

# THE WORD OF TRUTH

Published Monthly

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

Volume 13

MAY, 1969

Number 4

*"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

### COMMENTARY ON PHILIPPIANS (Installment 10)

By Richard W. Ebler

Chapter One (cont.)

(vs. 12-14) "But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear."

Paul expresses his earnest desire that the Philippians have a sound spiritual understanding. By this we see that knowledge is important, for by it we escape the pollutions that are in the world (II Peter 1:4). On the other hand, spiritual ignorance has a blinding power (Eph. 4:18). How can we intelligently battle against sin unless we are instructed concerning it? This may seem elementary, but it is an extremely necessary point in view of the fact that many today (especially Pentecostal groups) tend to belittle a knowledge of God's word on the grounds that it is mere "head-knowledge" while they emphasize what they call "The Spirit." But fleshly religious human emotions are not the same thing as the Spirit of God, and the only objective test we have to distinguish the two is the Word of God which is "able to divide asunder" between man's animal-soul and his higher nature, his spirit, wherein he worships God "in Spirit and in truth" (John 4:23) having his spirit enmeshed with God's Spirit (I Cor. 6:17). Whatever we think or feel that is contrary to God's Word is *flesh* no matter how spiritual it may seem to be. One thing is certain: a person who is full of God's Spirit will be full of God's word (Col 3:16 compare with Eph. 5:18).

Paul desires that they have a good understanding that they might correctly evaluate his circumstances. Some of the Philippians may have been troubled by the knowledge of his imprisonment so as to wonder if God were truly with Paul. It was difficult to see what good could come of his imprisonment. Paul's enemies probably made much of this circumstance to turn men away from him. But circumstances can be deceiving. They also must be interpreted by a godly mind through principles laid down in God's word. The truth of the case was that God had a purpose in Paul's imprisonment and was using it to "work salvation in the midst of the earth" (Psa. 74:2).

The problem that the Philippians might have had in seeing this truth lies in the fact that the flesh is always offended by the lowliness of the cross and of its messengers. Although some of the Philippians may have been fearful of suffering a fate similar to Paul's, the apostle encourages them by showing how God worked this adversity for good. Such glorious dealings are consistent with God's nature, his promises, and his past record (Num. 23:19, 20; Rom. 8:28, Gen. 50:20). Like

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## The Word of Truth

Published monthly by The Church Meeting at 26th and Colfax Street, Gary, Indiana.

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Address all correspondence to 7903 Hendricks Place, Merrillville, Indiana 46410

Sent Free upon request to all interested parties.

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT  
CROWN POINT, INDIANA

Jacob of old, Providence crossed its hands and blessed that which seemed to be the illogical object of blessing. "A strange chemistry of Providence this, to extract so great a good as the enlargement of the gospel out of so great an evil as the confinement of the apostle."

With this principle in mind we can see how "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." Paul's sufferings made him known at the Roman court where perhaps he would never have otherwise been known; and this led to the inquiry of many concerning the gospel for which he suffered, which they might otherwise have never heard of. It was apparent to all courtiers, citizens, Jews, and foreigners, that Paul did **not** suffer as an evil-doer, and it appears that Paul had not a few converts among Caesar's household (Phil. 4:22) and "in all other places" (v. 13), the populace being much affected by the emperor's court. Truly "the word of God is not bound" (II Tim. 2:9).

When Paul speaks of his bonds one cannot help thinking also of his spiritual bonds which made him a bond-slave to Christ, one whose ear had been pierced against the door of his master in order to serve Him forever (Ex. 21:1-6).

Paul says that his bonds were **manifest** in all the palace and in all other places. "Whatsoever doth make **manifest** is **light**" (Eph. 5:13). People ordinarily dwell in a sleepy darkness, unaware of eternal realities. These bonds were a mute testimony of the truth of God. What makes an innocent man willing to suffer so cheerfully? There were some in Caesar's household that said within themselves as Moses of old, "I will now turn aside, and see this great sight. . . ." (Ex. 3:3). People have a responsibility to investigate when they see a spiritual light. We live in the midst of so much indifference that we tend to excuse it, but God does not. Modern rabid soul-winners (so-called) tend to overlook this fact and to place the whole responsibility upon the saint for results in his witnessing. While we accept the duty to witness, the modern conception seems lopsided and unapostolic.

*(Please turn to page 6)*

## The Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge

"... Christ, in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3)

Whatever it is that constitutes wisdom and knowledge, they are among the more precious commodities in the intellectual and material world. Never are they to be held disdainfully, nor are they to be set forth as inferior or optional in the Kingdom of God. The possession of them is the possession of certain lasting treasures for the soul. Nor are we to permit the false emphasis placed upon these two jewels of the mind, by the world, to cloud our understanding and appreciation of them. These are not to be confused with the mere appropriation of abstract facts or discretion in disassociation from God. While this sort of knowledge and wisdom is valid, it is not foundational — not something upon which to build a life. The accumulation of factual evidence is, of itself, centered in man; it consists of **his** understanding, **his** ability, **his** judgement. However, our lives are not to revolve around ourselves, but around our Lord; and thus must we seek heartily after, and aspire to gain, that wisdom and knowledge which is affiliated with Deity, and which roots in eternity.

By way of brief, yet meaningful, diversion, it is well that we consider the relevance of knowing God's will concerning salvation and its varied aspects. One of the most devastating blows to the faith of struggling believers is the emphasis that is contemporarily placed upon "knowing the will of the Lord for **my** life." Such matters as marriage, traveling, moving, etc., become the very hub upon which the thought life revolves, and earnestly the will of the Lord is sought for these matters. While on the surface this may seem quite spiritual and commendable however, that is not at all the case. In a very subtle way attention has been removed from the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, and an unnecessary degree of simplicity is retained. Good is not discerned from evil, and each confrontation with decision becomes a crisis. The use of the term "the will of God" in Scripture is not directed toward such a mundane emphasis, however. **It pertains to our understanding concerning redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and the inscrutable wisdom with which our salvation has been executed by the Father — that is to be the burden of our attention.** Angels desire to "look into these things" (I Pet. 1:12), and it quite behooves the people of God to probe these depths and make such probing their regular occupation. This is the intent of the Apostle's prayer in Colossians 1:9-10; "... we... pray for you... that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his Will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." The term "His will" does pertain to the will where-with we are "sanctified" (Heb. 10:10); the great "eternal purpose" wherein we were "predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will" (Eph. 1:15). It is that "will", dear be-

liever, that is to be the subject of your mental and spiritual thrust; the quest for that "will" is to be your main occupation. Forever blot from your mind those Babylonish dogmas which cast you upon your own understanding, and cause your life to revolve in the orbit of this earth and your participation in it! **Those who understand redemption in Christ Jesus shall be wise in lower matters, for the earthly aspect of our lives must, of necessity, be structured in accordance with the eternal aspects of it.** If, therefore, there is no understanding of salvation and redemption, which things truly matter, then life is meaningless, for it is not set in its proper context.

Now, while these things were a brief departure from the main theme of this article, yet they have an integral association with it, for when I speak of "wisdom and knowledge" I am speaking, as did the Holy Spirit, of God's wisdom and knowledge — of the wisdom and knowledge that was employed by Deity in the planning, purposing, and executing of our "great salvation" (Heb. 2:3). **"Knowledge" pertains to the Lord's depth, perception, and scope of information employed in the perfection of redemption.** There is nothing that was not taken into account, no imperfect plans, partial purposes, or fragmentary design. **"Wisdom" deals with the Lord's sound judgement in the delineation of good from evil, true and false.** Discretion was used by our Father in our salvation so that at no point was any matter illegal before the heavenly tribunal, no part of His spiritual law was violated, and no portion of His vast character and Person was not taken into consideration. Thus He is called both the "Just and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). The forgiveness of our sins is based upon the "righteousness" of our Lord; "To declare HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS for the remission of sins that are past. . . ." (Rom. 3:25). This is but a high way of declaring that our forgiveness is the purpose and plan of God, and that His Person wrought out all of the necessities in wisdom and discretion in order to our perfection before Him. Salvation is a remarkable thing, drawing forth the curiosity of angelic hosts, the inquiry of prophets, and the amazement of apostles (I Pet. 1:9-12). Its inestimable worth, unsearchable depths, and spiritual profundity demands that it be pre-eminent in our minds. They do us a great disservice who charge that it is elementary, or that it is followed by a more impressionable work. The fact that such observations are even made is highly illustrative of the truth stated in our text; namely that this "wisdom and knowledge" is "HIDDEN" in Christ. It is outside of the realm of earth, transcended to the mundane; i.e., it is inaccessible and insensible to flesh. Thus does the Spirit witness; "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the HIDDEN WISDOM, which God ordained before the world unto our glory" (I Cor. 7:20). Here two truths may be beheld; (1. That this wisdom cannot be appropriated unless it is declared. 2. That this wisdom is God's wisdom, not the wisdom of this world; that it pertains to our glorification, not to our worldly success.

As I have already stated, this wisdom and knowledge belongs to Jehovah God. **These are**

**Divine attributes that may have been employed in the accomplishment of our "great salvation."** Hear the word of the Lord; "O the depth of the riches, both of the **wisdom and knowledge of God!** how unsearchable are His judgements and His ways past finding out" (Rom. 11:33). Here the Apostle has been overcome with the immensity of salvation's scope. Impressed upon his soul has been the truth of the reservation of a remnant according to the election of grace (11:5), the implementation of salvation through grace apart from works (11:6), the blinding of "the rest" and the obtaining of salvation by the "election" (11:7), the fall of Israel being the riches of the world and the diminishing of the Gentiles ushering in the fulness of Israel (11:12), the enmity of Israel toward God for our sakes as concerning the Gospel while at the same time the retention of the election for the father's sake (11:28), etc. These matters bear upon the subject of salvation — i.e., of God's eternal purpose to bring about the glorification of His grace. **Because this is God's grand purpose, therefore, He greatly delights in the comprehension of it by His people.** Therefore He sent forth apostles and prophets to illuminate the people of His choice concerning this great program (Eph. 3:1-6). It is interesting to observe the virtual lack of such a proclamation by religious zealots today — perhaps an indication of their kinship to antichrist more than to Christ. What are we speaking of? Of the understanding of God's salvation, of a perception of the purpose of the Lord as executed by His wisdom and knowledge; precisely the thing that is predominately missing among those that profess allegiance to the King. Indeed, this is the most integral part of the Kingdom, the segment where faith shines its greatest, and patience and hope are permitted to reign.

#### **The Implications Of The Text**

The implications of this text are awakening to the soul. If it is true that we are to appropriate an understanding of the eternal will of God and the redemption and atonement that are in Christ Jesus, then **no man is truly wise or knowledgeable until such an understanding is appropriated.** These flow forth from Christ wherein they are hidden, or, to put it another way; **they flow forth from a conscious union and fellowship with the Son of man.** Our wisdom and knowledge chiefly center around our understanding of God's eternal purpose. Those that are not acquainted with this truth spiritually can only "speak of (out of) themselves" (Jno. 7:18); i.e., they are cast upon their own despicable resources for their proclamations — resources that are woefully lacking in relation to the Kingdom of our God.

This brings us to an understanding of "philosophy" and "rudiments" as used by the apostle in verse 8; "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." **Philosophy, in this instance, is man's attempt to understand God's purposes without having God's mind, or "the mind of Christ"** (I Cor. 2:16). Legion is the name of those that so speak! **Rudiments are the proclamation**

of elementary truths minus spiritual understanding—the attempt to regulate the lives of the saints by rules rather than by faith, which understands and perceives. These things “spoil” the believer; take away his freshness and leave him a mere instrument of the organization. Tradition becomes the rule of his life, and thinking himself to be in association with God, he is actually at enmity with Him (James 4:4).

On the other hand, those that gain an understanding, by faith, into the eternal purpose of God are protected from beguilement and enticement. Such themes as election, grace, God’s uncontested reign and rule, Christ giving eternal life to those given Him, calling, pre-destination, etc., are all to be found within the framework of God’s wisdom and knowledge. It is for this reason that they are almost universally denied, or at least questioned, by traditional churches, whether fundamental, orthodox, or historical. **The ill-treatment of these subjects, or the staggering ignorance of them altogether, is manifold demonstration of the professing church’s absolute alienation from God.** Such a condition summons forth the prayers and supplications of true believers, and the earnest proclamation of these truths by those that have been given to know them. To all such we say, “Preach the Word!”

## The Call of God

“Moreover, whom He predestinated, them He also called. . . .” - Rom. 8:29

There exists a necessity in the Kingdom of God; that is this—that believers come into a fuller and more accurate understanding of the Kingdom itself. Ever do the words echo throughout the ages to the church; “I would not have you to be ignorant” (I Cor. 10:1; 12:1; I Thess. 4:13, etc.) **Ignorance actually alienates us from God,** as it is written; “Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart” (Eph. 4:18). The terms “understanding darkened”, “ignorance”, and “blindness of their heart” denote a condition of heart in which the truth of God is not apprehended; a state in which there is no concord with the Lord and His purpose within the understanding itself. Here is where real fellowship may be had with the Lord—in the renewed mind (Rom. 12:2). It is there that God’s laws are written (Heb. 8:10), and also, it is there that conformity to our Lord Jesus Christ begins (Phil. 2:3ff. I have mentioned these things by way of introduction because I am dealing with a facet of the Kingdom where there is not much understanding; and indeed, it is lamentable that it is so! The truth of which I speak is God’s call, and that truth is foundational in redemption and the execution of salvation.

In our text, the Apostle has been recounting the real plan of salvation. The plan, whose Author is the Lord, roots in eternity and bears fruit in eternity. It is comprised of five chief steps or phrases; “Foreknowledge”, “predestination”, “calling”, “justification”, and “glorification” (Rom. 8:29-30). In all of these parts the Lord God Omnipotent is the Worker and man is the receiver,

God the giver, and man the recipient. **God’s foreknowledge is a synonym for election.** It speaks of that part of our Father’s character that arbitrarily, and of His own will (Js. 1:18) selects whom He pleases. His foreknowledge is a determinate, not a resultant matter; i.e., it is not the result of what He has seen will happen, but it is the cause of what will happen (see Acts 2:23 for an illustration of this). **Our Lord’s unfathomable foreknowledge eventuated in His uncontested pre-destination.** His predestination is not depicted as the mere choosing of some to dwell in heaven, though that is the outcome of it. Rather, He “predestinated” that those whom He had foreknown by electing grace would be “conformed to the image of His Son;” i.e., that they would bear His image in their spirit, soul, and body (I Thess. 5:23). God’s foreknowledge and predestination were accomplished in disassociation from man; yea, “before the foundation of the world” (Eph. 1:4). When it comes to the “call” of God, however, man enters **experiencially** into the Divine scheme of things. **The call of God is, therefore, the first experiential part of the Kingdom; the beginning of the execution of God’s purpose within men themselves.**

### The Definition of “call”

The word “call” is not a weak word. It literally means in Scripture to “chase or excite by shouts”. It refers to that act whereby God stirs the heart by Divine speech; inward drawings. The call of God uncovers the condition of man and summons him Godward. It in this sense that the word is first used in Gen. 3:9; “And the Lord CALLED unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou”? There is the predominate question; “Where art thou.” It covered the condition of Adam, his nakedness and disobedience, his shame and reproach. And that still is the predominate question in God’s call; “Where art thou”? Where art thou in relation to fellowship with the Lord; in regard to spiritual growth and advancement; in regard to personal involvement in God’s eternal will. This call, or summons to spiritual awakening, is identified in Scripture as a “drawing” (John 6:44), and speaks of a Divinely initiated inclination toward truthful things. The affections are stirred Godward, proclivities are developed toward spirituality. There is a conviction of need; an impression is made by God’s Spirit upon man’s spirit of the need for justification, for growth and perfection, etc. This inward wooing and tugging at the heartstrings provokes one to desire spiritual betterment; to better fulfill his calling and station in life. The child seeks to be a better child before the Lord, the husband and father aspires to fulfill the Scriptures in his role, the wife and mother in hers, the elder, teacher, servant, master, helper, etc.,—each are impressed with a fervent desire to live becomingly of their Master. **This inclination constitutes the call of God upon the heart.**

Such things as pondering and meditation enter here; a state wherein the thoughts are devoted to the things of the Lord; where affections are set on things above, and not on things on the earth (Col. 3:1-3). It is during these times of “mus-

ing" that the Lord speaks to our hearts and the "fire burns" (Psa. 39:3). As the thoughts of the Lord are circulated in our hearts and minds, He speaks to our hearts and summons us into higher realms where Christ is "all in all" (Col. 3:11). A life of meditation postulates stillness of soul and deliverance from a roaming about from "house to house" (I Tim. 5:13). Those that are more renowned for their abstenteeism from their ordained duties will not experience the call of God, for it is in those moments of quiet and solitude — when the things of God are permeating the inner man — that God's call is upon the soul. This mental condition is what is called "study" in the Scriptures, and we are to devote ourselves diligently to it (I Thess. 4:11; II Tim. 2:15). Depth of thought in eternal matters is referred to as "looking at the things that are not seen" (II Cor. 4:18); beholding them intently with a mind in order to become partakers of them. Those that expend their spiritual energies in such holy activities will constantly sense the summoning of the Lord; that inward drawing and wooing — that Divine allurements into green pastures: this is the call of God. **It is not experienced apart from our thought life, nor is it experienced by beholding letters emblazoned in the sky, or visions in the night. Those whose minds are not given to the things of the Kingdom are not fit recipients of the heavenly calling** (Heb. 3:1). Those, on the other hand, who follow the leading of these inward proclivities toward reality, will have advancement in the Kingdom of God; for that advancement and growth comes by means of God's call; i.e., by means of an inclination toward and an appetite for these things. **A religion of true spiritual sensitivity and meditation will lead you into an actual conformity to the image of God's Son, Jesus Christ** (Rom. 8:29-30). By beholding the Lord we become like Him, and **He is chiefly beehld in our meditative thoughts and deliberations upon His Person and work.** Those who devote themselves to such pious and holy exercises will find their character refined to the glory of God.

#### Areas into which the Lord calls us

There are various spiritual spheres into which we are brought by attentiveness to this inward summons or call — the drawing of Almighty God. **The truth of God is designed to excite our spirits when we dwell upon it; while musing upon it the voice of the Lord waxes louder as He calls us forth to Himself and things above.** The summons comes through the Gospel, for it is by that avenue that we are "called" (II Thess. 2:14). As the truth that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them" (II Cor. 5:18) is taken into the heart and pondered we begin to sense our personal need of justification before God. We are thusly called into a state of experiential justification; into a condition of heart where the conscious is "purged from dead works to serve the living God" (Heb. 9:14). Notice the position of the Gospel here; by dwelling upon it and calling it to remembrance (I Cor. 15:1-3) we come into an experience of its truth. No man will ever be able

to rejoice in being justified before God in Christ Jesus until his mind and heart has been given over to a spiritual contemplation of the Gospel. This is because God calls us into such a state in the midst of musings and meditation — it is in that frame of spirit that the call of God comes to the heart. Those inclinations to purity before God, the longing to be pure and holy in His sight — that is God's call to you, and full provision has been made for such in Christ Jesus, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world (Jno. 1:29, 36).

Distinct from the truth of justification yet one with it before God is the reality of a holy character. Holiness flows from justification like the waters flowed out from Ezekiel's throne. Once justification is seen, holiness will flow as we are called and summoned into it. We are "called to be saints" and God hath called us to be "holy" (I Cor. 1:2; I Thess. 4:7). The inclination toward the possession of our vessels in holiness is of the Lord; that is His call! We become holy not by doing certain things, but by being inclined to a certain realm; the heavenly places (Eph. 1:3). Those that hunger and thirst for righteousness shall be filled, that is the promise (Matt. 5:6). **The thing that prohibits people from being holy is not merely the absence of certain exercises and activities, but their inward rebellion at the light of God;** "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men have loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19-21). Those that desire shall have, those that seek shall find, those that ask shall receive — that is the promise of the Lord (Matt. 7:7). That desire, that inclination — that is God's call; it is God speaking to the heart drawing you unto Himself. Pay heed to that call and harden not your heart, for in so doing you shall experience things wondrous and satisfying to your spirit (Heb. 3:8). Those that harden their heart to the growing affection for eternal things will be drawing back unto perdition, for it is by that means that we are brought forward to holiness; by the personal and intimate speaking of the Lord with our heart.

The word of the Lord declares that "if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him" (II Tim. 2:12). **Suffering is an integral part of our experience with the Lord,** of our participation in the Kingdom of God. Yet, we do not attempt to provoke suffering in the flesh by obnoxiousness or foolishness. **Suffering is an experience into which we are called;** i.e., it is the result of our inclinations Godward. We have truly been called to suffer (I Pet. 2:20, 21), and as we pay heed to that call, **that inner voice of summons,** we shall be drawn into conflict with the world. **Suffering is produced because of a clash with the world and its pseudo-philosophy.** We are of another world, citizens of another sphere (Phil. 3:20-21). As such, we are strangers and pilgrims in the world (I Pet. 2:11). To those that "have ears to hear" there comes an appetite for heavenly things, and in proportion to the intensity of that longing there comes a disdain of earthly things. That whole condition of heart produces suffering! You see, you are literally called or summoned into that

state. **Your sensitivity toward God and longing for the things of the Spirit of God places you at variance with the world.** Their thoughts, their ambitions, their views and philosophies all clash with your purposes and will. Thus do you suffer because of the enmity between you and the world. This enmity assumes many different postures; it is not the posture that counts at this point, but the principle. Whether it be the mere foolishness of the world, the overt opposition of the world, or the view of its carnality—suffering is the inevitable result, for all of this bears heavily upon your spirit, now sensitized by Truth. Yes, brother, hearken to that inner still small voice, that call of God, and you shall learn to suffer; but thereby you shall be equipped and made ready to reign.

To the believer there is nothing as rewarding as spiritual intimacy and fellowship with Christ, his Beloved One. This fellowship consists of Christ supping with us and us with Christ (Rev. 3:20), as He takes the things of the Father and gives them to us, also showing us the Father “plainly” (Jno. 16:25). As the two on that road to Emmaeus, our hearts “burn within us” while the Savior communes with us (Lk. 24:32). As we “hear” Him (Eph. 4:20-21) our hearts are made full of joy because that for which we “hunger and thirst” (Matt. 5:6) is given to us in copious quantities. But from whence comes this exceeding great blessing of fellowship with Christ? We are “called” into such a fellowship (I Cor. 1:9), summoned there by the inward drawing of the Father. **Those that have their attention drawn toward the things of God will enjoy the fellowship**

### A SPIRITUAL TRIBUTE TO OUR CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Brother Richard Ebler, author of COMMENTARY ON PHILIPPIANS, monthly installment in THE WORD OF TRUTH, is a true yokefellow in Christ Jesus. A fellow citizen of the heavenly Kingdom, he is a joy to my heart, and we most heartily recommend him to our brethren throughout the world, as worthy of their affectionate prayers. Brother Ebler is 26 years of age, and yet has acquired a degree of wisdom and knowledge in the Kingdom of our Lord not often attained by those many years his senior. He teaches History and English at the Merrillville High School in Indiana, and has been blessed of the Lord to often instruct even in the classroom concerning the faith once delivered to the saints. Having experienced a glorious liberation from several segments of Babylon, he is cleaving unto the Lord with purpose of heart, while executing several vital ministries for the brethren that meet at 26th and Colfax streets in Gary, Indiana. Especially do we commend him publically for his comments on Philippians. They are extremely rich, and are indicative of his close union with our Savior. We thank our God upon every remembrance of him as well as for his irreplaceable contributions to our love and faith, which are in Christ Jesus.

**of Christ if they follow that inclination.** Fellowship with Christ Jesus is the consummation of the call in this respect. Jesus will meet in personal intimacy all those that ponder eternal matters that are revealed by the Apostles and prophets in the Scriptures. Take these precious truths into your heart and hide them—ponder them, for in that act itself you shall experience the gentle wooing of the Father into the restful reality of fellowship with His Son.

There are other areas into which we are called by the Lord, such as spiritual illumination (I Pet. 2:9), which comes as we meditate upon the truths expounded by holy men of God that spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (II Pet. 2:20; 1:19). Too, we are summoned by the inward call into the stabilizing anticipation of hope (Eph. 4:4), as well as the ordinate ease of the soul, which is “the peace of God” (Col. 3:15; I Cor. 7:15). Also, as we ponder the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus, we will be drawn into a great and more effectual realization of the Kingdom of God (I Thess. 2:12), i.e., the rule and reign of Jehovah God will appear more evident to our hearts. But, there is one final area into which we are called which is precious above all else in its contemplation—“eternal glory” (II Pet. 1:3; I Pet. 3:9; 5:10). We are, dear reader, **called** unto eternal glory—summoned there by inward appetites and inclinations. **Those that develop, by grace, a hearty appetite for glory shall surely have it!** Oh, the glorious hope of the believer, that as his heart is prepared for glory by yearning and anticipation, so the promise is enhanced to his heart. **It is by our yearning for glory that we are prepared for it**—and that is actually the call or summons of God to it. That appetite for spiritual things, that longing to be freed from the encumbrances of the flesh, that through disdain for the mundane, and that longing to behold the Savior face to face—**that is the call of God to your heart.** Nourish that longing, feed that anticipation, and you shall surely be fitted, as by sovereign grace, for dwelling in the tabernacle of the Most High. It is there that we would rather be a doorkeeper than to dwell in the tents of wickedness (Psa. 84:10).

In summary, let none quench the gracious influence of the Spirit, the voice of the Lord, as He inclines us unto Himself and liberating truth. See that none hardens his heart, lest these things lose their appeal to him, and he lose his reward in glory. **Thoughts of higher aspirations of soul are not merely coincidental,** they are providential, and they that follow them and receive them joyfully into their hearts are thereby prepared and equipped for such things as earth cannot afford.

### Commentary on Philippians

(From page 2)

Paul says that his bonds encouraged bold preaching. “As the lily is increased by its own juice that flows from it, so is the Church by its sufferings.” Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus were but secret disciples before Christ’s suffering, but upon his death they openly owned him for their Lord (Matt. 27:57, John 19:39). Such are the works of God!

# POETRY FROM THE HEART

BY SISTER LEE KIRKMAN

Sullivan, Indiana

Sister Lee Kirkman is engaged to be married to our contributing editor, brother Dick Ebler. Having recently come into a larger sphere of faith, she was given to express her heart in words most edifying. Like many of us, she has spent a period of time in the confines of spiritual Babylon, but having been instructed of the Lord, her heart was made aware of the inadequacies that resided there, and she has now come into a realm where fuller liberty, larger expression, and greater suffering for Christ is experienced. We commend her unto you as worthy of your love and prayers.

## Joy Behold

Joy behold what God has given  
Joy behold the wondrous plan  
See our great Redeemer seated  
At our Father's strong right hand.

Low the angels bow before Him  
Happily they sing His praise  
This we'll join in bands of glory  
To rejoice for endless days.

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## A New Heart

A new heart may I have, dear Lord?  
A heart of flesh in one accord,  
A heart contrite and broken too,  
A heart that seeks just after you.

O take away this heart of stone  
That wickedly would sin condone;  
And leave not there the blackening stain,  
But stamp upon it Thy own claim.

May humbleness in it be found  
And grace and mercy all abound;  
And may you usurp worldly care,  
And place instead your kingdom there.

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## Pungent Points

Learning the will of the Lord is learning to choose that which nourishes faith rather than that which militates against it.

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Those who center their attention around religious ceremonies and formalism will inevitably seek the approbation of men; while those that focus their attention upon the heart aspire to the approval of God.

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To be "in the Spirit" is to be transported in our hearts and minds into the sphere of ultimate reality; it is to have our perspectives molded in the precise proportion of Holy Scripture.

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To seek things that are above is to aspire earnestly to attain that which is not only outside of our natural beings, but that which is transcendent to the whole natural order.

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The Scriptures speak of setting our **affection**, not affections, on things above. The singular is used because man's heart or mind is actually a single entity, capable of observing and assim-

lating into itself only "one thing." He that would attempt to devote attention toward the mundane and the heavenly at the same time has attempted to divide the indivisible. It is for this reason that Christ declared we cannot serve two masters. It is not merely a point of legality with the Savior—it is the proclamation of an impossibility.

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Truth and error cannot mingle; reality and subterfuge cannot be fused. When the pure and the impure, the clean and the unclean are placed together, all becomes at once impure and unclean. Thus when Satan combined a single word with Jehovah's pronouncement in Eden's garden, his sentence became a lie and a deception; when Israelitish men married heathen women, the nation became perverse. Great energies must be expended in maintaining the truth, therefore, lest all be lost. While perseverance in this matter will not gain the acclaim of the populus, it will nevertheless be met with the approval of God, who inspired Jude to write; "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints." Those who, therefore, engage in such holy activity, are approved of God and are precious in our eyes. God strengthen them!

Divided homes are not hopeless homes! Children that are begotten by a believer and an unbeliever are sanctified by the believer, and the unbelieving may be won by the believing (I Cor. 7: 13-16). Such as are in a situation of division in the home, therefore, should live in hope and strong consolation, striving to live peaceable, while leaning hard on the bosom of our Savior. Their lives should be devoted to the perfection of holiness in the fear of the Lord, adorning themselves with those words and deeds which draw attention to their Lord and Master which is in heaven. If, however, the believer cannot maintain his or her relationship to the Lord and with their mate, they are not under bondage to stay with them. They may "depart"—albeit, in that departure (unless adultery be involved) be reconciled to the single life from that point. Let all who are considering marriage ponder such thoughts well, for here is one area in life where we are not permitted the luxury of making a mistake. These words are meant to comfort only those who have found themselves in a state of division due to post-marital profession of the faith. For others, there is no excuse!

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Those that name the name of Christ are to be encouraged to keep the faith and not relinquish the battle at any point. Though enemies may result from firm adherence to the Lord, yet the righteous man is to hold on his way—at any and all cost!

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Astronomers cannot explain how the star hovered over Bethlehem, geologists cannot explain how the waters of the Red Sea and of Jordan stood as walls creating a path in their midst; botanists cannot explain how a fig tree could wither and die over night due to a verbal curse; nor can the psychologist perceive the workings of the heart and mind. There are matters in which hu-

man wisdom is futile and vain. One such area is that of the heart of man which is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9). Sigmund Freud with all of his purported insight knew nothing of the real man, his reasons for motivation, his deadness toward God, etc. The work of psychoanalysis is pseudo-therapeutic — it uncovers no real issue, only Christ can do that. Psychology is a "science falsely so called", and those that willingly embrace it or subject themselves to it shall find hurt ministered to their spirits and be lulled into spiritual complacency. Temporal administrations must never be sought for eternal ills! Earth wisdom is no substitute for everlasting wisdom that is "from above." Let those that name the Name of Christ forsake and oppose man's attempt to restore man, cleaving to the Lord with purpose of heart, who alone is the "Restorer of the Breach."

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Perseverance must be accomplished through appropriated grace, faith, spiritual determination, vigilance and obedience. The latter three spring from the former two, and are effectual only when they partake of that vitality of eternal life.

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There is a distinctive difference between boldness for truth and sectarian brashness. The former is characterized by a firm proclamation apart from party or system, with no interest in its effect upon organization or establishment. The latter takes the form of a defense of a religious order, and is used for the fortification of that which stands apart from God rather than through God. It is true that "the wisdom that is from above is first of all PURE"; it never is contradictory of itself, and takes all truth joyfully. All other wisdom is brutish and will eventually evidence itself by dealing with personalities, seeking to impugn motives in an attempt to fortify a weak and untenable position.

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The truth of God is not to be segmented in order to the fortification of persuasion. No distinctions should be made in the Scriptures that were not made and expounded by the Apostles and Prophets who laid the foundation of the church (Eph. 2:19-20). If the success of a religious system depends on the perversion of a part of the whole of Scripture, then it is hardly worth embracement. We could recount by name denominations that find it difficult if not impossible to embrace vast segments of the Word, but that is not necessary. It is enough to say, at this point, that **no child of God must become officially affiliated with an organism that is itself an opponent of the truth.** To do such is to become a friend of the world in the most subtle way, and thereby the enemy of God.

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Many have wondered at the negative approach that is often made in THE WORD OF TRUTH. It is because of the nature of the ministry that has been given to us, for which we make no apologies. The Lord, it appears, has placed us at the dung gate, to clear away some of the theological rubbish that has been accumulated around the pillars of truth. If it be offensive to some, we shall

just have to bear that. It is, however, refreshing to the spirit to realize a sense of kinship with the apostles and prophets, as well as a union with our Lord Jesus Christ in a thorough disgust for the perversion of truth. We hold no sympathy for that which alienates from God! primarily because we had to be retrieved from it ourselves.

## —o— The End

The time when Christ my Lord shall come  
Seems distant to my longing heart.  
Each throbbing moment longer seems,  
Until His face at last I see.  
I cry to time, O hasten thou —  
Linger not, but flee away.  
For me time brings a troubling wave  
Which sorely breaks upon my soul.  
O skys — Roll up as parchment scroll,  
Be thou renewed in righteousness,  
While earth beneath with fire be burned,  
Its melting works removed from me.  
Stand! angel on the land and sea,  
With hand toward the heaven lift,  
And cry thou gladsome message plain  
That time shall be no more for aye.  
Were not the hope of cloven skies  
And Christ returning in my eye;  
Were not anticipation wrought  
Of heaven and earth to be removed —  
Metrinks I would expire and die  
In this mean sphere of gaudy sin,  
Where life is death and death is life,  
And hope is wrought in hopelessness.  
No shame shall cover now my face  
Because these things I long to see.  
Nay! hope doth make me unashamed,  
Because of love sent from above.

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## Character Evincing Letters

Dear Brother in Christ:

Greetings to you and co-workers in the wonderful Name of Jesus Christ. I have been receiving your kind THE WORD OF TRUTH; kindly accept our best wishes. . . . We need bound volumes of THE WORD OF TRUTH for our library and proposed bible school. . . .

Yours in the Lord's Name,  
Brother A. Jacob  
Madras State, India

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Our Dear Beloved Brother Blakely:

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him. Psa. 126: 5, 6. Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come (Matt. 24:42). So many are not ready, let alone "watching" for His coming. May He help all of us to do all we can to warn and win as many as possible. . . . We are loving you, and praying for you and all of your wonderful Brothers and Sisters over there. It is wonderful to serve the Lord. I thank God every day for the way He is blessing this work for many thousands of souls that are being changed, and so many marvelous answers to prayer. Thank you again very much for your wonderful ministry of Him. God is blessing, and He is using you in His great way to es-



ublish His Gospel among the all nations over the world.

Ever Faithfully Yours,  
Your Brother in Christ  
Jonathan Myung Dal Kwon, Litt.D.  
Seoul, Korea

(This brother is responsible for the distribution of 20,000 copies of SEEKING THE LORD, a tract written by the editor a short while ago, then translated into the Korean language for distribution among the native peoples there. Pray for that ministry.)

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Dear Brother Given:

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits." One of the Lord's benefits to me has been your fellowship thru correspondence and the Word of Truth. . . .

Yours in His marvelous love,  
Brother Rick Deighton  
Eugene, Oregon

## The One True God

In the past few months the Lord has opened a great and effectual door in the nation of India, permitting us to distribute over 120,000 pieces of literature; messages that the Lord has laid upon our heart. The latest printing involved 80,000 copies of the message "The One True God". This message was translated into the Indian language, and has met with considerable favor with the Lord. This is the English version of that tract, not published in this country before. While it is written for those who have never heard of Jehovah God, its message is nevertheless applicable to the citizenry of this country also. We commend it to you for prayerful deliberation, asking that you beseech the Lord to implement it with His power as it is distributed in India in their native language.

In the world there are many different ideas and conceptions of God. There are as many different ideas of God as there are religions. You have a concept of God yourself — some idea relative to His being, His purpose, His will, and His demands upon your life. Your morality is governed by these conceptions, as well as your ambitions and motives. It may be that you are very fervent in your zeal for a god; that much of your life is spent in self-denial and the rigorous performance of duties which you feel are necessary. Too, perhaps, you are one that entertains only a morbid distaste for any form of strict religion, believing that God is not concerned with the activities of mortals — or that there is no God at all. Whatsoever your condition in respect to this matter, it is needful for me to say that **an idea of God and God are not synonymous**. There is truly a God, and man's idea of Him has no bearing upon His nature or His being. That there truly is a God ought to be axiomatic to every intelligent creature, for it is written in God's Holy Bible; "For the invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal

power and Godhead." An honest observation of the world and the things that are in it by nature, therefore, ought to bring a man to the conclusion that there is a powerful and self-existent God behind it all! Your curiosity ought to be stirred up enough to inquire after God with all of your heart, stretching out, as it were, with your heart and mind and soul to find the True and Living God. It is, after all, imperative that men know the True God, and not be satisfied with merely a conception or idea of God. This little pamphlet is written to acquaint you with the God that made the heavens and the earth, and all things that dwell in them. This is not merely an idea of God, it is the relation of the revelation of God Himself to mankind.

## God Cannot Be Found By Searching

The True God is so great, so high, that He reveals that no man can "find Him out by searching." God must reveal Himself; **He must be on the initiative!** The True God is named Jehovah, and has not only made the heavens and the earth, but created all nations from one blood (man) for to dwell upon the earth. He is not a man of flesh and blood and bones, but a Spirit; and even the very heaven of heavens cannot contain Him. He is higher in order than man; His thoughts and His ways are not the thoughts and ways of man, but as high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are His thoughts above our thoughts, and His ways above our ways. But, in spite of His greatness and magnificence, Jehovah God desires to make Himself known to men, that they may behold His glory in their spirits. He yearns for men to behold His exalted Person, and thus be brought to praise and magnify Him. However, because man can probe nothing beyond his own sphere, God is put on the initiative — He must make Himself known; reveal Himself! This truth is especially palatable to the soul of every man that realizes that this is the desire of God — that He is abundantly willing to make Himself known, for that will mean that glory and honor will accrue to His Name.

## The Revelation Of God A Revelation Of Mercy

The revelation of God is a manifestation of His tender compassion towards we mortals. We are not deserving of such a revelation, but rather would be the more justly treated if God completely obscured Himself from us. Yet, the Creator of heaven and earth puts Himself forward to us, and unveils not only His glorious Person, but also His Mind. He shares with men His purposes and will, and summons them unto Himself for blessing. While He is indignant and filled with wrath because of man's waywardness and proneness to earth, yet in mercy and tender compassion He cries; "Look unto me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth." So gracious is the Lord that He seeks to have you know that He will be merciful to men, though they be sinners, and transgressors of His will and Law. God is against anything that is unlike Himself, and yet He offers mercy and grace to those that are in such a case. Furthermore, the True God is "mighty to save"; that

is, there is no person that is beyond God's mighty power to deliver.

There are no depths into which the Lord cannot reach in mighty power; no heights to which He cannot rise to deliver; no place of obscurity that is beyond His vision or ability to enter and rescue; no death so deep that He cannot summon man forth from it; no life so vital that He cannot supercede and overcome it! It ought to be said here that the term "save" means to "deliver" — deliverance from all the power of God's chief enemy — the prince of evil spirits, Satan. The deliverance pertains not only, however, to this present life, but to that which is to come. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" — a time when all of the men of the world will be brought before their Creator to give an account for the deeds done in their body, whether they be good, or whether they be bad; and with God there is no respect of persons. Because God is absolutely righteous, and "all men are liars" and unrighteous by nature, no man can be justified in His sight. It is only by Infinite Mercy, love and grace, that men can be saved from eternal punishment. God manifests Himself as One that not only has mercy, however, but who actually wills to have mercy upon those that are sinners and ungodly. Other gods, which are by nature NO gods, are set forth as ready to consume all who anger them, and who can only be appeased or satisfied with sacrifices and arduous works by the offenders. It is, however, with great joy, that I proclaim unto you that the True and Living God who "only hath immortality" is not such a god! He is not merely A god, but He is **THE** God. All other gods are products of man's imagination! While they are purported to wait in anger to consume you, the True God is "waiting to be gracious unto you." This is how He desires to be known — and for all who will not receive Him as such, He shall become as a fierce fire which shall consume all of His adversaries — for His adversaries are all those that believe not the revelation of mercy that He has given of Himself.

### **The Supreme Revelation Of God's Person**

The primary demonstration of His love and mercy is to be found in His unspeakable gift to man. This gift was His "only begotten Son". Before the world was ever made, this Son was "in the form of God", Who is a Spirit, and He "counted it not robbery to be equal with God." God's Son was referred to as "THE WORD" before the world was made, and the True God, Jehovah, made the worlds by Him. Everything that was made was created by "the Word of God." Because God is all-wise, He designed a plan which would set forth the glory of His Grace among the heavenly intelligences and spirits which also were before the world — except they were created beings.

Knowing that man would "sin and come short of the glory of God" after being made "in the image of God", He devised a means of restoring man to the Divine fellowship even before man was created. The plan was this; "The Word" would come down to earth and inhabit a body that was

prepared for Him — a body just like that of man who was to be restored — men like you! While in the "body" the "Word" would suffer the deprivations of flesh that men experience, would be tempted in all points like as they were, but yet would overcome evil with good and remain guiltless in respect to personally offending or displeasing God. Because the "Word" was in the form of God, being the "express Image of His Person", coming to earth in a human form is referred to as "God manifest in the flesh." This was Deity Itself united with men — the Eternal with the created, the Holy with the profane, God with man! He was to be the God-man; one that was just as much man as you, yet just as much God as God! In Jehovah God's own good time, He created the world, and made man to have the dominion over it. He made man from the dust of the earth.

Satan, the chief evil spirit, however, deceived man, and caused him to go against the will of God, thus bringing upon mankind the curse of God, for now man was no longer in the "glory of God." As men began to multiply upon the earth, wickedness began to abound, and they drifted further and further away from the will of God. All was hopeless, and the True God was man's enemy rather than his friend, All of this was brought about according to the knowledge of God, and in order to the fulfillment of His great plan of redemption.

"In the fulness of time", however, "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, according to the Divine and eternal purpose. His Name was called "Jesus", and He was miraculously born of a virgin — Mary by name. The Spirit of God conceived the Son of God in her womb, so that His Father was God, and His mother was Mary, a mortal being. Therefore, He is called in the Holy Scriptures of God both "The Son of God" and "The Son of man." He was God because the mission which He was required to fulfill called for nothing less than Omnipotence. He was man because His mission necessitated identification in an experiential way with those whom He was to redeem from the power of the enemy. After a relatively short life of about 33 years in which the Son experienced great inward sufferings, the great manifestation of God's love was wrought. The Living God had to punish sin — display His wrath against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of man. He took their sins and iniquities — all of them — and laid them upon His own Son — Jesus Christ. This Jesus was killed according to God's eternal purpose by His own countrymen — nailed to a cross, which was the sign of the curse. There upon that cross, while His life ebbed away, He was also forsaken and abandoned by His heavenly Father — God.

The God of all heaven cursed His Son because He was bearing in His body on that cross all the sins of the world. Heaven grew dark, and all of the evil spirits converged upon Jesus to stamp out the Divine Life. God, as it were, gave Him over to these diabolical spirits for the fulfillment of His everlasting will. In agony the Son of God hung upon the cross of cursing, rejected by men, forsaken by God, while under the fierce oppres-

sion of Satan and his cohorts. The earth that He had made trembled and shook in convulsions as His blood was shed and His life was taken—yet men stood and reviled Him, challenging Him to come down from the cross and save Himself. But, He must perform the will of His Father in heaven! Therefore, He foregoes His great power, places His Omnipotence in the sheath of submission, and yields up His life willingly. This scene of sorrow was to be, however, the Divinely appointed means of redeeming mankind from the power of God's chief enemy, Satan, for from death Jesus was raised again by the glory of the Father, and ever liveth to rule and reign over all His enemies. Jesus was taken by God back from earth in a cloud, and was received with joy and gladness at the completion of His mission. He was crowned with glory and honor, and given authority over all things in heaven and in earth, even angels and powers, and principalities being made subject to Him. He is seated at the Right Hand of the Father in heaven now—the place of honor and esteem—and all of heaven worships Him, the Father only being excepted.

### **The Word Of Reconciliation**

The Almighty God, in bruising His only begotten Son, slew sin, death, and the prince of death—Satan. Man, upon receiving Jesus Christ (which is another way of God saying we believe on His Name, or trust implicitly in His Person) is forgiven of all his sins—granted a place of favor in God's sight, given the very Spirit of God, and granted the gift of everlasting life with the God of heaven Himself. This is called "reconciliation", and is not purchased with money or gifts, neither do men work for it, or do something for it. When they are persuaded in their hearts of the truth of Christ's work for them—when they see with their understanding that their entire debt has been paid by the Son of God, and that God will pardon them freely upon the basis of Jesus' death—then, I say, the realization of salvation is brought home to the heart. God's revelation calls this the "imputation of righteousness without works"; that is, God calls you righteous, forgives your sins, and acquits you before Himself purely upon the basis of your faith in Christ's blood. Speaking of the work of reconciliation, God's Spirit has inspired men to write; "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

We have been commissioned to merely announce this work of mercy to everyone, and "as many as are ordained to eternal life" will believe. If you find in your heart an inclination to believe this wondrous message of the Gospel of peace—the glad tidings of good things—then you have good reason to be glad, for that inclination was wrought within you by God Himself. Nourish and feed it, and untold blessings shall be your portion. The great work that God's Son performed in coming to the earth and voluntarily submitting to physical and spiritual death has completely satisfied God. God tells us through one of His holy prophets, Isaiah, that when "He (God) saw the travail of Christ's soul, He was satisfied." This means that Jesus has done ev-

erything that is necessary for the appeasement of God in relation to your personal sins and infractions of God's law.

When you have been enabled to see the truth of this in your heart and trust to it, the same God that raised up Jesus from the dead will grant you spiritual renewal within, and the promise of a bodily resurrection when this earth and all things in it shall pass away at the appointment of God. We who know the true God and have believed on His Son, know that our Lord Jesus Christ removed our transgressions as far as east is from west, that He blotted them out as a thick cloud, and buried them in the depths of the sea. He paid the debt we owed to our Creator, the True God. Because He took our sins upon Himself, in His body on the tree, it is said by the Eternal God that Jesus was "made to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." Again, the great message of truth is this, that Jesus came down from heaven and humbled Himself in becoming a man. But through His poverty we become rich; Christ takes our sin, and we take His righteousness, or uprightness before God; Christ becomes inwardly poor, and we thus become inwardly rich before the Lord God. Now, the Gospel that we bring is this; "Be ye reconciled to God", and "receive the atonement." This is not an announcement of demands, but a proclamation of good news, that God "sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin condemned sin in the flesh." That means that none, not even God, can exact the penalty of sin again from those that believe in His Son, Jesus Christ.

### **God Is Sending His Son Back To Earth**

The Lord God has declared that in the end of time, when He is finished with the earth, He is going to send His Son back from heaven to gather all who have believed on His Son together—and they are forever going to live with Him. When Jesus comes again, He will "appear without sin unto salvation" to everyone that is anxiously looking for Him. With this glad gathering of people He shall have an association that is totally divorced from sin; He will not set their sins before their face, but rather shall come to fully put before them the glorious and great salvation that God has wrought through Him. New bodies will be given them that shall not be subject to mortification and weaknesses, infirmities or deprivations of earth. These new bodies will be "fashioned like unto His glorious body", and all believers shall be like the Lord Jesus, for they shall "see Him as He is"—which sight shall transform them fully into the Divine Image. Then, with God and His Son and all of the holy angels, and higher orders of righteous spirits, we shall forever sing and serve the King of all the earth—Jehovah God. Satan will be cast into a great lake of fire, never again to assert himself; never again to cause hardship to the people of God! There, where we shall forever be with the Lord, there shall not be one thing that defiles; but all shall be right, holy, and pure. That is the glorious hope that I set before you. I ask you, can you believe these things? "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear."

that it is not necessary to go into those more lengthy explanations that are more befitting of children than of men.

**The purpose of doctrine is to enable the believer to form a proper conception of spiritual things; to inform him of the unchanging decrees of God and realities of redemption in order to the furtherance of his faith and joy.** By the very nature of this requirement, my religion cannot be an experience-centered one, either in my philosophy or my proclamation. It must be centered in Jesus Christ, in whom all of the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily (Col. 2:9), and therein must focus upon the purposes and will of God. I cannot make, for instance, the experiences of the Apostles or of early Christians the foundation of my doctrine; fetching from the wells of their spiritual walk the slab upon which to lay my theological dogmas. **I must rather embrace and proclaim what these saints of old embraced and proclaimed in order to the experiencing of true reality in my heart and soul.** The apostles richly point this out to our hearts as the Holy Spirit instructs the churches thru them; not merely rehearsing the things that had happened to others, but declaring the great truths of redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and salvation which is with eternal glory (Rom. 4:11; II Cor. 5; Gal. 4; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 2; Col. 2:3, etc.). When nourishing up the church, for instance, the Apostle Paul did not preach Pentecost, or the household conversion of Cornelius, or the conversion of the Ephesian disciples of Acts 19 fame. He rather set forth those truths which center in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Thus did he establish the hearts of believers in reality. I find, however, that all too often today, men are seeking to duplicate experience rather than assimilate the truth, and therein is a serious danger. **Such an attitude militates against Christ and His word, for it seeks to substitute sensibilities for intimate union with and knowledge of Christ.** When conduct is to be altered, the great truth of the cost of our redemption is to be set forth as providing the all-sufficient incentive for such alteration. (Phil. 2:3ff; II Pet. 3:10ff; I Cor. 5:7; Col. 3:1ff, etc.). **The Holy Spirit constrains the hearts of men through the proclamation of settled truth — eternal realities which have been settled in heaven from before the foundation of the world.**

The reason for such procedure is plain; **this places the Lord God on the initiative.** Man, rather than seeking to emulate an experience that is more or less appealing to him, is removed from such a wretched sphere of limitation, and is cast upon God who worketh all in all (Eph. 4:4-6). He no longer leans to his own understanding (Prov. 3:3-5), but, believing that God is just and will do right, he concentrates his attention upon believing the glorious Gospel of the blessed God (I Tim. 1:11), thereby pleasing God (Heb. 11:6) and qualifying (so to speak) for grace (Eph. 2:8-9). What do we say, then? Proclaim the counsel of God — His decrees and purposes, His will and covenant; make it known! Those who embrace that message in truth will not want for experience nor will they find themselves involved in things unlawful. "Preach the Word", is the word (II Tim. 4).

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## The True Sphere of Doctrine

There are two spheres in which truth is found; the eternal and the evidential. In the eternal realm truth has always been, it had no beginning, and it shall have no end. It has the very attributes of Deity in that it frees, edifies, and sustains. In the evidential sphere (where men dwell) the truth is also liberating and sustaining, unchanging, and eternal; but its primary difference is in its administration — it is manifested; i.e., it has an experiential beginning. The manifestation of truth is founded upon its eternality in the heavens where it is "forever settled" (Psa. 119:89). Eternal decrees, election, predestination — these are all in the higher sphere of heaven. Responses, experiences, spiritual phenomenon — these are all in the lower sphere. With these truths in mind, permit me to draw your attention to a subject which I feel to be very vital to the perfection of the saints, as well as their liberation from heretical dogmas that cause men to depart from the faith.

**Doctrine, or teaching, is to be summoned from the higher sphere; i.e., our proclamations of truth are not to be the mere proclamations of experiences, or of other men's responses, but of the great and eternal decrees of God.** Justification by faith, sonship with God, the forgiveness of sins, the empowerment of the believer — all of these truths have their root in the eternal counsels of God. **Responses to the truth are produced by the proclamations of the truth itself, and patient involvement in the will of God will produce experience** (Rom. 5:1-3).

It was said of the early church that they continued stedfastly in "the Apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42); i.e., they persevered in proclaiming the same teaching and preachment that was taught of the Apostles themselves. The body of the "Apostles' doctrine" consisted of this message; "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them . . . be ye reconciled to God" (II Cor. 5:18-19). The proclamation of justification by faith and the eternal decrees of God, together with the implications of those doctrines in relation to the handling of life, was the totality of the Apostolic presentations. Even a cursory examination of the Scriptures will reveal this truth, and we trust