

THE WORD OF TRUTH

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

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

SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL

THE SOUL CAST DOWN

"O my God, my soul is cast down within me . . ." - Psalms 42:6

The most wonderful times for the believer are when his soul is lifted up and rejoices (Psa. 35:9); the most sorrowful when his soul is cast down within him. External circumstances and physical possessions of themselves have little bearing upon the moods of the one that keeps his "affection set on things above, and not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:1-3). *It is the "inner man" (Eph. 3:16) and its condition that is the determining factor.* That is why Paul and Silas could sing and rejoice in prison at the midnight hour while in stocks fastened, and their backs covered with strips (Acts 16). The apostles "rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name" (Acts 5:40-42), also exhibiting this quality of inward strength. The rich man of Matthew 19 went away "sorrowing", though he had much possessions. Solomon counted all things vanity, though he possessed them all in superabundance. *We must learn that "godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Tim. 6:6), else we shall forever be in spiritual misery.* To interpret the true cause of depression, anxiety, despair, fear, sorrow, grief, and discouragement is indeed a great advantage! These things come (and I speak now to the believers in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ) when the soul is affected and impressed with various views of reality - and thus "cast down." To avoid such frequent experiences of this order, it is imperative that the soul be fortified and strengthened with might by "God's Spirit" (Eph. 3:16). *So often, because of spiritual ignorance, people attempt to change circumstances, when it is they themselves that require the changing.* We must, by faith, prepare our hearts to enter into fiery furnaces, lion's dens, prisons, and fierce trials of faith. We cannot escape these things, and often they shall cause our souls to be cast down in spite of all effort exerted in the Spirit. *Therefore, time and energy in faith must be expended in fortifying the soul, else we shall suffer needlessly.* The Lord restores the soul - blessed thought (Psa. 23:3), and glorious it is to rely upon that promise. It postulates that *the soul is often in a condition that requires restoration.* Hardly a day passes that the promise is not needful to my own soul. With great joy, I confess the need and the reality of deliverance: "Who delivered us (me) from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us" (II Cor. 1:10). The Lord, however, can also "keep my soul" (Psa. 25:20); i.e., through faith He can cause me to be strengthened so as not to be cast down! Not always is this within His will. Sometimes He wills us to pass through "fiery

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The Word of Truth

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The Inadequacy of a Shallow Religion

The life of the saint is fraught with many snares. Like the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah, they often find themselves in the presence of many "slimepits" and stand in fear of being swallowed up by them (Gen. 14:10). It is for this reason that great watchfulness and sobriety is summoned forth from the godly. They are not to permit frivolity, surfeiting, and general carelessness to characterize their lives. **Depth of life, and an intimate relationship with our Lord is to be sought and maintained with fervor and at all cost.** This is not a game that we saints are involved in; it is a crucial battle; one that will oftentimes wear you out, and drive you almost to despair. We are told that the righteous shall "scarcely be saved" (I Pet. 4:18), thus indicating the great need of establishment in the faith once delivered to the saints. Not knowing "much", or being bereft of understanding in things pertaining to the Kingdom of God is too often painted as the ordinary lot of the "laymen" (as professional religious men are wont to call them) - but that is a dangerous lot which eliminates the knowledge of God, for it is by that medium that we escape the "pollutions" that are in the world through lust (II Pet. 2:20).

It is most lamentable that much of the religion of our day is characterized by a shallowness and lack of depth. While in many "fundamental" camps there is an admirable zeal and fervency, it appears that there is all too little depth of spirit. It is what the Holy Spirit calls: "zeal without knowledge" (Rom. 10:2), and is to be avoided and shunned with great vigor of spirit. **We must remember that simplicity is not necessarily faith, and fervency may not be stimulated by the knowledge of God.** It is to be expected that much of the zeal we see today is fostered by religious organizationalism, and not by a living and vital communion and relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Such is an abomination in the eyes of the Lord, and worthy of damnation, for it has placed the Holy One of Israel in subordination, so far as men are concerned, to institutionalism. Many people who zealously labor for the church are honest to ad-

mit that they live virtually aloof from the Lord - little time is spent in His Word; they have nothing to relate of supplications that have been heard, and their speech belies them, that they have been living in and to the world and the lust thereof. **No matter how flourishing their particular sect may be, such a loose personal relationship with God is not good, and it is fraught with many snares and foolish and hurtful lusts.** We intend to sound the alarm to all to beware of shallow religion - an affiliation that brings you **not** into a deep experience with the Lord, nor gives you a good understanding of His mind. Hear the Word of the Lord, and awake to righteousness. There are more fish in the deep waters my beloved reader, and God has purposely placed them there. Launch into the deep.

In the parable of the Sower, our Lord Jesus made reference to a situation that is seen all about us today. In describing the various results of the spread Word (the "seed of the Kingdom"), He declared: "And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: but when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no depth of earth, it withered away. . . . And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the Word, immediately receive it with gladness; and have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the Word's sake, immediately they are offended" (Mark 4:5-6, 16, 17); "He that receiveth seed into the stony places, the same is he that heareth the Word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the Word, by and by he is offended" (Matt. 13:20-21). It may be seen here that the man referred to is characterized by IMMEDIATE action. He IMMEDIATELY receives the word with joy, and he also IMMEDIATELY is offended because of the Word. **His is a mind of the earth, which has no depth into the things of the Spirit of God.** He is tossed to and fro, and lacks faith - yet there is a time when he apparently receives the Word, and that immediately. Whatever else this may teach us, it instructs us that **many that immediately receive the Word with gladness also fall and wither away as quickly.** To many, the Word of God is good only because it offers an immediate answer to current difficulties. They see in the Gospel an escape from aggravation, and so they embrace it under the tutelage, many times, of carnal men, in hopes that they will from henceforth have a life of ease. Poor souls - they, by their acceptance of the Gospel, have only stepped into a newness of life which is attendant by much suffering and trouble. The Word "springing up" seems to indicate an outward or open profession of acceptance. **We ought never to glory in outward professions, therefore, for they, many times, are only the beginning of a fall.** Let our glorying be in the Lord, and in the cultivation of the fruit of the Spirit in the lives of the saints - not in their mere outward profession! In the planting of a field, the planter finds no excessive glory in the little sprouts that come forth from the ground for the first time, but rather in the ripe field of grain which testifies to the success of His work.

So it is with the planter of the Gospel Seed. His glory is in the ripening of the saints; in the development of strong faith in the Lord God of heaven and earth; in the springing up of meekness, joy, peace, longsuffering, brotherly kindness, etc.

Let us speak of this man who receives the Word in rocky soil, which has not much depth of earth. He hears the Word of God and receives it with joy. He is delighted with its beauty, its justice, its purity. But, alas! **HE HAS MORE OF THE ROCK THAN OF THE GOOD SOIL IN HIS HEART!** Hence, the Word of God cannot strike a deep root in his heart. He is not constant in his faith. He endures but for a time, and in the period of temptation and trial, falls away. The receptivity that such people possess is very limited. **The surface of their heart is soft, yet it is very shallow.** They do not "prove all things" (I Thess. 5:21), nor do they "hold fast to that which is good." **They receive the Word of God with pleasure, but not with profit.** They receive it as an intellectual treat or literary enjoyment, but there the matter ends. **They are not guided and governed by this precious Word—it is only received on the surface, not in the depth of the heart! It does not check their sinful lives, their beloved lusts and their besetting sins, nor change their evil habits and ungodly living.** Any change that it does produce is only transient. After the Seed has penetrated the outer shell of their deceitful heart, it strikes the hard rock of carnality and love for the world, and it can go no further. **As soon, therefore, as they are called to suffer from the world that they so dearly love, they are offended, and rather than relinquish their love for the world, they find the Word withering and dying within their shallow heart.** It is not rooted in their conscience, in their judgment, or in their understanding; **it has not become an integral part of them!** They have not received the Word "with meekness" (James 1:21). They have viewed it with carnal understanding, and have not "spiritually discerned it" (I Cor. 2:14). They, like the Holy Spirit witnesses are "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (II Tim. 3:7). **Their quickness to accept the Word of God is only superficial, and evidences their basic superficiality!** Many evil men, failing to catch the true significance of the Gospel message suddenly accept it, and profess allegiance to it, only to later renounce and repudiate it by their earth-bound lives, denying Him whom they profess to have embraced, through "wicked works" (Titus 1:16). They receive the truth in "word only" (I Cor. 4:20), never actually experiencing the transforming power of the Seed of the Kingdom.

A profession without depth will eventually issue forth in denial, for the trials and afflictions that are called forth by an acknowledgement of the Gospel are too fiery and weighty for one who has no deep root. There **must** be a rooting and an establishment in the faith, and in the Word of God—not in carnal and outward deliverances and relief from sorrow (Eph. 3:17; Col. 2:7). **A religion without depth always avoids the inevitable sufferings of the saint because of a wicked world, and paints a glowing picture of success and ease.** Such conceptions are shattered and

scorched when the "furnace of affliction" (Deut. 4:20) is fired and the depthless ones are called upon to pass through it. I have known professed followers of Christ to be driven to virtual despair and consternation simply because of illness in the family, or because of rejection by their loved ones. **They had embraced a damnable doctrine which taught that prosperity was to be equated with godliness, and that victory was synonymous with overt overcoming.** Woe be to those false prophets—liars they are—who perpetrate such confusing doctrines! The path of the righteous is "strait and narrow" (Matt. 7:13-14) and is fraught with afflictions on every hand which "work for us a more exceeding weight of glory" (II Cor. 4:17-18). However, praise the Lord, affliction, whether inflicted by others externally through circumstances, or wrought upon us inwardly by the Lord, is one of the many means God has employed of discovering openly the pretenders and the hypocrites. **Though their religion may have been characterized by great zeal, and a humility that was confounding, yet was its worthlessness uncovered when they murmured and fainted under the common lot of affliction towards the people of God.** Their shallow religion proved itself to be but a shallow acceptance of Divine truth—a **compromise between heaven and earth,** so to speak, that brought reproach upon the Lord, and discontent to their own wretched hearts. I have often heard preachers declare that the Word should be preached so that a six year old child can understand it. If such be the case, we must declare something other than the Scriptures; for they convey the depth of the mind of God. **Shallow preaching begets shallow conceptions; shallow conceptions beget shallow lives; and shallow lives are destined to be scorched and withered by the afflictions attendant upon a profession of faith.** Thus do many false preachers actually prepare their constituents for burning.

There are several things which we ought to here consider; things which will serve to illustrate the great necessity of a strong and grounded faith in the Lord; of spiritual manhood, and a putting away of childish things.

The Nature of Our Opposition

The Lord has made reasonably clear to us that our opponents are **unseen**; they are not flesh and blood, men and things; "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12). These are gigantic foes; stronger than men, more subtle than any mortal can imagine! These are the cohorts of our chief adversary, Satan, and **their express purpose is to overthrow us as to have us condemned.** They employ all sorts of wily arts, undiscernible to natural men, as they lie in cunning craftiness to deceive. They attack from within and without. Within they employ lusts, pride, and inordinate affection. Without they employ fierce opposition, distractions, delusions, etc. A person who is not strong in the faith is very susceptible to their tactics, and will often fall prey to them. If one does not "move on to perfection" (Heb. 6:1), there is, according to the Holy Spirit, that

danger of "falling away" (Heb. 6:4-6). Our perfection, or adulthood spiritually, is for a definite purpose; it is to aid in guarding us against the "strong delusion" that God shall send to all who "receive not the love of the truth" (II Thess. 2:10). Those who have no "increase in faith" (Luke 17:5) and no "increase in the knowledge of God" (Col. 1:10) are bound to be "ignorant of his (Satan's) devices" (II Cor. 2:11), and thus will fall prey to him. **Be not deceived on this matter; if you are consistently unable to understand the deeper things of the Spirit of God, then you are in jeopardy, even as the seed which had no root!**

The True Nature of Faith

Faith is possession, not profession! One of the tragic errors of our day is the confusion of a profession of faith with faith itself. Faith is a **persuasion** of spiritual reality. It is not conviction of a tradition; or a simple acceptance and unquestioning embracement of what a man says! **It is the evidence within the soul of the truth of God; of the realities which are witnessed to by the Holy Spirit of God.** One minister I read recently declared that faith was "making up your mind to believe that the Bible is true". Such is an heretical statement, and evidences an absolute ignorance of the things of God. **Faith is not making up your mind; it is not a product of human activity. It is not the working of logical presentations, or the effect of a stirring and challenging dissertation. It is a gift from God; something that we "obtain" (II Pet. 1:1-3); it is something that God has "dealt by measure" (Rom. 12:3). It purifies the heart (Acts 15:9), and makes one a son of God (Gal. 3:27, 28).** Because a person says that he believes, does not necessarily mean that he does. The fruitage of faith is seen in works (James 2), and if there are no works (works after the godly order), then there is assuredly no faith! **Faith brings the things of God to you, and gives you not only a realization of their presence, but an enjoyment of their benefits.** It is faith that makes the difference between shallowness and depth; not intellectuality or accomplishment, but **faith!** If your religion is shallow, it is because little, if any, faith is possessed; if it is characterized by depth, it is because faith has increased and is bringing forth fruit unto God. A religion, therefore, that is consistently shallow and superficial is one that is not filled with faith; but rather has mere empty profession. The things of God are never, under such a contemptible system, easily received, or readily acknowledged, but are always sifted through traditional conceptions and dogmas to prove their validity. In short there is no real communion with the Lord, but everything focuses around the activity of the organization involved. Oh, lamentable truth that so many have so received profession and rejected possession! Shall not the Lord deal harshly with those that have so led them!

The Devil's Kind of Faith

There is a faith in the world that is after the Devil's order, and is fostered and perpetrated by him. The beloved brother James makes mention of it in James 2:19: "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also

believe and tremble." There is the kind of faith that the Devil possesses; he trembles at the presence and will of the Lord, but has no love, no yearning for Him, no longing to dwell in His courts. **Fear — trembling fear — is the chief characteristic of this kind of believing. It cringes at the thought of punishment, but thinks nothing of being in the good favor of God.** There is no agreement with the Law of the Lord; only continual rebellion. So many people possess this type of faith. When the knife is put to their throat, they squeal and howl like the pig before his execution; but before that you hear nothing from them concerning the Lord's Christ. Their presence in the fellowship of the godly is only during the times of trouble and sorrow; they devote their better times to the devil and his work; either knowingly or unknowingly. It is true that most shallow faith is nothing more than a believing after the devilish order. There is no real joy of the Lord; no genuine righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost (Rom. 14:17), the real elements of the Kingdom of God. Their periods of receptivity are limited to those times when they are against the wall, and have no place else to turn; while **the man possessed of true faith lives and moves and has his being in the Lord, continually seeking recourse in the sanctuary of God in times of plenty as well as in times of famine.**

Overcoming False Faith and Appropriating True Faith

It is certainly not our purpose here to outline a convenient plan which will solve all of your problems. Aside from and above the fact that such procedures have no personal appeal to me, our Lord does not work in such a fashion. I but mention here some few principles which may guide you to proper seeking. First, **there must be a divorcement from everything that tends to foster the false faith which we have already described.** Any ministry that does not tend toward the development of strong and spiritual brethren is to be abandoned with great zeal. Second, **there must be a fervent seeking of the Lord through the ordained channels of the Word of God, prayer, desires of the heart, instruction by men of God, etc.** In these things, you will find a discontent with yourself and everything else that natural men have to offer! There will be a reaching out of the soul for reality in Christ Jesus; that water which satisfies the soul! Oh, how this must be the longing of every heart; to dwell in the very tabernacle of the most High, to inquire in His temple, and to behold Him in all of His beauty and Holiness. **We must seek a real understanding of the case before us; proper discernment of the nature of our foes, of the nature of spiritual reality! There must be war made against the false representation of spiritual things which is so prevalent in our day.** I find that I am increasingly less impressed by appearances, and more enthralled with the reality (the unseen realities) of the Kingdom of God — righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. I recall to mind the Lord Jesus as He sat in the temple with His disciples. During their observations there, people brought their money into the treas-

ury. Jesus observed that they that were "rich cast in much" into the treasury; however the "muchness" of their offerings left no favorable impression with Him. The real evaluation of the gifts given is seen in Christ's reaction to a poor widow's gift: "And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: for all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living" (Mark 12:41-44). Here is seen the distinction between **the faith and a faith!** According to appearance the most notable givers were those that gave the most — much like the evaluations of our day. But in reality, the greatest gift was the one motivated by true faith, which compelled a forfeiture of her whole living. **True faith places the greatest value upon eternal things, and expends its energies in that sphere; while false faith places the great value on temporal things, and thus is found frolicking in vanity.** To have a firm life, one that is not characterized by shallowness, and "lack of moisture" (as Luke was wont to put it—Luke 8:6), there must be a real relish for eternal things, and a contempt held for all that is temporal (**by contempt, I mean an attitude toward them which keeps them in subordination to the eternal realities of the Kingdom.** Certainly it would be sinful to teach abuse of the unrighteous mammon, for we are even to handle that wisely—in view of the accounting of our stewardship which lies yet ahead). **A religion which emphasizes the external (and most contemporary religions do) is not worthy of embracement, for it will not stand the test of affliction and hardship! It grows not deep, nor does it strike its root into the center of the heart!** This is because it is forever dealing with externals, temporalities, matters of the rudimentary sort—and thus can find no residence in the conscience of men, in the secret place of their heart. Declare fervent war upon all false faith which glories in appearance, and appropriate by grace that faith which glories in the Lord, and in the presence of kingdom-qualities; "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

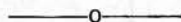
Summary

There are diversities of emphases in the religious world which tend to confuse the real seeker of the truth. Many have placed great stress upon the Holy Spirit, upon Jesus, and upon the power of God; yet their faith is virtually limited to things that are temporal in nature. **While we do not wish to cast reproach upon the great works of healing and repairs of the body of the saints, these are matters which are most unworthy of emphasis. Their presence is designed to point us to higher and more noble things; to things that shall last "world without end."** Many a saint has been shaken because of the lack of healing, or the lack of physical deliverance; they have, in short, been "scorched" by the "Sun" like those seeds which fell upon the stony ground. Their faith had not deep root through grace,

but gloried only in appearance. There have been great seasons upon the earth when the heavens were shut up, when God has not spoken, showed visions, or wrought wondrous works (I Sam. 3:1). Yet, during these times there was still faith, and a clinging to the promises of God; true holiness, and anticipation of the revelation of the Lord. **I am quite convinced that many individuals' faith would be absolutely extinct were it not for physical deliverances, external aids, and visible workings.** Such, to my understanding, brings great reproach upon the Lord God of heaven and earth, for it is a walk by sight, and not by faith. "The just shall live by faith", declares the Holy Spirit (Hab. 2:4), and again, "We walk by faith, and not by sight" (II Cor. 5:7). **Things that are seen cannot strike very deep.** The things, however, that are unseen, can find deep root in the soul, and stabilize you for trial.

Too, beware of all religions which place the **emphasis** upon work; any work of men. Many fundamental churches which proclaim a disdain for the doctrine of salvation by works, have one of the most complicated system of works ever designed. They send out their people to "win souls" and to testify with the belief that this "work" will obtain for them great rewards by merit. Oh, how damnable this heresy which instructs men to so root their faith in their own accomplishments. The word of the Lord is "PREACH THE WORD"! Whether souls are won or not (that is the work of the Lord), we shall preach the Word in season and out of season, instantly proclaiming what the Lord hath said! The results of that preaching shall be evaluated not by mere appearance, but by the evidencing to the spirit (and by the Holy Spirit) of the essential elements of the Kingdom; "righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

Seek a **deep faith**, a **deep perception** of spiritual things; a **profound appreciation** of and insight into the Person of Jesus Christ. Press in to the Throne, and seek within your heart to have Christ's image stamped. Thus will you stand!



Holiness - A Quality

Holiness is a quality rather than a mere overt action. Holiness does not consist in mere indulgence in this or that! It is a condition of the heart which tends to purify the actions, thus making them acceptable to God (Titus 1:15). Most "holiness" groups are known (whether it be so or not, to their own master they stand or fall) for their mere outward piety, and there is certainly no reason to avoid such piety; it is, in fact, to be honored when performed as unto the Lord. However, the outward appearance must be motivated and characterized by a pure and holy heart, else it is nothing less than hypocrisy. We must not refrain from frequently admonishing one another concerning our outward and visible lives, and how they must be undergirded by the "weightier matters of the law" which are "judgment, mercy, and faith" (Matt. 23:23). **These are our emphasis**, for they have to do with the heart, which is the subject of God's scrutiny and judgment!

Is Capital Punishment Right?

By "capital punishment", I mean the exacting of the death penalty upon those guilty of taking the life of another. By "right" I do not mean something right for one individual, but not for another. I speak of "right" in the absolute sense. Is the death penalty exacted upon murderers, for a specific example, right and proper? This is not to be construed as a relative thing; as something that is right in some instances, but wrong in others. Either it is right or wrong. To be more specific, the life taken has been taken in a malicious and deliberate way; it is not accidental, but is preceded by an animosity of the heart, and is performed deliberately and intently with the end result of removing life. Admittedly in our day, there is much question on this subject. In the country of the United States of America, we are well on the way to abolishing capital punishment upon the pretext that it is cruel and inhumane; that no mortal is endowed with so proper a judgement as to permit him to decide such a terrible and quick fate. The recent trials of famous murders which have issued forth in repeated stays of execution, and the deliberate care with which killers are tried and exempted from the punishment of death, has drawn the attention of all. The sociologists have proclaimed that capital punishment is wrong; that it ought to be outlawed; and their word, for the most part, has been accepted in our society. But, are they right?

When adjudging anything to be right or wrong, there must be an appeal made to the Lord God of heaven and earth. This is His earth (Psa. 24:1), and He has determined, according to His Sovereign Nature, all right and all wrong. **Right is simply what is in accordance with the nature of God; wrong is what is in conflict with the nature of God.** The point in question, according to the Spirit, is "Is capital punishment in accordance with, or in conflict with, the nature of the Lord God of heaven and earth"? If the Lord has expressed Himself on this matter, it will end all controversy, for His will is indisputable, and He is answerable to none. No one may inquire of Him, "What doest Thou"? (Job 9:12), for His word is Sovereign Law! It is to be understood that all must bow the knee to Him, and accept in all humility and shamefacedness what He declares.

Many professed believers are amazingly weak upon this point of capital punishment, being tossed to and fro by the conflicting opinions of men. To such, especially, do we speak, with a solemn tone, desiring that they "hear the Word of the Lord" (Jer. 22:29). The principle of the matter is set forth by the Lord Himself immediately after the flood; "WHOSO SHEDDETH MAN'S BLOOD, BY MAN SHALL HIS BLOOD BE SHED; FOR IN THE IMAGE OF GOD MADE HE MAN" (Gen. 9:6). That is the principle! Man is made in the image of God, and God has decreed that man's life cannot be taken without the paying of the death penalty! **Nowhere has this edict been reversed!** The Lord God did not say that He would drop fire down from heaven upon the murderer; but that by man his blood

would be shed. Further, in the Mosaic code, the matter is set forth within the framework of cleansing; ". . . blood, it defileth the land: AND THE LAND CANNOT BE CLEANSED OF THE BLOOD THAT IS SHED THEREIN, BUT BY THE BLOOD OF HIM THAT SHED IT" (Numbers 35:33). By these expressions the Lord places the sin of murder in its true light, as a **sin against Himself**. The land, His land, is defiled with the blood of the slain, and nothing can do away with the guilt which cleaves to it but the strict execution of Divine justice upon the murderer. Money might satisfy the relatives of the slain, but it shall not satisfy the Maker of the slain! The blood of the slain defiles the land; or to put it in modern vernacular; **the blood of the slain defiles the city, the community, the suburb, the hamlet, etc.** The whole community has a share in its guilt, and the only thing that will purge that guilt is the death and shedding of the blood of the murderer! Why do you suppose that cities of our land have the curse of God upon them; women afraid to walk through the streets in the dark hours; safety precarious at the brightest hour of the day, and all sorts of heinous actions taking place? Is it because for one thing blood has defiled the city to say nothing of the love for evil that prevails). **Whole cities and nations have the curse of God upon them because they have refused, and that in the name of intellectuality and social advancement, to execute the law of the Lord!** Murder is criminal above all other offences, because it involves a defacement of the image of God — and God will not permit that to lightly pass by! The Lord spoke remarkably plain concerning this matter in Deut. 21:1-9: "Be merciful, O Lord, unto Thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto thy people of Israel's charge. And the blood shall be forgiven them. So shalt thou put away the guilt of innocent blood from among you, when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the Lord" (Deut. 21:8-9). These were the words, and the commendation of the Lord for those words, which were to be uttered by the elders of Israel over a headless heifer when a slain person was found in the land and the murderer was NOT known! **Does it not reveal to us the defilement that blood has upon the land.** Do we not call to remembrance that wicked Cain who slew his righteous brother Abel, whose blood "**cried forth from the ground**" (Gen. 4:10). Again, in David's recountal of God's dealings with the Israelites, it is said; "Yea, they sacrificed their sons, and their daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons, and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: AND THE LAND WAS POLLUTED WITH BLOOD. AND THUS THEY WERE DEFILED WITH THEIR OWN WORKS, AND WENT A WHORING WITH THEIR OWN INVENTIONS" (Psa. 106:37-39). God will not abide a land where innocent blood is shed and no remedy is taken! **By "innocent blood", the Lord means the blood of a person not socially guilty of a crime worthy of death.** Ought not this to open an abundance of truth to us pertaining to our own nation? Persistent prayers should arise for rulers and leaders in high places, that their choices might be according to the

"The Whole World"

"And we know that we are of God, and THE WHOLE WORLD lieth in wickedness" (I John 5:19). That is the truth as declared by the Lord God of heaven and earth! For the child of God, there is no gainsaying the fact of the world's proneness in wickedness, for his personal fellowship with the "Lord's Christ" has confirmed to him the darkness of this world. **There is no part of the world that does not lie in wickedness!** The Lord says; "The WHOLE world"; that leaves no high places, no safe places, no pure places, to acceptable places with God! **No sector of the world is free from wickedness!** Oh that all would learn this truth of singular importance! No element of godliness is found in what God calls "the world"; not one single vestige of purity, holiness, or righteousness! **The entire system is under the curse of God—the "WHOLE WORLD."** In another place, John writes; "For ALL THAT IS IN THE WORLD, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life are not of the Father but are of the world" (I John 2:16). **There is nothing, then, "in the world" that is "of the Father"—i.e., nothing that is in conformity of itself with the nature and mind of the Lord.** In its entirety, the world is alienated from the Lord, having been repudiated and cursed because of the sin that contaminated it! The Lord means, by these positive assertions, to inform us assuredly that **anything of God must be sought apart from the realm of the "world"; that God's nature is not manifested by the world, but that He is, in a sense, hidden to everything worldly.** New senses, new vision, new values must be granted by grace before anyone in this sphere will ever be able to appreciate the Lord God of heaven and earth. **The whole world is void of any of the attributes of the Father; "ALL THAT IS IN THE WORLD — IS NOT OF THE FATHER!"** That is the solemn pronouncement of Scripture!

Observe that the whole world "LIETH in wickedness". **Wickedness is the habitat of the world.** That is where the world flourishes, where its values lie, where it spends its time! "Wickedness" speaks not merely of gentle sin, but of gross rebellion against the Lord; of attachment to that which the Lord Himself is separate from; to be affiliated with that which is irreconcilable with the Father which is in heaven! "Wickedness" is that for which the Lord first sent the flood upon the earth; "God saw . . . the WICKEDNESS . . ." (Gen. 6:5)! This is that which is legislated and organized and perpetrated by the spirits that are in league with Satan himself. They are called "spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12). **Anything that is not in harmony with the nature of God is WICKEDNESS!** It may take various forms of respectability, but it is an "abomination" before the eyes of the Lord. **Wickedness speaks of that quality and nature which can never abide with the Lord; that which He shall ultimately banish from all memory and sight of the righteous ones.** By its very nature, wickedness becomes the "blood" in which the whole world lies (Ezek. 16:6); it is the slayer of the whole world. The world is "dead", and therefore "LIETH" in wickedness! There is **no** receptivity to the Lord in this realm; **no** respect unto the judgements of the Lord; **no** love for His law; **no**

relish for spiritual things; **no** seeking after the Lord (Rom. 3:10-17). Here abides death, the bands of which Jesus alone can sever, who "hath the keys of death and of hell" (Rev. 1:18). Men are, here, "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1-3), and until they be quickened by the power of the Holy Spirit through the ministration of the Gospel of Christ by the hands of Christ-sent messengers, they are absolutely "free from righteousness" (Rom. 6:20); not only being unable to work righteousness, but totally unable to even acquire an appetite for it! Their affections are set upon the "earth" (Col. 3:1-3), and is, apart from the intervention of the Lord, hopelessly confined there! Oh, he who has ears to hear, let him hear! Those whose heart is tender enough to sense the pleading of the Lord to "come up hither", and away from the earth, bend your will; submit yourselves unto the Lord, and kick not against the pricks. **It is an evil thing indeed for a man or woman, boy or girl, to sense the call of God upon their heart, and yet fight off the drawing impulse Godward by quenching, grieving and resisting the Holy Spirit!** The world is cursed; set for damnation! It lies in wickedness, and you must come forth from it, and be "raised up together with Christ to sit in the heavenly places" (Eph. 1:6; 2:6). The world lies in the squalor of all that is contrary to the Lord that made it. Its wickedness is not wickedness in men's eyes; but it is wickedness in God's eyes, with whom we alone have to do! Are we not taught of the Lord Himself that "that which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination unto the Lord" (Luke 16:15). Such things as self-sufficiency, a-homeliness in the world, pride of life, and the desire for things, are all respectable in our day; but in reality, they are gross wickedness, because they attempt to ostracize God and push Him out of His own creation!

There is nothing good in the world, nothing spiritual, nothing godly! It ALL lies in wickedness! Its philosophical patterns of thought, philanthropic appearances, and apparent advances in intellectuality, are all of themselves wicked! Are you able to receive that? You that profess allegiance to the King of kings—are you able to receive the truth that THE WHOLE WORLD LIETH IN WICKEDNESS? Why fight you so against this truth if it be not that you are in love with the world and dread the thought of forsaking it? If you have not by faith acquired a detestation for the world, then claim no affiliation with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! You have no part or lot with Him if you are at home in this world, and not a confessed stranger and pilgrim (Heb. 11:13; I Pet. 2:11). But you who know the world for what it is, then can see and hate the wickedness in which it all lies; rejoice that you have been given the faith to understand this, for it is a token of your spiritual sonship, of your redemption, and of your coming salvation which is "ready to be revealed" (I Pet. 1:5). **God alone is good, and all else of themselves are wicked, and apart from the washing and sanctifying of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 6:10-12), there is "none that doeth good, no not one" (Rom. 3:12).**

(Concluded next month)

THE SOUL CAST DOWN

(From page 1)

trials" (1 Pet. 4:12). I am, however, convinced that *this blessing of keeping us from the "hour of temptation" (Rev. 3:10) is available to us far more than our experience is willing to admit! Many of our periods of spiritual depression are brought on not merely because of grievous trials, but because we do not avail ourselves of strength as manifested in "all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness" (Col. 1:9-11.) Persecutions, domestic difficulties; fears, doubts, fierce trials, and brazen heavens can cause the heart to be heavy and stoop - therefore, it behooves us to avail ourselves of all strength that may be ours, and to be equipped for the day of visitation. Let us all avail ourselves of a full measure of grace that is reserved for us (Eph. 4:7).*

Having mentioned that the soul is often cast down needlessly, we shall presently devote our thoughts to those periods when no explanation is apparent. There are times when the Lord seems distant from us; "Why art Thou so far from helping me"? (Psa. 22:1). The Lord "hideth Himself" (Isa. 45:15) oft times for reasons not readily apparent. 'Tis then that the soul languishes and writhes in discontent; attitudes become sorrowful; expectation dims; our own infirmities become pre-eminent to us. *It is our business during such times to cry out unto the Lord; "O my God, my soul is cast down within me" (Psa. 42:6). To ourselves, we declare: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance" (Psa. 42:5, 11; 43:5). Here we have a commentary of the real nature of a soul "cast down." It is a "disquieted" soul; one in which the peace of God has been interrupted; where the quietness of soul, which brings great spiritual strength (Isa. 30:15; 32:17), is disrupted by the sounds of care, fret, imaginations, and aloneness. These times remove from the saint all trust in self; all reliance in abilities; yea, it even removes us from the child of God his unlawful faith in God's gifts instead of the Lord Himself. There are several things important to know about being "cast down." (1). It is God alone that casts down (Psa. 102:10). Therefore, we are to beseech Him to lift us up during such times. (2). These are times when we ought not to speak in "haste" (Psa. 31:22). Judgement is generally clouded, and rather than seeking to pronounce great judgements, we ought to be seeking to obtain favor in the eyes of the Lord. (3) Such a condition is not hopeless; we may, even in despair, be given to good hope (Psa. 42:5). (4). We ought not to think it strange that we are subject to such periods; for they are common to man. But, praise the Lord, there is also a "way of escape" provided, that we may be "able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10:13). Amen.*

Is Capital Punishment Right?

(From page 6)

mind of the Lord — whether knowingly or unknowingly!

Now, it may be countered that these truths were ministered under the Law, and hence are not applicable under the Gospel of the Grace of God — or during this "dispensation", as some are wont to say. However, the Holy Spirit witnesses, as is His custom, quite differently from the religious bigots of the day. Referring to civil leaders, the Holy Spirit brings up this very matter of capital punishment — then called the using of the "sword", with which the executioner promptly severed the neck of the offender. Here

is the Word of the Lord; "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are **ordained** of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Wilt thou then be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for **HE IS THE MINISTER OF GOD** to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he **BEARETH NOT THE SWORD IN VAIN: FOR HE IS THE MINISTER OF GOD, A REVENGER TO EXECUTE WRATH UPON HIM THAT DOETH EVIL**" (Rom. 13:1-4). That ought to end all controversy on the matter; **this is the Lord's means of cleansing the land from the pollution caused by the shedding of innocent blood.** The bearer of the sword, however difficult it may be to receive, is called "the minister of God". By that, it is meant that he is executing the will of the Lord.

This short treatise is not meant to stir up people to political actions; but rather to aid in straightening out some of the thinking of the saints on the matter. God's word is explicit about it, and the Lord even gives reasons for His judgements, which He does not at all times do. **It is the obligation of every saint to find his heart in agreement with the Lord, however unacceptable it may be by a world that lieth in wickedness.** Let our prayers and supplications attend fervently our desires for the implementation of the will of the Lord, and may we not be so foolish as to trust to the arm of the flesh, human ability, or philosophical views.

I am often tempted to underestimate the power of prayer. This resource is not nearly so easily exhausted as I sometimes foolishly think. I fear that I sometimes seek release from vexation by means of effectual prayer rather than implicit trust. **God has not committed Himself to answer the prayer of haste, but rather "the prayer of faith!"** Too, an expression is different than a request, and a wish than a hope. **My faith must lie in God through Christ; not in an answer, or in my ability to pray.** My ability has no direct bearing on the case; **it is my faith — received from above — that actuates and vitalizes real effectual prayer.**

Those who serve the Lord serve Him with their hearts, not their hands! God does not need what we do, or what we have; but, praise His Name, He does desire our affection, and the whole love of the whole heart. He who heartily does this truly serves the Lord in all that He does, for it is "**unto the Lord.**"