

# THE WORD OF TRUTH

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

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

## SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL

### FLEEING TO HIDE

*"I flee unto Tee to hide me . . ." — Psa. 143:9*

When our enemies pursue us relentlessly, as often they do, we sometimes are brought very low, unable to fight against or resist them. We are *not always strong*, able to launch effective offensives and present formidable resistance. There are times, distasteful as they may be, when we seek a hiding place, when retreat is precious and solitude inviting. It is not that we are cowardly during such times - that is an improper evaluation of the case. It is that we have been "pressed beyond measure" (II Cor. 1:8); i.e., any further contact with the enemy is simply beyond our perceptible degree of strength and ability. It is no shame during such times to seek a hiding place; to crave for obscurity from the face of your enemies. For believers, there is, in the Lord, a "covert" for times of storm (Isa. 32:2), and a "Rock" that is higher than our own persons and power (Psa. 61:2). His person is a "Tower" into which the righteous run and are safe (Prov. 18:10) David hid from Saul (I Sam 20:24), Elijah hid from Jezebel (I Kgs. 19:1-4), and the disciples from the Jews (John 20:19). There were also times when the Lord left the multitudes, and hid Himself (Jno. 8:59) that He might receive strength from uninterrupted communion with the Father. To emulate our Savior in such cases is wise, for many a young novice and zealot, failing to do this, have eventually left their first love, unable to stand the incessant pressures of worldly contacts.

What does it mean to flee unto the Lord to hide us? Certainly this is not a synonym for cowardice. God forbid! Nor does this speak of mere abstract retreat. *It is going from something to someone; not leaving a state of activity for one of inactivity, but rather it is but a change in the type of activity - input instead of output!* To effectively wage war against the "principalities and powers" (Eph. 6:12) against which we wrestle, our strength must be "renewed" (Isa. 40:31) and our minds "renewed" (Rom. 12:2). This may be experienced only in the Lord; i.e., only in a consciousness of His presence. *This does not always come easy; it is not always a trite thing to experience the presence of the Lord in your heart; to know that sweetness of fellowship that comes from spiritual intimacy with Him.* Some of the departed spirits spoke of "practicing the presence of God." By this they meant living in an awareness of God; enjoying the interplay of His mind and thoughts with ours. *There, in His Person, ravished by His glory and preoccupied with His Person, we become inaccessible to our enemies.* It is even as the "sweet Psalmist of Israel" asserted; "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies" (Psa. 23:5). *When we flee to the Lord, we are capitalizing on the limitations of our enemies.* Beyond the sphere of flesh and blood they cannot go. Praise the Lord! When we are in the "heavenly places" (Eph. 2:6) they cannot really touch us - we are beyond their scope. While they can "destroy

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## The Word of Truth

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the body", after that "they can do nothing" (Luke 12:4). **If, therefore, I am transported in my spirit beyond the confinement of the flesh (Rom. 8:9), I am gloriously safe — involved in an intimacy with my Father that cannot possibly be severed or interrupted by those inhabitants of the earth's terrain.**

To be hid by and in God, of course, does not speak of **noticeable** obscurity, but of spiritual **protection**; it speaks of the fortification of the "inner man" (Eph. 3:16). In our spirits we are given to sense the Lord, to know His favor and blessing. In that knowledge we are truly safe, having "clean escaped the pollutions that are in the world" (II Pet. 2:20), as well as the "corruption that is in the world through lusts" (II Pet. 1:4). That is the sort of hiding that we seek in the Lord — **the hiding of the spirit through absorption with the Face of the Lord.** When we ask the Lord to hide us, we are really imploring Him to show His face, to give us to realize the benefit of His satisfying presence (Psa. 63:5; 145:16; 107:9). All of this, of course, comes by faith.

Flee then, weary pilgrim, to the Lord. Make Him your "hiding place" (Psa. 32:7; 119:114). **Enthralled with Him your enemies shall seem insignificantly small and vulnerable.** There, within the sphere of spiritual illumination and in the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God" (II Cor. 4:6) we are "hid" — yea, "hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3). **Our minds and hearts are filled with reality, eternal verities are upon the soul, and the things of this life are relegated to the inferior position that they occupy.** While in that frame of spirit — one of great exaltation and delight — unspeakable power is asserted over our enemies. They are unable to gain access to our real persons, and though they buffet our outward man, the inner man continues to be renewed in strength day by day (II Cor. 4:15). This is what enabled the martyrs of old to glorify the Lord in their deaths. Their enemies really had no access to them. Thus did they yield up their lives, giving glory to the Father through Christ Jesus and in the Spirit. Undaunted by the limitations of their

flesh, the saints of old experienced the fuller freedom of the spirit which enabled them to fly high above the terrestrial. They had, in reality, fled to God to hide them.

However, **apart from this heart vision, your strength will wane, your courage slaken, and your zeal abate.** All too often have I witnessed this in the brethren of our Lord. Feebly struggling in the energy of their flesh, and void of a sense of the Lord's presence upon their heart they are so viciously assailed by the enemy of their soul that they actually bring disgrace upon the Lord Jesus who bought them. O, that they had the grace to **flee** from their enemies, from the things that vex them so, unto the Lord God. Jesus left the multitudes, Paul went to Arabia, and Moses fled from before the face of Pharaoh. Why ought you to be any different? Why should you wrestle beyond your strength and lose the battle. It is not better to gain strength of heart and soul with God that you may be able to stand in the evil day? Get that invigorating glimpse of the Monarch of creation. **He is not always seen in the heat of the battle, and when He is not, it is always better to flee from the enemies in order to see Him rather than forfeit both His Presence and the battle.**

May the God of all grace grant you the grace to determine to glorify Him in this matter.

—o—

If I can redeem myself, then I am obligated to redeem all other men also!

### BABBLINGS FROM BABYLON'S BULLETINS

#### BABBLE #5

"Thinking about the traditional red and green of the Christmas season, we are tempted to say that we need much more green to cover up the year-end red, but it really isn't a laughing matter. How does one say 'Help! We really need financial help!' without appearing melodramatic? God is blessing the college in every way - finances included - but expenses are surpassing income by a large margin."

Taken from  
GOSPEL LOG  
Puget Sound College of the Bible

#### BABBLE #6

"The Pentecostal movement is not an innovation . . . It is a renewal indeed, but a renewal of that which Acts of the Apostles show us taking place from the beginning. It is a renewal that seems to have come in answer to the prayer of Pope John: 'May the Divine Spirit deign to answer in a most comforting manner that prayer that rises daily to Him from every corner of the earth: 'Renew your wonders in our time, as though for a new Pentecost.'"

Taken from  
TESTIMONY  
written by Edward D. O'Connor, C.S.C.



## Faith And Salvation

The interrogation "What must I do to be saved"?, appears one time in the Scriptures, and consequently has but one answer. The wide variety of answers to this question that have been supplied by Babylon evince at least two things; (1. Ignorance of the true nature of salvation. (2. Ignorance of the true nature of believing. In short, a failure to comprehend the "manner of the Kingdom" or to apprehend "that for which we are apprehended" (Phi. 3:12-13), results in the complete garbling of theology. **One that is not conversant with the real "Kingdom of God" (Jno. 3:3, 5) is really unable to perceive or pronounce upon the sayings of Scripture.** Participation in the Godhead (Matt. 28:18-20; Num. 6:25; I Cor. 16:23) is absolutely essential to the apprehension of Truth. Furthermore, there are few, if, indeed, any, truths as vital and comprehensive as faith and salvation. Both issue forth from the Father (Eph. 2:8-9) and are sure evidences of His favor. Those possessed of unilluminated minds do us no service by opening their mouths, however, on these exceeding precious subjects. "Let all the earth keep silence before me" (Hab. 2:20)! — that is God's Word to very soul outside of the circumference of Divine intimacy. Were every such individual to adhere to this admonition, the variety of answers concerning the procurement of salvation would at once diminish, and we would be left alone with the blessed sound; "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31). Whatever may be said of that verse of Scripture by certain segments of Babylon today in attempts to explain it away, you may rest assured that it was good news to the hungry hearts of Cornelius and his household.

### The Nature of Faith

**Believing involves the impression of the reality of Christ and His vicarious work upon the heart and mind.** Belief transcends reason, and is not arrived at through the rationalizing process. It is found to be in the heart when the invisible Christ (I Tim. 1:17), insensible, intangible, and "dwelling in light which no man can approach unto" (I Tim. 6:16) is perceived with the understanding; when the unquestionable conviction of His reality pervades and dominates the spirit of man, which is "the candle of the Lord" (Prov. 20:27). **Actually, the possession of faith constitutes the illumination of the spirit, or the "lighting of your candle" (Psa. 18:28).** The implications of our Lord's Saviorhood are seen, and a definite association is made between Him, His work, myself and my condition. It is as though the obscuring veil of heaven had been pulled aside for the heart; as though all natural inabilities restrain and hinder the understanding of heavenly things were at once overcome and dissipated. Now, there bursts upon the heart a totally new world, governed and controlled by One that is in active possession of "all power in heaven and earth" (Matt. 28:18). **He is seen as He that has so thoroughly satisfied the God Whom I have so grievously offended that I now have been forgiven all of my sins.** The sight is "rather glorious" (II Cor. 3:8) and most liberating to the spirit. In its splendor our own wretchedness is seen, together with God's immutable holiness. Within the heart,

transported, as it were, out of the flesh and into the eternal order, we are given to know matters that were settled before the foundation of the world. I am brought to see the real issues that concern me. They are not mundane, (nor are they primarily sensual. They rather have to do with my acceptability with the Monarch of creation Who alone is able to "save and to destroy" (Js. 4:12). Christ Jesus is seen as God's Lamb and my Savior. He is witnessed as willing and sufficient to remove me from servitude to sin, which I now hate. I see Him urging me into the very presence of God; convincing me that though a most grievous and undeserving rebel, I may receive the atonement which has **already** been made; i.e., that I may consciously appropriate and enjoy it. What has been done by our Lord has been "done forever" (Eccl. 3:14). It is eternal in its plan, scope, and application — nothing can be put to it or taken from it. **My vision never effects the purpose of God; it never truly activates His counsels, but rather brings them to my heart — or rather, lifts my spirits into their sphere of operation. When I am urged and constrained effectually to those matters — when I am enjoyably, peaceably, and righteously transported into such realities, perceiving them without a doubt, I AM BELIEVING.** That is what truly saves me; i.e., rescues me from the world of sin and deception in which I willingly and complacently sit by nature. Without that vision I perish (Prov. 29:18) because I remain in bondage to the elemental spirits.

It can at once be seen that this "work" of believing (John 6:29) calls for Divine intervention; for an omnipotent fiat of power. We are dealing with an unseen Savior, an unseen world, an unseen atonement and salvation. Not only are they, however, unseen, but they are of another world — of another order. They are not the same specie as the creation. Consequently, they are imperceptible to the physical senses, and unable to be grasped with the bald human intellect. In essence, the truth which I appropriate is eternal — it has no real beginning, nor will it ever have an ending; praise the Lord! It is called the "eternal purpose" (Eph. 3:11) and is as transcendent to human concept: and analyses as the heavens are above the earth. **By nature I am possessed of no faculty — either seen or unseen — which is capable of gathering these things into my heart, or even of enabling me to be aware that they exist.** I cannot appeal to reason — it is not sufficient. **My rationalizing processes are applicable only to things in the natural order** — they are geared alone for such as that. When, however, we touch upon salvation, we are beyond the scope of rationalization. Human reason alone cannot discover God's love for rebels, free grace for transgressors, nor consolation and good hope for the guilty. You cannot rationalize justification, sanctification, or glorification. The wooings of the heart Godward and away from the environment in which it has willingly resided, the very real conviction of sin against an invisible God, the yearnings for that which is beyond the material, which is not compatible with but above our fleshly nature — these are not the productions of a philosophical search

or mere human rationalization. A man would be a fool to contend for such things! Yet, they are not all figmentary or imaginative. They are the effects and evidence of believing. There is no question in the minds of those possessing such faith of its value — it is “like **precious** faith” (II Pet. 1:1). Truly it is “**given**” (Rom. 12:3) of God; and how greatly is it to be treasured (I Pet. 1:6-7), as well as “kept” (II Tim. 4:7). **Enablement** to believe is a weak way of putting it, and yet I suppose that some find this sort of language necessary. The unvarnished truth is that “faith **COMETH . . .**” (Rom. 10:17), and that it is obtained” (II Pet. 1:1). However, such words must, indeed, be further expounded.

To say that faith comes from God, and yet to urge upon men to “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ” may appear incongruous to the sophist. But, that is only because his theology is restrictive to His spirit — which is a strong reason for abandoning it! But such apparently divers statements perfectly comport with reality, and are compatible with revelation. **It has pleased the Lord to bestow benefits in the midst of effort — that is one of the means that He has graciously employed.** This was demonstrated in our Lord’s miracles upon the earth, which were a prefigurement of the greater miracle of faith in men’s hearts. The notion that the Lord drops down benefits apart from any involvement of the faculties of man is something less than tenable. We have no such example in Scripture. **The blessings of grace are always enjoyed through the involvement of the participant in God’s will.** There are literally hundreds of examples that could be cited in support of this proposition — though it seems somewhat obnoxious to my spirit to suppose that any truthful proposition needs support. Oh that men were more disposed toward the love of the truth, that they might embrace the realities of the Kingdom apart from much argumentation and dispute. Notwithstanding, it has pleased the Lord for such not to be the case; and therefore to acknowledge His wisdom, together with our ignorance, and engage in the proof for which so many hearts search, I will bring to your attention one notable example — one that is by no means disputed among believers, and therefore one that will form a good ground for a mutual faith. It is the wonderful healing of the man taken with palsy found in Matthew the ninth chapter. Here is an account that warms the heart and refreshes the spirit, as we behold our Lord bringing to naught the powers of darkness. There is a single truth which I wish to extract here; one that is vital to a proper comprehension of the Kingdom of God: **The Lord employs exhortations and admonitions to facilitate His glorious working in mankind.** You will recall this account, no doubt. In recounting it Mark tells how that four men of faith brought Him to the Lord, only to find the crowds impassable. Not discouraged, however, by the delimita, they went up to the roof of the house, and removing a portion of it, let their subject down into the presence of the Savior. Beholding their faith, the Lord cried out; “Son, thy sins be forgiven thee” (Mark 2:5). After a confrontation with the legalists of His day,

the Lord Jesus said to the man sick with palsy; “Arise, take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house” (Mark 2:11). Now, there is no question that the man possessed no innate powers that would enable him to arise and walk. He had been on a pallet of affliction long enough to lose any confidence in natural ability. Yet, dispatched with the Word of the Lord came a wondrous power that enabled him to rise above the infirmities of the flesh and the natural proclivities of his infirm body. What did he do? “And **immediately**, he arose, took up his bed, and went forth before them all” (Mark 2:12). While this account may seem to have no bearing upon our discussion, permit me to indulge in a few more remarks concerning it.

Here, **means** were used to accomplish the purpose of God. Jesus did not grab him and stand him up; he did not use some mystical power to cause him to rise against his will and apart from the employment of his faculties. No! He commanded him to rise himself, to deliberately take up his bed, and to forthright go to his house. The man did that, thus evincing his reception of the power of our Lord. It is somewhat like the case of the raising of Lazarus, a man dead for over three days. Not recognizing the extreme restrictions of our contemporary theology, our Lord stepped to the mouth of that tomb wherein lay his friend, Lazarus. He did not go inside and come forth carrying Lazarus, nor did he cause the body to come floating out of the tomb mysteriously. He called out, “Lazarus, come forth” (Jno. 11:43). At the sound of the voice of our Lord, Lazarus came forth, bearing the grave clothes in which he was buried. You must see here, dear reader, that our Lord used means — **He, by Omnipotent power, summoned a dead man, as He did earlier a palsied man, into action with His Word; just like He called the worlds into existence** (Gen. 1:1ff). Now, these things are acknowledged by those who have received the love of the Truth; and yet there is a large segment of Christendom that objects to us calling upon men to believe, declaring that all such admonitions are pointless. “How can a dead sinner respond to the message of the Gospel; to the admonition to believe”?, they theologially question. In turn, we reply; How can a palsied man arise, take up his bed and walk at the Word of the Lord; or how can a man dead for three days step forth out of a tomb at a word? You must answer those questions, oh objector to these things, for they bear heavily upon your stilted theology. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” is not merely an affirmation of human ingenuity! **It is a Divine word, and unctioned with the Spirit of the most high, it can summon the deadeast of sinners to life just as surely as “Lazarus come forth” brought a completely dead and incapacitated man from the grave.** Faith comes through the hearing of the word, like life came to Lazarus through the hearing of Christ’s word, and dexterity of limb came to the palsied at the word of the Lord. It is just that simple. The fact that some people do not respond favorably to the admonition to believe has no real bearing on the case. When the Lord so pleases, He will attend our words with



power, and they shall accomplish the impossible. Because we are not thoroughly cognizant of His purpose, however, we are not to forbear urging men to believe. The Gospel must be preached to "every creature" (Mark 16:16). Men are admonished to "believe" many times in the Word — all men (Mark 1:15; Jno. 10:38; 12:36; 14:11). Those that are "ordained to eternal life" do believe (Acts 13:48), and in hope we labor and admonish, and urge upon men to believe.

**It may be seen, therefore, that faith, by its nature, is the very apprehension of the truth; the perception of reality as it is in Christ Jesus.** That perception comes through the means of God's Word being brought to bear upon the mind and conscience. **Once the vision of truth rests upon man's spirit, inactivity becomes obsolete and repulsive;** it is the least of his problems. **As long as faith is strong, work will be zealous, and obedience will be the fundamental activity.** Men ought not, therefore, to fear that the admonition "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" obviates obedience. Such responses to these things merely evince ignorance of the Kingdom of God.

### The Nature of Salvation

When once the nature of salvation is comprehended, the notion that it can be appropriated by works and activities of the flesh is seen to be the folly that it really is. Salvation is deliverance from a state of hopelessness, for before our union with Christ we were "without God and without hope in this world" (Eph. 2:12). In reality, then, salvation is deliverance from an impossible situation.

To be saved from sin is no small matter. We were "shapen in iniquity" (Psa. 51:5), and "for vain would be wise, though born like a wild ass's colt" (Job 11:12). Endowed from birth with a very definite proclivity towards that which dishonors and displeases the Lord, we found our way to be "froward and strange" (Prov. 21:8). "All have sinned and come (active tense) short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23), apart from Christ Jesus, steadily progressing farther and farther away from "the Father of lights." **Furthermore, "the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God" (I Cor. 2:14); he has no capacity for truth, no ability to perceive or embrace it, and not one whit of an appetite for it.** He is carnally minded, and thus "dead" (Rom. 8:6). Before we were illuminated, we were "alienated and enemies in our minds by wicked works" (Col. 1:21), "dead in our sins" (Col. 2:13). Peter further described us as "foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another" (Titus 3:3). **In this situation of deadness, we were endowed with no faculty by nature that would make our sin obnoxious to us.** Thus, we were rendered "without hope in the world" (Eph. 2:12). Those that insist upon salvation by works must recognize this — that not only is man incapable of working or accomplishing his own salvation, **he is totally void of any desire to do so.** He has no interest in eternal things, and no appetite for the Lord God. Rooted and grounded to the earth, man sits in squalor by nature, not knowing that it is squalor. Before he can ever begin to participate in truth, his conscience must

first be awakened to his eternal jeopardy. This cannot be done by mere philosophical reasonings. The carnal curiosity may well be tantalized in that way, but no real effect is wrought upon the heart. **Salvation is not a mere change of mind, a new direction of interest, or a refinement of observable character and deportment.** It is a very real involvement with Deity; an immeshment of our spirit with His Spirit (I Cor. 6:17). For man to make a horizontal move socially, economically, etc., is not difficult to conceive. But for him to make a vertical move, to rise beyond the natural boundaries set for man — to be elevated above the earth order — **that is a work for God!** Thus do we read, "Salvation is of the Lord" (Psa. 3:8), and again, "God is working salvation in the midst of the earth" (Psa. 74:12).

If the Lord did not make the first and initial move toward any given person, that person would "die in his sins" (Jno. 8:21, 24), just as surely as Israel would have remained in Egypt to this day had the Lord not moved them out through a variety of circumstances and situations (Exodus 1:8-2:23). **Their discontent with their bondage was commensurate with the preparations of the Lord.** Now, if a person can achieve salvation by human works, then Israel could have come out of Egypt under its own volition without the ten plagues, Moses, the blood of the passover lamb, the cloud by day, or the pillar of fire by night. "Well", says the sophist, "We know the case of Israel well. Of course it took Divine intervention." We reply that we would to God they understood salvation in Christ Jesus just one half as well as they **seem to** understand Israel coming out of Egypt.

The many passages of Scripture concerning salvation sets forth its high and lofty nature. **All of the haggling over the means of obtaining salvation only come forth because of the utter failure to recognize its magnitude.** Were the ingenious minds of men devoted more to comprehending the immensity of the task of saving mortal man (I speak after the manner of men), there would be no time for religious argumentation against the plain statements of the Lord. For instance, salvation is equated with "coming to a knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. 2:4), i.e., coming into a spiritual familiarity with things that are beyond the most distant horizon of human imagination and concept. Further, salvation is also set forth as issuing forth in the "obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thess. 2:14); i.e., it shall be consummated in our **total** conformity to the Lord Himself. It is also pictured as deliverance from "this present evil world" (Gal. 1:4), i.e., from its contamination and influence; from its delusion and its blinding ways. It is also set forth as a "quickenings" of those dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1); the enlivenment of the spirit Godward from a state of total and complete ignorance of God. This should suffice to set forth the nature of salvation; it is simply transcendent to anything that the natural man can comprehend, to say nothing of his inability to accomplish it.

### Conclusion

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, **and thy house.**" How pleasant it

is to rehearse it to our hearts, for it is as true today for you as it was when first you believed. **The message is simply that as we lay hold of reality in our spirits we are delivered from all that is superfluous and meaningless; from sin and its heinous rebellion against the most High, from its infection and slavery!** Jesus put it this way in another place; "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32, 36). **Salvation, in a very real sense, is freedom; and faith is knowing the truth.** Does all of this obviate obedience? God forbid. It rather brings it properly into the picture. **Obedience is the offspring of faith; it is the Divinely appointed means whereby faith is meant to express itself.** If you fear that believing Acts 16:31 will make it impossible for you to instruct others in the matter of obedience, then forever purge your mind of that nonsense. It did not inhibit Paul, and it will not inhibit you! **The great project of the heart is to believe God; then it is ready and sensitive to obey!**

Let all of the people of God receive the truth of faith and of salvation, for therein is much joy and consolation to be found. Make not faith a substitute for obedience in an attempt to justify spiritual slothfulness, but rather believe that you might be joyously inclined to obey the Lord. Rich promises are given to them that "obey Him", as those that believe will know. **But if a man cannot believe God, he cannot truly obey Him, for obedience is the response of faith to the command of our Father which is in heaven through Christ Jesus the Lord, and by the Spirit of God.**

Men must realize that there is sufficient inherent perverseness in them as to constrain them to commit the grossest sins and be guilty of the greatest possible irrationality. There needs to be no outside influence, spiritual or human, to irresistably force such things, though often these are contributing factors. Yet, if perverse instruction leads men away, it is only because there is a perverseness in man to which such debauchery can appeal.

There is nothing lower than a man without God and without hope in this present world.

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There is fundamentalism, and there is true fundamentalism. Today, there is a certain sect of professed Christendom, that goes under the heading of "Fundamentalists." So strong is this schism that the embracement of its very identification name of "Fundamentalist" is made a point of fellowship. Often, whether or not the question of your faith is ever raised or not, or whether or not you are seeking a city which hath foundations is asked, the question, "Are you a fundamentalist?" is asked. Exactly what is meant by this interrogation, we are not altogether sure. I suppose that they are asking whether or not we subscribe to the fundamentals of the faith — i.e., the fundamentals which they have arbitrarily assigned and classified. It is interesting, in the face of such confusion, to see what sort of doctrines, or truths, that the Apostles felt were "fundamental". There is widespread disagreement on those matters, even among the "fundamentalist" camp. Let us examine them briefly with a mind to discern whether or not these still remain fundamental in the minds of professed believers.

They are found in Ephesians 4:4-6, and they are set forth as matters that make possible the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." **Failure to receive these matters into the heart with joy will result in the disruption of real fellowship, for unity is not possible apart from the embracement of these things in truth.** Note them well; they all speak of singularity — and that is the first step to unity; a realization of the singularity of spiritual things. (1. "One body". (2. "One Spirit". (3. "One hope". (4. "One Lord". (5. "One faith". (6. "One baptism". (7. "One God and Father". Notice that there is no mentioning of the inspiration of the Scriptures or the virgin birth of our Lord. Does this mean that Paul did not subscribe to these matters, or that we are deriding them? God forbid such foolish thoughts! It is because these are matters which, if not believed, condemn a man, and send him to perdition. There need be no more discussions of fellowship when those are blatantly denounced. Rather than mountain peaks in the faith, they are the foothills which bring us to the mountain range itself. **Place undue emphasis upon them, and you will fill your church with carnal people, for it takes no moral or spiritual courage to contend for these things; the intellectual embracement of them does not touch the life, nor compel one to acknowledge sin or strive to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord (II Cor. 7:1).** Thus men haggle over these things because they may do so with a seared conscience. We who have come into the truth of the Lord know these to be true, and there is no question about them. We simply reckon upon these truths and derive the nourishment from them that brings us into personal involvement with God through Christ Jesus the Lord. However, it is not the fact of Christ's birth that we are to emphasize, but the fact of His Lordship! It is not the inspiration of the scriptures that we are to emphasize, but their eternal message! That has a bearing upon your life, upon your motives, upon the direction that your life takes! All of the facets mentioned of Paul in our



text place responsibility — personal responsibility — upon the shoulders of the hearers. **It is their job to maintain the unity of the Spirit; to see to it that they do not interrupt the fusion of hearts into oneness in Christ Jesus.** This they may do only by capitalizing on capitals, to associate their lives with the unchangeable truth of God. See, now, the bearing that they have upon your life.

“One body.” **There is only one fellowship of people that is recognized by God** — that is the group that finds their lives “hid with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3). There are not several churches, numerous denominations, different sects, or anything of the sort! The fundamental truth here is that there is “one body” — just one. My job is to be identified with that body; to let my life be so marked as not to detract from its unity; to live and move and have my being in God so that I may enjoy the fellowship of everyone in that body. As it is written; “They that feared the Lord spake often one with another” (Mal. 3:16-17). Such as that belong to the “one body.” Christ lives in and actuates but one group of people — those that live and walk by faith — no others. **I must narrow my fellowship down — narrow it all the way down to those that are united vitally to Christ Jesus; only to those, for there really are no others.** If they are not a part of my “click”, I must accept them anyway. If those in my church are not “partakers of Christ” (Heb. 3:14), I must reject their fellowship. There is only “one body” — do you see what an implication that has!

“One Spirit”. **There is one source of life; one valid Comforter in Israel** — the Holy Spirit of God. It is He that raised up Christ from the dead (Rom. 1:3); it is He that inspired the Word of God (II Pet. 1:21), and He that guides us into all Truth (John 16:13). He alone applies the redemption of Christ to the heart, illuminates salvation in Christ, and acquaints us with the Father and the Son (I John 2:20, 27). All of the various graces that are supplied the church are wrought and given through means of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 12:4, 9). This rules out intellectualism as a means of appropriating Divine graces; it means that no one, by mere human wisdom and ingenuity, can arrive at the truth as it is in Christ Jesus (Eph. 4:20ff). **If the Holy Spirit does not open our eyes to the truth, we shall never see it.** We must learn dependency upon the Divine, and forever have done with those approaches that leave us resting in man, man’s wisdom, and man’s integrity. They are all insufficient. There is “one Spirit” — one life; one pulsating source of spiritual vitality. Let us with one accord repudiate the meager offerings of flesh and receive the truth of “one Spirit”. We shall soon find the “unity of the Spirit” a blessed reality. **It is resting upon man as a SOURCE that produces so much trouble in the church!**

“One hope of our calling.” There is one blessed aim behind the “work of faith with power” (II Thess. 2:11). God has called us in one Divine purpose — not a multitudinous one! That we might be brought into His presence with “fulness of joy” — that is the aim of it all! To dwell “in the house of the Lord forever” (Psa. 27:4) — that is why we have been “called into the fellowship

of God’s Son” (I Cor. 1:9). It is not in order to the salvation of the world, or the renovation of society with all of its evils, or the erection of a self-sufficient religious organization. It has nothing at all to do with the heavens and the earth which shall “pass away” (Matt. 5:18; I Cor. 7:31; I Jno. 2:17). **The hope of our calling is to root us in heaven, and to uproot us from the earth.** That is the “one hope” to which we have been called! Let believers unite on that, and they will be united. But as long as some are striving for things of earth and others for things of heaven (if there even be such a thing as a believer striving for the things of this world) there can be no unity — **there shall be no unity!** We must ever remember that “hope that is seen is not hope” (Rom. 8:24), and any fulfillment that can be completely **realized upon this earth is not “the hope”, and must be repudiated as such!** Those whose anchor is not in heaven, “within the veil” (Heb. 6:19) can have no real fellowship with us. They are not within the confines of that “one hope”, and thus have disrupted the unity of the Spirit for themselves. Let them come to embrace the hope that “saves” us; the one that produces a great longing in the heart for glory, for heaven and God and Christ; a heart that is filled with discontent and loathing for the world. Ah, there is a soul with which we can experience glorious unity — unity in the “one hope.”

“One Lord.” Can we not unite on that! It is true that in the world there are “Lord’s many” (I Cor. 8:5), but to us there is but one Lord Jesus Christ, and we in Him. He is primarily LORD. That is the first thing that we ascribe to Him when speaking of His glorious Person; “Lord Jesus Christ”, “Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”; “Prince and Savior” — that is how we speak of Him. It is His will that the true worshippers (John 4:23) aspire to fulfill His will alone; yea, it is to be their “meat”. They are not satisfied with the desires of flesh — either their flesh or another’s. Further, they see not two Lord’s in the universe; one evil and one good; **they see but one!** That is a fundamental tenant of “the faith once delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). Jesus Christ the Lord has overcome finally and completely all opposition, having “spoiled principalities and powers, making a show of them openly” (Col. 2:15). When confronted with hardships and perplexities, the saints recall to their minds that there is but “one Lord”, and therein do they derive great comfort.

“One faith.” Ah, there we deal a devastating blow to nominal Christendom, do we not? How often do we hear the question propounded; “What faith are you”? There is only “one faith”; that is all! Humanistic preachers speak of faith in this and faith in that — earthly faith and heavenly faith. But in the face of their meaningless prattlings God declares to our comfort that there is “One Faith”! Praise the Lord — that is enough. **There is only one unseen world of reality — only one that shall not be shaken, but shall “remain” when this world has been dissolved** (Heb. 12:27). **Faith is our connection with that world, and if there is but one unseen world, then there can be**

Oracles? The Apostles saw no difficulty in simply speaking of "baptism" — they saw no need for further explanations, and neither do we. There is, then, but "one baptism", whether that truth can be received or not!

"One God and Father." One God? Why it is necessary to say that? Simply because "in the world there are gods many" (I Cor. 8:5). **The only true God is the One that is revealed to our hearts by Jesus Christ.** It is written; "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we might know Him that is true; and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Christ Jesus. This is the true God and eternal life" (I John 5:20). All other Gods are idols, and John admonishes believers in the next verse; "Finally, little children, keep yourselves from idols" (I John 5:21). There is a difference between a concept of God and God; between a church-oriented tradition of God, and the true and living God. There is only "One God"; He is the "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." His will is Sovereign and unquestionable, and He is in and through all. He dwells in "you all", and is unrivaled in His reign. He is absolutely "above all"; even being proclaimed to be "the Head of Christ" (I Cor. 11:3).

**In all of these things, man is confronted with unquestionable decision!** He must narrow His fellowship down to those that are united with Christ — the "one body." He must aim for one goal, counting all other things but loss and dung — "one hope." He must acknowledge the futility of earthly wisdom and life; One Spirit." He must repudiate His own will and the will of men; "One Lord". He must be humbled by a burial in order to confessed life — "one baptism." He must admit that none are knowledgeable but those that are in contact with the heavenly order; "one faith." And finally, he must receive all things as from God — "One God."

We are admonished to "speak the things that become the sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1). In identifying such things, the apostle mentions; (1. Aged men are to be sober, grave, temperant, sound in the faith, sound in patience, sound in charity. (2. Aged women are to be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things. (3. Young women are to be sober, love their husbands, love their children, be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their husbands. (4. Young men are to be sober minded. (5. Servants are to be obedient to their own masters, pleasing them in all things and not talking back; not pilfering, but being trustworthy in all things (Titus 2:2-10).

**These are matters that show the loveliness of true doctrine.** If they are offensive and all too often they are), it manifests a heart at variance with God. These are the things that truly compliment the doctrine — "sound doctrine." **If they are absent and no protestive objection is raised, it is only proof that a basically unsound doctrine is being taught.** I have personally found this to be a most illuminating test; both when applied to myself and to others. If your teaching — whatever it is — does not demand these things, discard it — **it is false!**

**but one faith — and there is, glory to God!** One "conviction of things hoped for", and one "evidence of things not seen (Heb. 11:1)! **It is not a mere set of creedal statements to which one subscribes.** It is the conviction of things as they are; the persuasion of the heart by the Holy Spirit of a world of things that is totally and completely imperceptible to the natural man. **There is only one faith like that, and all that have it are united.** Labor to maintain that most blessed persuasion and you shall remain united to those of "like precious faith" (II Pet. 1:1-2). This faith does not have multiple divisions; it is "one"! It is not one of a category of classification of faiths — it is "one."

"One baptism." Now there is something that you will rarely, if ever, hear a "fundamentalist" confess. He wants nothing to do with that verse — but it is in the Scriptures; let us believe it!! It is pathetic to see people wrestle with passages like this, trying valiantly to get it out of the way so it will not hinder their church dogma. "One baptism" — i.e., one initiatory rite admitting one into the church. This act is not to be divorced from spiritual union with Christ, however, for we are told that "as many as have been baptized into Christ have **put on Christ** (Gal. 3:27-28). Again, we were "baptized **into His death**" (Rom. 6:3, 4), being "buried with Him" by baptism, "wherein also we are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God" (Col. 2:12). Here our conscience was purged (I Pet. 3: 21), and, coupled with faith, we received the promise of the Lord; "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). There are not two or three baptisms — but "one baptism." I do not know that Paul realized how difficult that would be for professed believers to receive — but I really do not believe he was interested in that. He was proclaiming the truth, regardless of its implications to tradition — bound disciples. This is, then, a fundamental! It is mentioned with the truths of the "one body", "one Spirit", "one hope", "one Lord", "one faith" — that makes it important. Let none be guilty of deriding baptism, or of attempting to explain away its significance to the believer. There are yet some of us that believe the Word of God and find great comfort in knowing that we have been urged of our Lord to emulate Him in "fulfilling all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15). **Neither** ought men to attempt to distinguish between spiritual and "water baptism" — the Lord does not, **why** should men? Who are men that they should introduce new nomenclature into the Divine