough to follow and be practically regulated by an

unseen, divine government; Mr. Shelhamer simply does not believe that people can live on that plane of spirituality. He believes that only human government is practical, thus necessary and indispensable. And because saved men are so diverse, they will never be in unity as described in the Bible, except in a sympathetic way from behind their denominations. Finally, he fiercely condemns all attempts to be in Biblical unity as merely substituting one sect for all the sects, and describes those who have tried to do so as deluded and deceived.

The significance of this can scarcely be overstated. Here is a profoundly different vision of the Christian religious world from the vision that the Bible presents to us. Here is the acceptance of denominations—divisions—as natural to man, even part of the divine plan. Representing these schisms of the body of believers as branches of the one true vine, instead of individual believers as branches, with each branch connected to Christ. Here is the enshrining of do-as-it-seems-best-to-me, rather than only-God-knows-what-is-best and we-must-wait-upon-Him to both find and keep to the only right way.

What Is a *Sect* in the Bible?

Mr. Shelhamer would have us believe that the word *sect* means the same as the word *group*. According to the definition he relates

from Webster and a quotation from an unnamed writer, he presents us with the picture of groups of people, distinguished from each other by mere differences of opinion. By this definition, no group possesses legitimacy over another, nor is there anything but sects, i.e., groups.

But the Word of God does not use the

word in this manner, nor did the inspired writers convey that meaning. The word *sect*, also translated *heresy*, comes from the Greek word *haireisis*, which is used 9 times in the New Testament; translated *sect* 5 times in the book of Acts:

It would seem that he was resigned to divided Christianity because of the natural diversity of humanity. He admits that the church of the New Testament was not like this, but...

“...which is the *sect* of the Sadducees...”
Acts 5:17

“There rose up certain of the *sect* of the Pharisees...” Acts 15:5

“For we [the Jews] have found this man [Paul] a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the *sect* of the Nazarenes.” Acts 24:5 Notice that the word *sect* is applied by the Jews to them who they regarded as *heretics* involved in a *heresy* (that is, *sectarians* involved in a *sect*) to Judaism. “A mover of *sedition*.” *Sedition* is defined as “conduct or language inciting rebellion against authority insurrection; rebellion.” In response to this charge of being a sectarian man, a heretic, Paul replied, “But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call *heresy*, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets.”^{v.14} The word *heresy* is translated from the same word translated *sect* in verse 5. Notice that Paul does not apply the term to himself or others of God’s church—he says of the word *sect*, “*the way which they call heresy*.”

“My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest *sect* of our religion I lived a Pharisee.” Acts 26:4-5 When Paul was a Pharisee, before he became a Christian, he was at that time a member of the *sect* of the Pharisees.

“But we [the Jews] desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this *sect*, we know that every where it is spoken against.” Acts 28:22 These words were spoken by the Jews about the Christian religion.

(The word is used three more times—1 Cor. 11:19; Gal. 5:20; 2 Pet. 2:1—translated *heresies*.)

We see that the Christians **did not** regard themselves as a *hairesis* (a sect or heresy) from the Jewish religion. It is also plain that the Jews **did** regard them as a sect from Judaism—at the very least, as a subset of the Jewish religion. The question then follows: Was Christianity a sect or subset of Judaism?

“The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.” Lk 16:16 The gospel dispensation marked

the end of the law and the prophets. “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt.”^{Heb 8:8-9} It is plain that Christianity was the fulfilling of the law and the prophets, and by this fulfillment, the covenant of the law and prophets was ended and replaced by a better testament. Therefore Christianity was not a sect of Judaism—far from it! It was the beginning of worship to God in spirit and in truth.

“But *the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.*” Jn 4:23

The true worshippers are not a faction of Judaism, but something else entirely—something that is created by God and therefore possesses a legitimacy in His eyes that supersedes the old, completed legitimacy of the Old Testament.

The Jews, of course, did not accept the new doctrine of the Messiah, although it was built on the fulfillment of the Old Testament. Since they refused to walk in the light, they naturally regarded the coming of Jesus as, first a prophet of the Jewish religion, then a false prophet. “The way *which they call heresy*.”

Now the word *heresy* conveys quite a different meaning than the word *group*. It is very convenient and expedient for Mr. Shelhamer to reduce Christianity to a group among groups—a sect among sects, but it is not scriptural. God did not establish Christianity as a divided religion. “Is Christ divided?”^{1 Cor 1:13} No. “There is one body.”^{Eph 4:4} Not many bodies (groups, sects, heresies), but **one**. “That there should be no schism in the body.”^{1 Cor 12:25}

Mr. Shelhamer contends: “It is utterly impossible for them with the least show of reason or common sense, to prove that they are not a sect.” You are wrong, Mr.

Shelhamer. Christianity is not a sect from Judaism. It is the creation of God, cut out of a mountain without hands and not left to other people (Dan. 2:44-45).

[My Hoe]

It is alleged by no-sectites that the Bible does not say anything about having separate rules in a discipline, a creed, or articles of faith. Granted. But does that prove it wrong to have such a book? “Must I be deprived of using my hoe to cut the weeds out of my corn simply because the Bible does not inform me so to do? My reason tells me that I can accomplish more with my hoe than I can without it. I can raise more corn.

Reason informs us that there are some things necessary in the government of the church, as well as other things that are not laid down in the Bible. But shall we deprive ourselves of any weapon to fight Satan and sin just because we can’t find it in black and white?”

—*Ibid.*

Christianity is not a sect from Judaism.
It is the creation of God, cut out of a mountain without hands and not left to other people.
(Daniel 2:44-45)

It is precisely because men have leaned to their own understanding and

have done as seemed best to them, without the specific direction of the Word of God and the Spirit of God, that we have the great mass of divisions and schisms that make a mockery of unity. Had all men brought “into captivity *every thought to the obedience of Christ*,”^{2 Cor 10:5} instead of reaching for their spiritual hoe or spiritual weed whacker or spiritual lawnmower or spiritual herbicide or spiritual fertilizer, thinking that “*gain is godliness*” (by this method “I can raise more corn”); if they had rejected their own ideas, there would not be the multiplicity of sects that exists today. What *we think* to be a good weapon to fight Satan and sin has side effects and frequently backfires in a most astounding manner.

When the unsanctified Peter reached for his “hoe” in the Bible record, we read that he “said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.”^{Mt 17:4} **What a disaster would have resulted if this suggestion had been followed!** But God knows well the danger

of us following our own thinking. “*While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.*”^{v.5-6} This is what we need to do—*be sore afraid* to the extent of falling on our faces—lest we deviate in any way from the divine pattern. **Behind this apparently innocent motive to help God out by reaching for the unscripturally-sanctioned hoe is a deadly unbelief** in the promise that “*his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.*”^{2 Pet 1:3} The reaching for *our* hoe would have us accept that the Word of God is incomplete without our thinking—instead of thoroughly furnishing the man of God with good works (2 Tim. 3:16-17), the Word needs the addition of our ideas. But God warned us: “*For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.*”^{Rev 22:18} And we plainly see the truth of this scripture carried out in the disciplines, the creeds, and the articles of faith that men have tacked onto the Bible. The result is the plague of denominations, warring, striving, contradicting both the Bible and each other, until pure religion and undefiled is buried beneath a fog of confusion in the minds of men.

So, in answer to Mr. Shelhamer’s question, “Must I be deprived of using **my hoe** to cut the weeds out of my corn simply because the Bible does not inform me so to do?”—thus says the Lord: “***This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.***”

Only the Holy Spirit Is Qualified to Govern

Now human reasoning and the power of a sound mind have their place in life, but our God-given capability for natural life is vastly overmatched in the spiritual realm. Because of this, the inspired writer wrote, “*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.*

It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.”^{Pr 3:5-8} We are forbidden to *trust* in our own understanding—we must not even *lean* unto our own understanding. Just as a serious parent might instruct a child who is inclined to take too much upon them: “Just do exactly as I tell you; don’t do anything else. There is more to this than you realize.”

In dealing with the human heart (including our own), we are out of our depth. “*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the*

In dealing with the human heart (including our own heart), we are out of our depth

LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.”^{Jer 17:9-10} This is spoken of the sinful human heart, a heart which is unwashed as described in 1 John 1:8. But even when the work of God is done in the heart, we are no better at accurately describing and evaluating the heart’s condition. “*Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.*”^{1 Cor 4:5} How can we know what is in us? “*I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins.*” God allows us to see, step by step, here a little and there a little, what is in us by manipulating our reins. What are our reins? They are our appointed trials and temptations, and they accurately measure where we are. Howbeit, we also need help with evaluating the results of our examinations, so to speak.

“*For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.*”^{1 Cor 2:11} A beast knows not the things of a man, for the beast has not the spirit of a man within him. And the spiritual things of the great war between right and wrong are not naturally understood by our natural minds. We need the Spirit of God to “*guide you into all truth.*”^{Jn 16:13} Notice that we need more than guidance into *some* of the truth—we need guidance into *all* truth.

All of this is exemplified in our Lord and Master when He was in the flesh. “*And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*”^{Php 2:8} We catch a glimpse of that humbling: “*Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.*”^{Lk 22:42} Here is the reasoning and desire of the fleshly mind of Jesus. He wished for a different way than the way of the cross, but this natural desire was entirely submitted to the Father’s will. He was totally committed to obedience to

His Father. He submitted all thoughts to the will of His Father. This is what is necessary to do when found in fashion as a man. This is our pattern. Notice how vastly

different all of this is from the vision that Mr. Shelhamer would hold before us. Being found in fashion as a man, he says, “My reason tells me that I can accomplish more with my hoe than I can without it. I can raise more corn.”

Jesus met the temptation of leaning to His own reasoning by humbling Himself and becoming “*obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*” He accepted direction from the Spirit of God. Although He was God and part of the Godhead, He laid that aside to take on the nature of Abraham, so as to live an exemplary life and die for us, showing us how to do it, leaving us an example that we might follow in His steps. “*Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*”^{Mt 4:8-10} The temptation in this diabolical presentation was that of an easier way. A reasonable, commendable way to go about salvation according to the ways of men. How much good could be done without going to the cross. How much pain, suffering, and rejection could be avoided... with all the souls hindered by the process. All this by taking a different path than the one which God the Father revealed unto His begotten Son to follow in the days of His flesh! But Jesus turned away

from fleshly thinking. He devoted Himself to perfect obedience to God.

Fleshly thinking mars the work of God. It gives room to pride and presumption. It considers not our low estate. “*For God is in heaven, and thou upon earth.*” ^{Ecc 5:2} What a depth of spiritual understanding is in these words! Consider also Psalm 127:1-2.

The Effect of a Rival on Seeing the True Government

“*Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” ^{Rom 15:5-6} What prompted Mr. Shelhamer’s deadly unbelief in the power of God to do as He said? This likemindedness, this one mind and one mouth, seemed hopelessly idealistic and unappealing to Mr. Shelhamer’s unbelief. (See also Luke 18:27.) As he puts it, “I listened attentively, but the new doctrine did not appeal to me.” Why did not the concept of what God had promised “not appeal” to him?

Here is God’s promise: “*Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.*” ^{Isa 52:8}

Here is what Jesus prayed for:

“*That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*” ^{Jn 17:21} Here is the standard that Paul insisted upon to the Corinthians congregation, labeling their divisions as wrong, unacceptable, and the “yet” result of carnality.

“*Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.... Is Christ divided?... For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?*” ^{1 Cor 1:10,13; 3:3-4}

Although the Corinthian congregation, as

a whole, did not have the blessed unifying experience, being *yet* carnal, we can see that the ministry that labored with them to bring them to the unity standard *were themselves seeing eye to eye*. They were not divided; they were not in denominations; they were *not* carnal; they had been purified so that they could see God, and were in complete unity with Him and with each other. The promise of God had been fulfilled in them, and they were laboring to see it fulfilled in the divided brethren. A loss of confidence in God would have put them on the same ground as Mr. Shelhamer.

Mr. Shelhamer did not feel the appeal of above-the-norm-of-human-unity in Christ Jesus because he enshrined the concept of all men grabbing their hoes as seemed best to them. To him, it was and is normal for men to walk as men (1 Cor. 3:3). But for Jesus, it is the standard of the New Testament for widely-different men to have fellowship together with Christ and *with each other* exactly as the fellowship between Jesus the Son and God the Father (Jn. 17:21-23).

But let us now the apply a simile from family life. The “right” to take up my own hoe is similar to a child setting up a government “as seems best to them,” under which they would conduct themselves. To do such

To him, it was and is normal for men to walk as men (1 Corinthians 3:3). But for Jesus, it is the standard of the New Testament for widely-different men to have fellowship together with Christ and with each other exactly as the fellowship between Jesus the Son and God the Father.
(John 17:21-23)

a thing would be to disregard the government of the adult parents of the home. Such an invention would rightly be evaluated as **a rival government—the second of two masters**. Submission to the only authorized and appropriate government of the home would mean abandonment of all other governments. The very existence of other governments speaks very eloquently, and the message of the illegal and unauthorized

governing attempt is very disrespectful. At the very least, the attempt to create another government proclaims dissatisfaction with the parental rule. How forcibly the Word of God addresses this concept: “*For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works.... Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.*” ^{Heb 4:10-11} Instead of doing-as-seems-best-to-us, the Bible directs us to **cease** from our own works—and to enter into His rest.

It has been and yet is the effort of our adversary to set up and extol a *rival* to pure and exclusive love for God, and so he works hard to substitute a man-made focal point for Christian love and effort, namely, “my church,” also known as “my group.” And many Christians, who genuinely love God to an extent, divide their love for God with love for a group, while excusing themselves with the thought that the group is for God, therefore loving the group is the same as loving God—though the group is actually the product of the efforts of men, disciplined and adjusted by people as they see best. And to further blur the distinction between the works of the hands of men and the work of God, it is claimed that there is nothing but the works of the hands of

men (supposedly even God’s church is a sect, according to Mr. Shelhamer), and that God is pleased to work in this way. But Christ said, “*Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*” ^{Mt 16:18} Because Jesus addressed this truth to Peter and the other disciples, the Rock upon which He builds His church has been falsely regarded as Peter. The greatest of the Christian sects (heresies), the Roman Catholic Church, thus justifies a false claim that Peter was the first pope. But *Peter* means “a piece of rock.” In effect, Jesus was saying, “You, Peter, are just a little stone, but I am building My church upon this Rock—the Rock revealed not by flesh and blood.” Furthermore, “*I, Jesus, am building and will build My church.*” In this way, we see that the harmony of Mt. 16:18 and Dan. 2:44 is perfect and non-contradictory. To grasp

the harmony of Mt. 16:18 and Dan. 2:44 is perfect and non-contradictory. To grasp

this work of Christ—His church—and to become a vessel unto honor in the same is accomplished through this description: **he has ceased from his own works to enter into the rest of God.**

The Right Name, or Kept in His Name?

Now this blurring of the line of distinction between what-is-of-God and what-is-of-men is essential to E. Shelhamer's argument. We quote from him again:

"But," says one, "we do not have any such name as Presbyterians, Methodist, or Free Methodist. We are 'Christians,' we are 'saints.'" Well, it is not the name that makes the sect necessarily. You may renounce all the names to which you refer, and still you may be a sect. We call a horse a horse. It is not the name that makes the animal what it is. A flock of geese is a flock, whether you call it a flock or not. Your sect is a sect, whether you call it a sect or not. You may not give it a name, but that does not destroy the sect quality.
—*Ibid.*

We would certainly agree that the significant difference is not just in the name—it goes further than that. If my name is Smith (a common English-language name), and I meet some woman who is named "Mrs. Smith," it is plain that she is not my wife. There is more to being a wife than the name; yet the name is important. (Would I introduce my wife as "Mrs. Jones?") The crucial question with husband and wife is: **Are they "no more twain, but one flesh"?** ^{Mk. 10:7-8} The crucial question with respect to a congregation is: **What is the sect quality?** And to that end, the Bible tells us Christ is married to the church that

He has built and is building. "*He that hath the bride is the bridegroom.*" ^{Jn 3:29} "*Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.*" ^{Rom 7:4} "*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} (Israel after the flesh is a type of Israel after the Spirit.) It is plain from Eph. 5:23-32 that Christ is the husband of the church: "*For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.... This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*" Furthermore, we gladly testify that Jesus Christ is not a church bigamist, but has only one wife. In prophecy, she was described thus: "*My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother.*" ^{Song 6:9} This is the **non-sect quality**. It is a uniqueness that arises from the solemn reality that **God has only created one church**. Just one. Not two or more—**just one**. And He is married to just one. Jesus Christ is not a church adulterer; He is married to the one and only "**church of the Firstborn.**" ^{Heb 12:23}

So what is the sect quality? "*And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.*" ^{Isa 4:1} In Shelhamer's day, and in ours, there were sects ("women") who claimed marriage to Christ ("*shall take hold of one Man*"); but it is evident from the prophecy that they were not submitted to Him, not one with Him—indeed, they were and are *independent* of Him, on their own. There have been groups who called themselves by the Father's name (the *ekklesia* of

The Bride of Christ is more than a woman among women. She is uniquely His, and He is uniquely hers. They have left all other bodies and spirits for each other and are one, even as God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son are one.

God), but they are **not one with Jesus**. "*Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name.*" ^{Jn 17:11-12} The name is important, but the oneness with God and with each other is of first importance. We will say it in this way: The Bride of Christ is more than a woman among women. She is uniquely His,

and He is uniquely hers. They have left all other bodies and spirits for each other and are one, even as God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son are one. She is known by the name of her Husband's Father, the one and only Church of God.

"In heaven and earth is no other; Her Builder and Maker is God."

Do Men's Church Organizations Divide God's People?

Let us take a closer look at the government and manner in which God has organized His church, as compared with the way men organize and govern their churches. Mr. Shelhamer writes:

"But," enquires one, "do not these church organizations make divisions among the people of God?" We reply, nothing can divide two of God's saints unless one or both of them backslide.
—*Ibid.*

"*For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?... For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?"* ^{1 Cor 1:11-13; 3:3-4} Here is where the Word of God brands the teaching of E. E. Shelhamer as false. Here is a picture of children of God, not backslidden, still feeding on milk, yet unable to bear stronger food, *who*

are divided. And right with that state of things, we see an *undivided ministry* laboring hard with them to be cleansed from the causes of their division and be one in Christ, seeing eye to eye, having the same judgment, speaking the same thing (1:10). Here is a Bible definition of undivided. By this Bible standard, many of God's saints *are* divided from each other, in spite of Mr. Shelhamer's denial of the fact.

Do you hear the Bible rebuke in this? Can you see the clash between Paul and Shelhamer? The lack of affinity between him and the ministers of the one true church, *“the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.”* ^{Heb 8:2} There is a denial of fact in Mr. Shelhamer’s statement, “Nothing can divide two of God’s saints unless one or both of them backslide.” There are things that **do divide** God’s saints from each other, and these things need to be faced, the root causes dealt with, until it can be truthfully said that the divided ones are **no longer yet carnal**. If I deny it is happening, then surely there will be no serious attempt, such as Brother Paul’s, to deal with the problem.

Is It Possible to Leave Sectism?

But let us sample Mr. Shelhamer’s unbelief some more:

There it is, brother, in a nutshell. It is easier to say put away divisions and schisms, than it is to get it done. And if all sects would obey your command to “come out,” and be “one,” we would simply be one unorganized sect, with the same divisions and schisms as before, instead of several sects. So, all there is of it, there are different understandings of the Bible, that make different sects, and the come-outer simply offers another understanding, thus forming an unorganized sect. So, disorganizing would not destroy divisions.

—*Ibid.* (emphasis added)

It is plain from this sample of Mr. Shelhamer’s thoughts that he **saw nothing of God’s cleansing of His saints that takes the contention for our own way of reasoning out of us and subdues us to Himself**. Mr. Shelhamer looks at the entire things through the eyes of mere human ability. If that is all that there were available, then all of us would have to agree with Mr. Shelhamer. But God has a cleansing for the church (Eph. 5:26-27). He has a cleansing for the sinner to put him in His church

(Jas. 4:8). He has a heart purification for the double-minded child of God to lay the foundation in that heart for how he ought to behave himself *“in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”* ^{1 Tim 3:15} The fact

The fact is, brother or sister, that God is not only able to take you out of a church of men, He is able to take all the churches of men out of you.

is, brother or sister, that God is not only able to take you out of a church of men, **He is able to take all the churches of men out of you**. God is able to completely spoil you for anything but His guidance, His Word, His interpretation of that Word, and to render you in such an inward condition that you will not vaunt yourself, but complete-

ly and absolutely trust Him to take care of all problems and needs. God will give you something that will keep you from looking to man, especially yourself or whoever you might feel naturally drawn to, and that will keep you looking to God alone through everything. Before the disciples received this operation of divine grace in their hearts, they argued and reasoned about which of them was the most spiritual, *“the greatest,”* but **praise God!** we read no more of that kind of activity among them after the upper room dying and purging.

Let us return to the garden: once I have seen (and it takes God’s eye surgery in my heart for me to see like this, Mt. 6:22) the great superiority of how God cultivates His garden and deals with the challenges to His crops, I am thoroughly disenchanted with my hoe, with your hoe, and with everyone else’s hoes. I just want God to work in the way that He sees best. Yea, then I can say with the Bible, *“Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity.”* ^{Psa 39:5} *“For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.”* ^{Php 3:3} *“The flesh profiteth nothing.”* ^{Jn 6:63} *“That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.”* ^{1 Cor 3:5}

—*To be continued, further examining this rejection of “Come-out-ism,” while describing the results of true obedience to the biblical “come out” message.* ➤

How Great is Your God?



Do you find yourself weighed by discouragement, stressed by circumstances, fearful of failure, or critical of others? Then your idea of “God” is not great enough. It has been said that no one rises higher than their image of God. Do you want to go higher? Soar in the sunlight above every cloud? Rejoice always? Dwell in the peace that passes understanding? Then acquaint yourself fully with the God of the Bible.

Don’t stand on the outskirts or wade around the edge. Joy and peace don’t come to the wary and unbelieving, because God is not known by the reasoning mind. He is all-consuming and infinitely more than we can ever comprehend. Yet He has made it possible for us to know Him personally and intimately, by that simple heart-clasp called “faith.”

“Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee.” Job 22:21 Do you know the God that is good? Have you thought on His holiness recently? Are you trusting in His love and purposes right now? Are you embracing His promises as your own? Is He a God of light to you, where no darkness can stand in His presence? To hold any other image in our heart does more than limit the Almighty. It is offensive to His character and degrading of His holiness and should be called for what it is—idolatry.

If God is all that He has revealed Himself to be—through His creation, His Word, and His Son—then it is serious to underestimate Him. It will be to our eternal loss. Dear one, let us seek to know God as He is. Not by some affiliation or discipline, but in the depth of our innermost being. Because you need Him. Because He created you for Himself. Jesus said, “Abide in Me and I in you.” Can it get more personal than that? Seek to know God today and experience His power and glory for yourself. ➤

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