

# 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 MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

*"He shall glorify Me . . ." - Jno. 16:14*

The Holy Spirit is the means whereby man is infused with the life of God, and therefore He is of great importance to the believer. It is written that God hath given us of His "Holy Spirit" (I Thess. 4:8). *Because there is no more personal or intimate part of an individual than his spirit, it is to be understood that God, in giving us His Holy Spirit, has granted unto us the very "Divine Nature" (II Pet. 1:4) and "that Eternal Life" (I John 1:1).* The ministry of that Holy Spirit, which we have received "because we are sons" (meaning "sons of promise" Gal. 4:5-6), is one of great glory - a ministry, I say, which is "rather glorious", as Paul was wont to put it (II Cor. 3:8).

*The Holy Spirit is always viewed in association with our Lord Jesus Christ, and we believers must exercise ourselves in maintaining that association in our presentation of His Person. Never is the Spirit disassociated from the Son in redemption, never exalted above the Savior, or pictured as engaged in a ministry distinctive from that of the "Lord's Christ". He is referred to as "the Spirit of Christ" (Rom. 8:9), "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:2), "The Spirit of His Son" (Gal. 4:6), and "the Spirit of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:9). Paul refers to the saints as "Epistles of Christ . . . written with the Spirit of the living God" (II Cor. 3:3). You see, then, how that the Holy Spirit is not to be divorced from Christ—not to be considered as possessing or ministering something that the Son does not minister and do! Those who "receive" Christ, therefore (Jno. 1:12) are those who also possess the Spirit of Christ, for one cannot possess the one without the other! Jesus, speaking of the impartation of the Holy Spirit, declared; "I will send the Comforter" (Jno. 15:26; 16:7), while in another place, speaking of the same event, He declares; "I will come unto you" (John 14:18). . . . The point to be seen here is this: *Christ dwells in us through the Spirit, so that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Rom. 8:9).* To have Christ is to have the Spirit, and to have the Spirit is to have Christ. I hear much these days of those who confess that they have Christ dwelling within, and yet they feel that they do not possess the Holy Spirit. Such thought is foolishness, for the Spirit is "THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST". Let none be "led away by the error of the wicked" (II Pet. 3:17) into contemplating the Holy Spirit, therefore, in disassociation from our Lord Jesus Christ!*

Jesus proclaimed of the Spirit; "HE SHALL GLORIFY ME!" i.e., "He shall shed light and radiance upon My Person; He shall exalt and extoll My attributes and

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## THE WORD OF TRUTH

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We are not called upon to worship Him, nor do we have examples cited of people doing so. He rather instructs us to worship God through Christ Jesus the Lord, who is "the Express Image of His (God's) Person" (Heb. 1:3). By way of brief, but meaningful, diversion, prayers are not to be directed to the Holy Spirit either, nor are songs, or any manner of conversation. Christ did not die to bring us to the Holy Spirit, but to bring the Holy Spirit to us, and us to God! Prayers, songs, and general conversation directed to the Holy Spirit evidences a very basic ignorance of the glory of redemption, and the significance of reconciliation! It is the Spirit Himself that assists our feeble efforts in offering prayers and supplications to God Himself (Rom. 8:26). It is interesting to observe that among these who claim to especial possession of the Spirit, there is an unbecoming emphasis of the Holy Spirit, which eventuates in the obscurement of Christ's real work of power and glory. However, such is not the emphasis of the Scripture — rather, our Lord Jesus and His work are set forth as the dominate themes of true spiritual revelation, and it is with these matters that the Spirit of truth occupies Himself.

## THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

(Continued from the Cover)

virtues; He shall occupy Himself with the illumination of My Being." **The Holy Spirit, therefore, was to dispel the natural ignorance of the Lord which existed by displaying the "glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ" (II Cor. 3:18), revealing Him to the hearts of those whom God had "chosen unto salvation from the beginning" (II Thes. 2:13).** In this ministry, the Holy Spirit is **unobtrusive**; He does not draw attention to Himself, but rather points to Jesus. The truth of this is seen in the events that took place on the day of Pentecost. It was there that the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit, and under His influence began to speak "as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-4). This mighty display of spiritual power eventuated in at least two observations; neither of which were directed toward an observation of the Holy Spirit as such. One was this; "we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God" (Acts 2:11); the other was this: "These men are full of new wine" (Acts 2:13). Now I ask you, who was there that spoke of the Holy Spirit there? What person is recorded as saying: "What a wonderful work the Holy Spirit is doing there"? Not even Peter spoke as such, but rather lifted up the Lord Jesus, proclaiming His death, resurrection, and ascension into glory. He was occupied with the Person of Christ, not a commentary upon the work of the Holy Spirit; rather, **his comments were the work of the Spirit.** When the Holy Spirit sets about to work there can only be two reactions; "This is the good word of the Lord"; or "This is foolishness to me" — there is no middle ground; **indifference itself is merely an accrediting of the message to foolishness!** Can you see this, dear reader, that the Holy Spirit occupies Himself unobtrusively with the Lord Jesus — not with Himself!

In such a capacity of ministration, the Holy Spirit is never set forth as the object of worship.

Because it is the Person of Christ that the Holy Spirit exalts and magnifies, it is imperative at this point, to make a few remarks concerning the nature of these attributes. **Christ's character or Being has primarily to do with redemption and reconciliation.** This is how He is to be "set forth", even as the Father set Him forth; "to be the propitiation for our sins" (Rom. 3:23-25). **The love of Christ, His mercy, compassion, power, knowledge, wisdom, longsuffering, instruction, meekness, etc., are all to be viewed in connection with our salvation** — they were all necessary to the implementation of the purpose of God, which was to "deliver us from this evil world" (Gal. 1:4). The approach to Christ which speaks of the relevancy of His Being to "every-day living"; etc., is not of God! **Christ's relevancy is only to matters that pertain to redemption and reconciliation.** So far as we believers are concerned, that encompasses the whole of "things pertaining to life and godliness". **The emphasis of the Spirit, therefore, is the declaration of Christ's work as Redeemer and Savior!** The shedding of His blood, His death, resurrection, ascension, subjugation of Satan and all of the evil powers, and second coming in power and glory for those who "look for Him" — these are the matters of which the Holy Spirit speaks. All through the epistles, the Holy Spirit "moved" upon men to write concerning Jesus Christ and the efficacy of His death. They spoke of the Law being done away by Christ, of the sins of the "children" being remitted through His blood, of the overthrow of Satan, of the removal of enmity, of peace with God, of righteousness and joy — all these matters flow forth from Christ's redemptive work! **Christ's attributes, let it be once again affirmed, are set forth the more gloriously in His atoning work; in the accomplishment of our salvation to the glory of God.** We are not to attempt to view Christ apart from our own redemption, for it was therein that all of the fulness of God was manifested in His Person. A few Christ-exalting passages ought to suf-

face to demonstrate this fundamental truth of the Holy Spirit's primary interest in the glorification of Jesus Christ.

"But now in Christ Jesus, ye who were sometimes afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (Eph. 2:13-16). Here the virtues of Jesus are set forth in connection with the reconciliation of both Jew and Gentile in one body unto God. His supernatural wisdom and power were effectual in such a stupendous work! He drew together by His own infinite Person both those who had been tutored by the Law, and those who were without law — who had fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23), and whose "iniquities like the wind had carried them away." **When you view the Person of Christ, then, view it in connection with this great reconciliatory work!** Again, it is written; "And having made peace through the blood of the cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven. And you, that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled, in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in His sight" (Col. 1:20-22); and again; "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col. 2:14-15). There, praise the Lord, the great Christ of God is set forth as the Conqueror over our "adversary the Devil, who walketh about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (I Pet. 5:8-9), You see, dear reader, **Jesus cannot possibly be more glorified to we mortals than in the capacity of Lord and Savior, who hath not only triumphed over all that was against us, but who hath so done it as to enable the Father to "cause us to triumph always in Christ Jesus"** (II Cor. 2:14). Other passages which set forth the ministry of the Holy Spirit in declaring and glorifying Christ are as follows; Eph. 5:2, 25-26; Titus 2:14; Heb. 1:3; 7:27; 9-12-28; 10:12-20; 12:2; I Pet. 2:21, 24; Rev. 1:5, etc. This, then, is how the Holy Spirit sets forth the Christ; **not as one that bears relevancy to the current problems of our day, but as One that has brought us to God** (I Pet. 3:12); **as one that hath reconciled us to God** (II Cor. 5:18-20), **and caused us to be accepted by the Father** (Eph. 1:2-4). Never does a spiritual mind consider Christ apart from deliverance from sin, reconciliation to the Father, atonement, and the remission of sins! Those minds that are so prone to think of Christ as a mere helper and strengthener for daily duties do greatly evidence the lack of Holy Spirit ministrations; for Christ is best glorified in the role of Redeemer, Savior, and Deliverer. Let no soul deny it!

The implications of this text (John 16:14) are many, of which we shall but name a few. First, Jesus declared of the Spirit; "HE shall glorify my". This shows to us the utter destitution of the "natural man" (I Cor. 2:14). **Without the Spirit's effectual ministry, Christ should not be seen in His true glory.** It is only that blessed unobtrusive ministry of the Spirit of Truth that causes us to not know Christ after the flesh (II Cor. 5:16), and which enables us to "look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:1-2). **To be spiritually discerning** (I Cor. 2:14) is, then, **to be under the express tutelage of the Holy Spirit** (called elsewhere that "unction or anointing" — (I Jno. 2:20, 27). However adept men may be in the presentation of the Lord, however their minds might appear to be keen, no man can truly know Christ until He has been glorified to Him by the Holy Spirit.

**Second it is to be understood that the primary activity of the Spirit is ministerial;** that is, He occupies Himself with ministering Christ. He is not Himself the object of attention, nor, indeed, does He draw attention to Himself. He always is pointing toward Christ Jesus, glorifying Him. The Scriptures set Him forth as one that ministers (Rom. 5:5; 8:26; I Cor. 6:11; Gal. 5:5; 5:22ff; Eph. 2:18, etc.). **When we are admonished to "quench not the Spirit", or "grieve not the Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption"** (I Thess. 5:19; Eph. 4:30), **we are to understand that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to always be joyfully received.** This is done by continuing faithfully to "crucify the flesh together with the affections and lusts" (Gal. 5:24). As we "walk in the Spirit", we continue to put off the old man which is corrupt, and put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him (Eph. 4:20-25). **Sowing to the Spirit** (Gal. 6:7-8) **is that blessed exercise whereby the spiritual appetite is fed and nourished while the fleshly appetite and the old man is mortified and denied its base desires.** To all such as indulge in this holy activity, the voice of the Spirit will be the more clearly heard, and Jesus Christ will appear more fully glorified. It might be here added that the person who walks after the flesh, who does not expend his energies in the crucifixion of his natural desires, cannot possibly see Jesus as He truly is; and thus he will not glory in the Lord, but will "neglect" the "great salvation" which is "in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (Heb. 2:3; II Tim. 2:20). It is, therefore, imperative that the Lord Jesus be kept in our hearts, and that a vision of His glorious Person be kept in our eye. This is the exclusive ministry of the Holy Spirit, thereby making perseverance patience, longsuffering, and endurance a reality by faith! How we praise the Lord for this glorious ministry of the Holy Spirit, whereby Christ is glorified unto us, and set forth in all of His glorious majesty.

**In closing, let it be said that the Holy Spirit is to be considered primarily in connection with His illuminative work; in connection with His exaltation and glorification of the Lord Jesus**

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## THE WARRIOR FROM HEAVEN

"He also Himself took part of the same (flesh and blood); that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil". (Hebrews 2:14)

Our Lord Jesus Christ has wrought the complete and thorough overthrow of Satan! He has emancipated mankind and defeated the arch enemy of God. This victory had been attempted before, but never accomplished. Many a holy man — many a prophet — would have accomplished this defeat were he able to do so. The will for such a victory was present betimes, but the means was not. Every mortal from Adam to Christ confronted the Evil One and lost the battle. Without a single intermittent period "death reigned from Adam to Moses" (Rom. 5:4). The sons of men came crashing down from youthful innocence until it could be said "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). The discerning eye wells up with tears when the unprecedented success of Satan is seen. He ran roughshod over mankind, deceiving and defeating men without a single exception. Adam — thoroughly perfect morally — was sent to the depths of ruin with a thundering fall. Moses, a man faithful in all of his house was provoked to speak "ill advisedly with his lips" (Heb. 3:2, 3; Psa. 106:33). David, that "man after God's own heart" and the "sweet psalmist of Israel" (I Sam. 13:14; II Sam. 23:1) was provoked to commit adultery and murder, while Abraham, the father of the faithful twice lied about Sarah his wife; and Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel, was guilty of deception. Unbelief spread its net over the nations, and the tenacious talons of covetousness sank into the hearts of all men. None could be found to deliver — none could be found to stand in the gap! It is unanimously declared that "there is none righteous, no not one" (Rom. 3:10ff). Men's iniquities like the wind "carry them away", and their righteousnesses all fade as a leaf (Isa. 64:6). Is there anyone that can deliver? Can man be rescued from the dilemma of sin?

We read of one Noah that "found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Gen. 6:8). Can he deliver the race? He builds an ark to the saving of his house (Gen. 11:7). But that "old serpent" works his wiles on the old patriarch, and while the waters of the flood were vivid and fresh in the mind, Noah became drunk with the fruit of the vine, and was seen in his nakedness by his own offspring (Gen. 9:22).

Perhaps Moses, that faithful servant, can redeem men. He has faith! He "chose" to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Heb. 11:25-26) — he will surely be able to rescue us. But no! Satan also has his way with this holy man. God even becomes angry with Moses because he fails to circumcise his own son, and stands in the way to actually kill Moses (Ex. 4:20-26). Further, his entrance into the promised land is forbidden because he "believed not

to sanctify" God "in the eyes of the children of Israel" (Num. 20:11-12). He cannot redeem us, even though the law "came by" him (John 1:17).

David, a man after God's own heart, whose psalms and odes evidenced unsurpassed tenderness before the Lord — he can rescue us if anyone can! But no! The Temptor assaults David in an unprecedented way. He sees Bethsheba, he lusts, he commits adultery, he murders! He becomes known before the Lord not only as the "sweet psalmist of Israel" but also as "a man of war that hath shed blood" (I Chron. 28:3). He was not even permitted to build God an earthly house, let alone bring fallen men back to the Living God from whence they had been alienated.

The list of prospective deliverers is endless . . . until they come under the all-scrutinizing eye of the Lord God. All were sinners, all were unrighteous, all required a Savior themselves! They could by no means redeem their own brother (Psa. 49:7). Whether we speak of Samson, Isaiah, Samuel, Noah, or Jeremiah — we confront the same enigma of sin! Even the apostles fail to qualify — Peter, John, Paul — they too require forgiveness. Peter denied the Lord, John forsook Him on the night of His betrayal, and Paul persecuted Him unknowingly. What shall we do? Will man ever be delivered? Even the Lord Himself "wondered that there was none to uphold" (Isa. 63:5). When an intercessor was needed, it was declared, "I sought for a man among them that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before Me for the land, that I should not destroy it: BUT I FOUND NONE" (Ezek. 22:30).

So thorough is Satan's victory that when the Almighty gives a **holy and spiritual law** to men it only **condemns** them. With one voice the honest-hearted cry out; "the commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death" (Rom. 7:10). From every corner of earth, every continent, every nation, every city, every home, comes the lament; "There is **none** than can deliver" (Isa. 43:13; Job 10:7); "There is **none** to help" (Psa. 22:11); There is **none** to guide" (Isa. 51:18); "There is **none** to plead" (Jer. 30:13). Individuals cry out before the Lord "Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death" (Rom. 7:24). Helpless! Hopeless! It is a day of jubilation for Satan!

This plight continues uninterrupted for four long and dusty milleniums. If such a thing as complacency can exist in hell, surely it is there now. Death has swallowed up the entire human family, save for Enoch and Elijah. Unholy laughter and prideful confidence fills the wicked legions of Satan. Apollyn has dominated; the Destroyer has prevailed! But before the fifth millenium of time has proceeded very far, an angel from God is sent to the hill country of Galilee — a remote, yet central portion of the earth. There a young virgin named Mary receives an announcement of a coming Deliverer — A Savior. One like Job desired when he wept for a "Daysman" (Job 9:33). It was told her, "He shall **SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS**" (Matt. 1:21)! What an an-

nouncement! Was the unchallenged reign of death at last to be broken? Was the adversary of men to be finally overthrown and destroyed? Heaven could not keep silent! A Savior was coming from the Throne room to earth, disguised as a "Babe". He would enter the battle arena with all of the handicaps of those He came to save! He would enter enemy territory and set the battle in array: away from home! He was "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom 8:3), having humbled Himself, taking upon Himself the form of a servant and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil. 2:7-8). He entered into the battle arena in the weakest possible form — an infant. He was vulnerable (as men see it) in every sense of the word. It hardly seems that any success can be expected — but wait: let us stand and view this battle as it begins to be set in array!

The first attack of this decisive battle is launched by Satan while as yet the Conqueror from Heaven is a baby. Working with one of his own, Apollyon provokes Herod to publish an edict that authorized and commanded the slaughter of all children under two years of age. The Anointed One fell into this category, and He was geographically in the area where the mandate was issued. The soldiers were dispatched and the slaughter of the innocents began. What would the outcome of this Satanic initiative be? If the infant King is slain, the hopes of all men will be dashed upon the rocks of despair! But wait! Aid is summoned from the higher Kingdom! An angel of God is dispatched to warn Joseph that the life of the child is in jeopardy. He is told to go to Egypt — a citadel of Satanic power and idolatry. There, in the very depth of spiritual darkness and demonic superiority, the child whose goings forth are from old, even from everlasting (Micah 5:2) is "nourished from the face of the serpent", and preserved from destruction. Satan cannot find Him, let alone slay Him. The time for the crucial and decisive battle with our ancient foe has not yet come!

During the years that follow, Satan continues his successful work of deception among men. A moral decline among the populace, wicked and depraved political leaders, and false prophets flourish. It seems as though no one is here to contest the spread of iniquity. Death reigns without exception over the whole of the race of men. But all is not lost; There are some even now that have seen the "holy child", and have spread the Word! Simeon is ready to die, having seen the Salvation of God (Lk. 2:29-31). Anna the prophetess has made known the news of the Deliverer's birth to those who are waiting for redemption (Lk. 2:38). From among the common people, shepherds have seen and have published the good news that a Savior has been born. From among the noble, wise men from the East have bowed the knee to the veiled "Prince of the kings of the earth". The news cannot be kept quiet! The hold that despair had upon men is starting to lose its grip! Illuminated hearts begin to sense that people that sit in darkness are about to

"see a great light" (Isa. 9:2). The stage is being Divinely set for the great conflict!

Between twenty and thirty years pass without a record being left us of any serious encounter between the King of kings (Rev. 17:14) and the "prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2). But we may rest assured that Satan is not idle during our Lord's adolescence and young adult years. It is revealed to us that He was "tempted in all points like as we are" (Heb. 4:15). Whatever attacks were made upon Jesus of Nazareth were actually resisted with effort, for we read that He not only "suffered being tempted" (Heb. 2:18), but that He remained "without sin" (Heb. 4:15-16).

The second major offense was again launched by Satan. At the very threshold of His ministry, when He had fasted for forty days following His baptism, our Lord and Savior was confronted with the insidious subtlety of the Wicked One. No sooner had the Spirit of God descended upon Him and led Him into the wilderness than Satan "tempted" Him (Lk. 4:1-2; Matt. 4:1). The temptation came in its apex at the conclusion of those forty days and forty nights (Matt. 4:2). To a hungry Man, the Temptor brought the enticement to turn stones into bread. To an obscure Son, Satan hurled the fiery dart of putting God to the test; jumping off of the pinnacle of the temple in hopes that the angels would, in fact, bear Him up, lest He dash His foot against a stone. To a King without an apparent kingdom, the Devil showed the kingdoms of the world and their glory, saying that they could be His if He would fall down and worship the old serpent (Matt. 4:3-10; Lk. 4:3-12). In all three of these heavy and subtle temptations our Lord Jesus reached into the arsenal of God's Word, and not only neutralized the power of the darts of the Devil, but completely repulsed his attack. It is written; "And when the Devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season" (Lk. 4:13), and again; "And the Devil leaveth Him" (Matt. 4:11). Satan had suffered defeat more thoroughly than he ever had before! But he is not discouraged, nor has he any intention of surrendering the battle. He "leaveth" the Lord, as it were, to regroup his forces and to plan new and more extensive assaults.

The next major offensive is to be launched by Heaven's Missionary, and He presses the battle with vigor. He finds one of Abraham's daughters that has been bound with a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years, and He looses her with a word (Lk. 13:16). He finds another, indwelt by a legion of demons, and casts them out with a word (Mark 5:9). He reaches into the extremities of Satan's kingdom and finds a child with an evil spirit, and with a rebuke of the mouth, the child is set free (Matt. 17:14-19). He thrice invades the region of the dead, loosing the pangs of death for Lazarus (Jno. 11:43ff), Jairus' daughter (Lk. 8:51-56), and the only son of the widow of Nain (Lk. 7:11-15). Blinded eyes are opened, deaf ears are unstopped, the strings of impotent tongues are loosed and heard to praise the

Lord audibly. The dreaded disease of leprosy departs from some, while withered hands and lame limbs are restored. Throughout that Galilean countryside the foundations of the kingdom of darkness began to tremble and shake. Apparently impregnable walls began to crumble and fall. Individuals that had been blind and lame from the mother's womb were granted though vision and mobility. In short, with the "finger of God", Jesus casts out devils, proving that the Kingdom of God had come to men (Luke 11:20). The Gospel is "preached to the poor", multitudes are fed with the provisions of a single lad, and empty nets are filled miraculously with fish. The Kingdom of darkness is seen to shake and tremble as the Mighty Conqueror uses but His finger!

Still, the Temptor battles on relentlessly! He moves Herod to behead John the Baptist, that blessed and faithful harbinger of the Lord Jesus. He stirs up the rulers of the people to seek to trap Jesus, and even to slay Him (Matt. 26:4; Lk. 22:2; Jno. 5:18; 7:1). But Satan cannot stay the mighty arm of the Lord's Christ! Truly, the various appellations ascribed to the Lord Jesus Christ are seen to be accurate and precise as He tramples down the walls of ignorance and oppression which had been erected by Satan, breaking the chains and fetters of darkness which had bound multitudes for milleniums. Think of some of the ascriptions given to our King; "Captain" (Heb. 2:10), Deliverer (Rom. 11:26), Governor (Matt. 2:6), Judge (Acts 10:42), King (Matt. 21:5), Leader (Isa. 55:4), Lord (Rom. 1:3), Lion of the Tribe of Judah (Rev. 5:5), Potentate (I Tim. 6:15), Prince (Acts 3:15), Ruler in Israel (Mic. 5:2). For the first time, the Devil has confronted a foe that cannot be stopped. In fact, this heavenly warrior will "not fail nor be discouraged" (Isa. 42:4).

After over three years of utter frustration, Satan plots his final and most vicious attack. He gathers together all of his diabolical ingenuity, his motley force of demonic spirits and the hosts of fallen angels. He provokes the chief priests and the rulers, the people, Pontius Pilate, Herod, and the Gentiles (Acts 4:27). He infiltrates, as it were, the very inner circle of the disciples that accompanied Jesus. One of the Lord's own — Judas Iscariot, a "devil from the beginning" (Jno. 6:70) — becomes the manly instrument of betrayal. His offensive role was prophesied of old in these words "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me" (Psa. 41:9). Satan "put it into his heart" to betray the Lord Jesus to His enemies (Jno. 13:2). This was to inaugurate the most critical battle of all. The fate, as it were, of the whole race of man is to be determined by this final confrontation!

See the Prince of life become "exceedingly sorrowful unto the death" (Mk. 14:34) as the Satanic offensive begins. His spirit is "heavy", His heart is sad. He makes His way into the Garden of Gethsemane, where He "oft resorted" (Jno. 18:2). A band of beleaguered and confused disciples are with Him. As they cross over the brook Cedron (Jno. 18:1), He looks at His followers and says, "Sit ye here, while I go and pray

yonder" (Mt. 26:36). Taking "Peter and the two sons of Zebedee" with Him, it is said that He "began to be sorrowful and very heavy" (Mt. 26:36-38). The "Old Serpent" is increasing the intensity of his heartless attack. How often he had provoked holy men to act in unwise and thoughtless fashions! Adam was provoked to eat forbidden fruit, Abraham to lie about his wife, Moses to speak ill-advisedly with his lips, Noah to become drunk with new wine, Jonah the prophet to run from the Living God, David to commit adultery and murder, Solomon to be carried away with the idols of his wives! History is cluttered with evidences of his success. Sorrow has been one of his ancient weapons. It has constrained mighty men like Elijah to even request death, others to speak wrong and act wrong! A hitherto unknown measure of sorrow is cast like a mantle upon the soul of Jesus. This covering of sorrow was to his soul what Job's boils were to his body. It is as though Jesus is in a winepress, being pressed "out of measure". He cries out to the Living God; "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me" (Matt. 26:39). Does He tremble on the brink of death? The entire race of man hangs in the balance! If He does not go through with the sacrifice, hope will forever be vanquished. No mortal will ever have anything but a "fearful looking for of judgement and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversary" (Heb. 10:27). Our Lord meets the temptation boldly, and wins the first round: "Nevertheless, **not** as I will, but as **Thou wilt**" (Mt. 26:39b). Rising, our Savior returned to His disciples in quest of fellowship, only to find that the Temptor was attacking from that vantage point also. He finds them asleep at this most critical hour! With a lament in His voice He says, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour" (Mt. 26:40). What measure of the Divine heart was projected in those tearful and pleading words we mortals will never know this side of the great gulf!

The intensity of the warfare increases as the Lord Jesus returns to His vigil of prayer. He is suffering, "being tempted", and sends to heaven on the wings of prayer "strong crying with tears" (Heb. 2:18; 5:7). So fierce is Satan's diabolical assault that an angel is dispatched from heaven to "strengthen Him" (Lk. 22:43). Having received strength, He again grapples with the great Deceiver. The word tells us of the unfathomable energy that is being exerted: "And being in an agony, He prayed the more earnestly" and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Lk. 22:44). But soon, our Master emerges triumphant from this battle to face the covetous and fallen Judas — Jesus' own "familiar friend" (Psa. 41:9) — as well as the soldiers. He then submits, after a brief altercation involving Peter, to captivity at the hands of representatives of "His own" (Jno. 1:11).

Relentlessly Satan presses his energetic offensive. He now seeks to provoke the Savior to anger, hasty speech, and improper response. He has had alarming success already among other of the sons of men with this tactic. He provoked Cain to slay righteous Abel because of jealous anger,

Moses slew an Egyptian once, and spoke ill-advisedly with his lips on another occasion. Who can forget Simeon and Levi who "in their anger slew a man, and in their selfwill they digged down a wall" (Gen. 49:6). O, this tactic has already brought forth excellent results for the Evil One. What an offensive he now launches against the Lord! No effort — no energy is spared. **Success for Satan will mean the final doom of all men!** The King of glory is now submitted to the outrages of men controlled and animated by the "prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2). They mock Him, crown Him with thorns, buffet Him, spit on Him, pluck the hair from His face, and beat Him mercilessly. They shuttle Him, so to speak, between Herod and Pilate amid the dark and forboding hours of eventide, submitting Him to the fickleness of unregenerate men. What is His reaction to this unjust and unmerciful treatment? "As a lamb before the shearer, so opened He not His mouth" (Isa. 53:7), prophesied Isaiah; and well was it fulfilled — "He answered nothing" (Mt. 27:12). When finally faced with an exasperated Pontius Pilate, He answers with a note of finality and spiritual composure; "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above" (Jno. 19:10). Satan has lost another round in his quest to thwart our redemption!

Some dreary hours pass, and we again see the Lord Jesus subjected to the special offensive of Satan. Our Lord Jesus is fixed upon a cross — nailed there by "wicked hands" (Acts 2:23). Suspended, as it were, between heaven and earth He hangs — rejected by men, and rejected by His Heavenly Father — the Living God. "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of Thy waterspouts" (Psa. 42:7) that awful day on Golgatha's hill. Our Lord Jesus became "a worm, and no man; a reproach of men and despised of the people" (Psa. 22:6). In the hour of His greatest need "all that see Him laugh Him to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head saying, He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him: let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him" (Psa. 22:7-8). He is left alone upon the cross with "none to help" (Psa. 22:11). "Many bulls" compass Him, they gape upon Him with their mouths "as a ravening and roaring lion" (Psa. 22:13). Our Savior is "poured out like water, and all His bones are out of joint: His heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of His bowels. His strength is dried up like a potsherd; and His tongue cleaveth to His jaws", as He is brought into "the dust of death" (Psa. 22:14-15). His very bones stare upon Him (Psa. 22:17) as "he that had the power of death, that is the Devil", rushes in like a flood. Fallen spirits, demons, Satan himself, wicked men — they all encompass and rush upon the Lord in the full vigor of wickedness. This is "their hour and the power of darkness" (Lk. 22:53). At the conclusion of that awful hour, with darkness covering the face of the earth as the sun blushed and covered its face in the presence of the wickedness of men at its apex, our Lord Jesus "bowed His head and gave up the ghost" (Jno. 19:30). From all visible appearances, Satan has won, and

the last major offensive has gone to the power of darkness!

Three days and three nights pass, and there is no word from heaven! Women weep as they make their way to a garden tomb. Disciples walk discouraged along the road to Emmaeus. Others return to their fishing trade. It was a sad time around the regions of Jerusalem, that holy city which had heard the sound of the voice of Son of man. Death had apparently won another round in Satan's interminable struggle for power. But wait — suddenly there is a shaking from among the region of the dead! Like Samson of old, the Lord Jesus shakes Himself — the powers of darkness cannot hold Him in the grave! From a holy expedition to the spirits in prison, the Son of God returns to His body. The gates of death are torn off the hinges of captivity, and death meekly bows to the prince of life! It "is not possible" that the Lord's Christ should be holden by the pangs of death (Acts 2:24). He bursts the bars asunder, and leading captivity captive returns from the grave, having "abolished death", and "destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (II Tim. 1:10; Heb. 2:14).

With that resurrection from the dead there sprang an unexpected harvest from an apparently barren and forsaken land. Hope, hitherto weak, now sprang to life (I Pet. 1:3). We were even saved by that resurrection (I Pet. 3:21). In fact, when Jesus was raised from the dead, all of His people were raised with Him (Col. 3:1); i.e., they were thoroughly released from the dominion of Satan. They gained "access to God" (Eph. 2:18) and the forgiveness of their sins. The head of the serpent was bruised according to the ancient prophecy (Gen. 3:15). Satan's kingdom was spoiled, and he was made a "show of openly", Christ gloriously triumphing over him (Col. 2:15). The warrior from heaven had won — unquestionably won. From thenceforth one in Christ need only "resist the devil", and he will "flee from him" (Js. 4:7).

And you, dear reader — are you taking full advantage of this glorious victory?

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## THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

(From page 3)

**Christ to the hearts of men.** Let others think of Him as an assistant if they will, but I shall glory in His ministry, whereby Jesus Christ has become precious to my heart. I exhort you therefore to a consideration of the Apostle and High Priest of your profession (Heb. 3:1), in glad anticipation that when such consideration is given, the Holy Spirit will speak to your heart and illuminate your minds concerning Him with Whom we have to do! Amen.

# THE GOSPEL—A PROCLAMATION OF WHAT THE LORD HAS DONE FOR US, NOT WHAT THE LORD IS DOING IN US

Experience is, in the current usage of the word, a term describing a work which the Lord has done within us. This is a wonderful thing, and has its place in the Kingdom of God — **but it is not a proper subject for preaching.** The Gospel, or glad tidings, is not a proclamation of what the Lord is currently doing in me — however great it may be. Rather, it is a declaration, or report, of what has **already** been wrought **in my behalf**; the activity of Jesus Christ toward God the Father in the behalf of me, a child of wrath by nature. Yet, there is a current trend in the direction of substituting experience for Gospel, and actually creating an idol out of such experience. This is alarming to those who possess any degree of spiritual understanding (Col. 1:9). It is generally thought that relating personal experiences will challenge believers and non-believers alike to seek similar experiences, thereby procuring to themselves great blessings. Naively believing that this is proper, great energies are expended in this direction in the apparently sincere conviction that it is advancing the Kingdom of God. The Gospel, by which we are saved (I Cor. 15:1-4) has evidently lost its "power" unto salvation (Rom. 1:16) under such a system, and thus men concoct their own messages of light and illumination — at least it appears that this thought has been embraced.

By "experience", I mean happenings which are accredited to the Lord — "accredited" I say, because it is questionable, in my thinking, that all such reports are properly categorized as rehearsals of the "righteous acts of the Lord" (Judges 5:11). **Let it be clear that there is room for the relation of such events in truth, and that such reports are good and wholesome. But, they are never to take the place of the Gospel — never considered to be Gospel!** Further, they are not to be made the basis for fellowship, but rather are to be held as a means that enable us to rejoice with one another in understanding and spiritual union. It is lamentable that there are so few, in most "churches", that actually have anything to report concerning the Lord working in their lives. Few can get beyond the juvenility of rain, sunshine, families, and health. The great and glorious results of "walking in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4), and of "walking in the light as He is in the light" (I John 1:7) are virtually unknown to my myriads that claim nominal affiliation with Jesus Christ. This instruction, therefore, is not meant to encourage such lifelessness — God forbid! But rather to assist those who replace the Gospel with the experiences of men — who are only constrained by what has happened to men, rather than by the love of Christ (II Cor. 5:14).

## The Constraining Power of the Gospel

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is not deficient! It is the very "power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16) Further, it "brings life and immortality to light" (II Tim. 1:10) and reveals the "righteousness of God from faith unto faith" (Rom. 1:17) It was to the brethren at Rome that Paul wrote; "And I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come in **fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ**" (Rom. 15:29). There is, praise God, a **fulness** of blessing in the Gospel — the glad tidings of what the Lord hath done! There is no area of our lives — no need of our souls, that is not blessed by the Gospel's fulness. Referring to this "fulness" that is in the Gospel, it is witnessed; "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height: and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph. 3:17-19) He is speaking of insight into this glorious **Gospel**, which is the declaration of the manifestation of the love of God. As it is written; "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us" (I John 3:16). It is in the "**spiritual understanding**" (Col. 1:9) of the Gospel that true perfection is wrought, and we are "**changed into that same image, from glory unto glory, even as by His Spirit**" (II Cor. 3:18) It is not that men may be motivated only by the "glorious Gospel of the blessed God" (I Tim. 1:11); there are sundry other means which can be (and are) employed. But they are all deficient — all inadequate next to the Gospel, for they do not bring with them the "fulness of God." **There is transforming power in the Gospel, and therefore the elect are called by it.** As it is written; "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto He called you by our Gospel unto the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thess. 2:13-14). Let none, therefore, vainly suppose that testifying of the work of God within an individual will be more effectual in constraining men Godward than a proclamation of what the Lord hath done for them in and through Jesus Christ. Personal experiences are precious, but they are not Gospel; they are good reports, but not the best reports; they are meant to cause rejoicing, not faith; they are a good sound, but not the joyful sound!"

## The Danger of An Experience Centered Proclamation

It may be said of the believer's relationship to Christ; "Our vine hath tender grapes" (Song of Sol. 2:15). Great care must be taken not to damage the fruitage of spiritual life with the "little foxes" of foolishness and thoughtlessness. An emphasis on personal experience, however, will do

just such a thing — spoil the vine filled with tender — very tender — grapes!

Because there are various “measures” of faith and grace dispensed to the members of Christ (Rom. 12:3; Eph. 4:7), the grace of any one may not necessarily be the grace of all. Further, the experiences of one may not necessarily be incumbent upon all. **No believer must be led to believe that his personal life is to be ordered in the precise manner as that of another; and yet, this is what will invariably happen if the proclamation of the Gospel is supplanted by a heralding of personal experience.** Not ever the experiences of the saints of old are to become the pivotal point of our preaching! “We preach Christ, and Him crucified” (I Cor. 1:17-22). **He is the Hub upon which all truth turns, and no reality may properly be divorced from His Person.** It is His work and His accomplishments that are the primary and fundamental emphases of the Gospel, for thereby was our salvation wrought. We do not preach Moses, or Abraham, or Elijah — righteous men though they be. On the mount of transfiguration, the will of God on this matter was settled once and for all. While Peter, speaking from an empty head, and not knowing what to say (Mark 9:6), suggested the erection of three tabernacles, wherein counsels with Moses, Elijah, and Christ, might be held (Matt. 17:4) the Father which is in heaven proclaimed the truth of the case; “This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; **hear ye Him**” (Matt. 17:5). In the book of Mark, this observation of that occasion is made; “And suddenly, when they had looked round about, **they saw no man, save Jesus only**” (Mark 9:8). This was the Divine means of exalting His Son above even the prophets, who were but harbingers of Him. “God, who at sundry times and divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by **His Son**, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds” (Heb. 1:1-2). **All blessings flow forth from our spiritual union with Christ** (Eph. 1:3-5). **Christ is the common factor in all believers, and consequently the primary substance of their spiritual diet.** While some may feed upon the experiences of others and suppose themselves to be satisfied, I shall feed upon that “Bread of God” which came down from heaven (John 6:51).

The proclamation of personal experiences, on the other hand, provokes emulation, a work of the flesh (Gal. 5:20). We are not called upon to be imitators of Moody, Finney, Ironsides, or others who are held forth so ardently by our contemporaries. Rather, we are to be imitators of Christ. **The flesh is swift to seize upon any opportunity to be like man — emulation!** It is an evidence of inner foolishness, therefore, to feed such a proclivity, for it only detracts from our precious Lord, but also brings with it spiritual impotence. Falling into great error, those who hear and read constantly of the experiences of others, set about to create in their own lives circumstances, patterns of behavior, and thoughts that will cause

them to be like those they hear, and after whom they read. A current trend in this direction has to do with “revival” (a very ambiguous term). Sophists, supposing themselves to be wise, set about to create revival by reading of former awakenings in the world, and seeking to recreate the same circumstances that then existed. That all of us have often entertained such foolish notions cannot be denied; but such notions must be crucified along with the rest of the flesh (Gal. 5:13). The whole concept of “revival” that is entertained by religionists of our day needs to be sifted through the Scriptures — refined, as it were, by the revelations of truth! Many such things are there likewise, which, need to be candidly reviewed in the light of God’s word. It is quite possible that many have been entertaining completely false and erroneous ideas about the whole work of God in the earth! (By way of explanation to our critics, we are not opposed to revival — God forbid! We but say that it is the work of God, not of man; that it comes **when** God sends it, not when man wants it; that it is fundamentally a raising from the dead, and thus can only be effectuated by the will of God). Our job is to preach to the dry bones, and pray the Lord of the harvest (Ezek. 37:1-14; Luke 10:2).

The great burden of the Epistles were written by the Apostle Paul to the churches. He had been given grace and authority to edify and build up the people of God (Cor. 10:8). In all of his instruction, little time was expended in relating his personal experiences in the Kingdom — and when related, it was generally for the purpose of substantiating his apostleship, which thing was needful. Further, he did not hearken men back to Pentecost (there be many worshippers of Pentecost today, rather than the Christ Jesus that was **preached** on Pentecost), or to the household conversion of Cornelius. **He never declared that the experience of others was to be the aim of believers.** The absence of such references proves beyond any controversy, that **the great events of Scriptures were never meant to be sought experientially by all** — else they would have been proclaimed as such! Paul always set forth Jesus as the hope and life of the believer, and the Sum and Substance of all that he needed or required — yea, “in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:2). **The primary experience set forth was that of the heart** (Eph. 1:17-20; Col. 1:7-9; Eph. 4:19-23; Col. 2). **The apprehension of Christ by faith was set forth as the pre-eminent experience of the heart — that which encompassed “knowledge”, “wisdom”, “spiritual understanding”, “joy”, “peace”, “comfort”, etc.** These are things that are of the heart and mind, and they are effectuated by the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ.

**It must be the truth as it is in Jesus (Eph. 4:20-21) that constrains us, dear brethren, else when experiences seem distant from us, nothing be found to cheer the heart! Take heed that no man deceive you on these matters!**

## CHASTITY

"Mortify therefore your members that are upon the earth; fornication, and all uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" — Col. 3:5

The text above is speaking of the necessity of chastity — pureness of soul and body. "Fornication, and all uncleanness" refer to the perversion of the body in unlawful indulgence, while inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and idolatry, speak of the defilement of the mind and heart with impure and lawless indulgences. Chastity is defined as "the state of being chaste (virtuous, pure)." Especially is the term applicable to "continence", which is mentioned in Scripture (I Cor. 7:5; I Tim. 3:3), which refers to the restraint of thoughts of impurity, so that they are neither executed overtly, nor entertained without the most vigorous restraint within the confines of the mind. The term "chastity", quite frankly, involves the matter of sexual relationships between men and women — relationships which touch upon the handling of the body by another, the turning over of the personal physical being to another — whether in thought or deed. In a day when sex is vaunted before the public with alarming persistency, it is good that believers have their "pure minds stirred up by way of remembrance" (II Pet. 3:1) concerning the Lord's views of the matter — which views are the only valid and true views; **the views by which all men shall be judged in righteousness!**

There is no question but that there is a general decline in the morals of our nation, as well as a rapid development of ungodly tolerance toward the unlawful display and indulgence of the flesh. The purity of the body and soul is implicitly taught in Scripture, and must therefore be proclaimed in power — especially in our society. Literally myriads of church members have an indulgent attitude toward these things, often participating in off-color stories and humor that are based upon the perversion of connubial affections. Not the least of these problems is the persistence of women, in religious bodies, in the matter of displaying their bodies, and thus dishonoring both their husbands and their Lord. The social trends of short skirts and form-fitting garments are an abomination to God, and so ought to be among His professed people also! One of the greatest contributions to the rise of shameful thoughts is the ignorant display of female flesh. It renders both the displayer and lusting one unchaste and impure before God. While women are to adorn themselves with "shamefacedness" (I Tim. 2:9-11), men are to remember that "whoso looketh at a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his own heart" (Matt. 5:28). Particularly those of the "household of faith" (Gal. 6:10) are to conduct themselves becomingly of the Lord's children, learning how to "behave themselves in the house of God" (I Tim. 3:15) **Let there be the heartiest cooperation between the brethren and the sisters in these mat-**

ters that no reproach be brought upon the Lord or His "pure and undefiled religion" (James 1:27). While morality is plummeting to all-time lows in the general public, may there be a great upsurge of spirituality, holiness, and sound-mindedness among those that have named the name of the Lord!

### The Teaching of I Corinthians 6:15-19

The absolute necessity of chastity may be seen in the apostolic instruction concerning the body. This is a matter of stewardship — a matter of handling aright that which has been procured by another, and which rightfully belongs to another! Here is the word of the Lord:

"Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them members of an harlot? God forbid. What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith He, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?"

Our physical bodies are to be viewed as members of Christ; not because they shall inherit the Kingdom of God, nor, indeed, because they are spiritual in constituency, nor because they are innately righteous! **Rather, they are those "earthen vessels" (II Cor. 4:7), wherein resides the Spirit of God, and their activities are to be viewed as indicative of the person's spiritual union with Christ Jesus.** Sanctification is the operation wherever the Spirit of God is found — there is "washing, justification, and sanctification" in the energy of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 6:11), and it is inconceivable that such a dynamic work would properly evidence itself in any form of unchastity or defilement of the body by unlawful indulgence! **The body is, then, the property of Christ.** As it is written; "Now the body is **not** for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body" (I Cor. 6:13b.). It is not ours, therefore; we are but trustees of it, not its proprietors. We are keeping it "for the Lord", and we should use it according to His directions! The body is meant by the Lord to be used for the expression and development of holy thoughts and purposes. It is to "let in God to the soul and reveal God to the race." If we are genuine believers, then the Lord graciously considers even our bodies to have a vital connection with Himself. Our Savior now sits in a glorified body — a glorified man; and when He shall appear, we shall be changed to be even as He is, for we shall "see Him as He is" (I John 3:1-3). **Our bodies are to be held in honor until that time, that we be not ashamed at His appearing.** To take that in which the Holy Spirit of God dwells; that which was purchased by the spotless Lamb of God, which is not our own but the

Lord's, and to so display it as to provoke fleshly lusts and damn the soul — I say, this is a sin of the greatest magnitude! There is far too little emphasis upon this point today, when there ought to be very much said about it. In a time when the display of the body is considered quite fashionable and socially acceptable, the trumpet needs to be sounded in Zion that such things ought not to be!

By referring to the person that is "joined to the Lord", the apostle means to further instruct us in the sanctifying power of Christ within the life. He elsewhere taught the same truth as he confessed; "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). **The instrument employed by the Lord Jesus cannot be turned into a means for the expression of base and evil thoughts. Being spiritual does involve the proper handling of the body — and that cannot be gainsayed!** That is the explicit instruction in the text! "Every sin," declares the Lord, "is without the body" — i.e., it is stimulated from without. Such matters do not have to do with the perversion of the body; with turning it over to another for unlawful and contemptible usage! But fornication is different; "he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." He alienates his body from the service of Him to whom it belongs. He poisons the inmost sanctity of his own being, and incorporates it with the degradation of another. He has permitted another to defile and handle that which is exclusively the Lord's, and which may be guided (in respect to lawful indulgences) alone by Him!

The word of the Lord is that we are to "glorify God in our body." Ought there not to be far more stress placed upon this point of truth that is done so commonly! **God is glorified by chastity — He is reproached by unchastity!** Such things as **adornment, conduct, manners, appearances, habits, etc., have a great bearing upon the effectuality or ineffectuality of our testimonies, as well as the approval of God upon our lives.** The body must be a vehicle of godly expression; a means of exhibiting the inward life of the Spirit — that is what it is for. We live in society; in a world that is festering with immorality, licentiousness, and sexual perversion. Promiscuity and fleshly indulgence are not only approved by the world at large, but are now openly advocated. Many Christian (professed) women, although they would not think of indulging in actual flesh-perversions, are guilty of stimulating such desires in those whose "eyes are full of adultery" — and in this they render themselves unchaste before the God of heaven. There is no room for ignorance here, or for fleshly naivety! **Either a person lives for the Lord, and glorifies Him in his body, or he brings shame upon the Lord Jesus and dishonors his own body, sinning against it and the Lord that bought it with His own precious blood.**

Along these lines, it might be well to observe that fathers and mothers are to raise their chil-

dren up properly in respect to these matters. Young girls and ladies are to be taught the proper use of the body; its proper adornment (I Tim. 2:9-11), and godly presentation. Young men are to be instructed concerning fleeing fornication, turning away their eyes from promiscuous maidens that display themselves. It is time for the saints of God to cease to have "fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." They are to "reprove", or "expose them" (Eph. 5:11). May great grace be granted unto all to fulfill these things honorably before the Lord who hath made them. You see, then, how that moral purity and chastity is not an optional matter! We are to glorify God in both our body and our spirit, which are God's! It is beyond controversy that glory can be brought to God by the display of bosoms and legs, but rather only reproach. There is sufficient difficulty in subduing the flesh apart from any outward stimuli, without flesh being fed by overt actions and appearances. "Wantonness", as it is called in Scripture (Rom. 13:13) **must be mortified within and without, and no effort may be spared in the subduing of it.**

### Chastity and Modest Apparel

The unequivocal message of the Holy Spirit to the sisters in Christ in relation to their apparel is: "In like manner that women adorn themselves in **MODEST** apparel with shamefacedness and sobriety . . . with good works" (I Tim. 2:9-10). While we have already mentioned pertaining to this theme, it is well that we add something more for the general edification of all. **Modest apparel is that which becomingly obscures the body and "makes no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lust thereof"** (Rom. 13:14). It is to be worn "because of the angels" (I Cor. 11:10), i.e., knowing that they are beholding our activities; and before the Lord (i.e., in a spiritually conscientious effort to please and not dishonor Him.) True adornment is inward, and therein must great effort be expended in order to the glory of God (I Pet. 3:1-6). It cannot be countered that one is just not cognizant of their appearance — it is everyone's obligation before God to be conscious of it — God requires it! **Immodest apparel manifests an immodest and thoughtless, sinful spirit, and renders the person unchaste and defiled.** She who adorns herself so as to provoke lust is guilty of adultery, and thus does not so adorn herself with impunity. It would do all believing women well to hearken unto these words, for they are honorable before the Lord.

### Chastity and the Captivity of Thoughts

For a believer to maintain a chaste and pure mind, it is imperative that he cast down and captivate sinful thoughts. It is written: "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obe-

dience of Christ" (II Cor. 10:5). **It is one of the traits of the carnal mind to lay hold of any sight that will permit it to indulge in sinful pleasure.** But, it is equally the quality of the new man to subdue such thoughts in the energy of the Spirit of God — forbidding them ever to take expression, and bringing them into captivity to the higher thoughts of things that are above (Col. 3:1-3).

One of the most evident things about unchaste thoughts is their militancy against the knowledge of God. **God is obscured to the measure that unchaste thoughts have the ascendancy.** No man can properly know and fellowship the Lord God while entertaining thoughts that have to do with the gratification of the flesh. How imperative it is for every believer to very firmly capture his thoughts for Christ, not permitting fleshly affections to dominate his thought patterns, but rather subduing such thoughts in the power of the Holy Spirit, while bringing himself, through grace, to think upon things that are lovely and holy. The mind is the citadel of the soul — it is there that the food for the soul is dispensed; and therefore, it is there that the warfare is waged. **Satan seeks to breakdown the bulwarks of the mind with lusts, fleshly affections, evil concupiscence, licentiousness and covetousness.** If this is accomplished the heart and mind is at once torn away from eternal things, and from the Lord Jesus, and given over to thoughts that seek overt and sinful expression. Thus are men brought into captivity to sin, and thus to death. It behooves, therefore, every child of God, to faithfully and courageously stand against every effort of the adversary of our souls (whether from within or from without) to gain the control of our mind. It is good that the heart be established with grace (Heb. 13:9), and the mind be kept by the peace of God which passeth understanding (Phil. 4:6-7). It must be remembered that an unclean mind necessarily produces an unclean and unchaste person — whether external acts are committed or not. Let us each labor to have "pure minds" (I Pet. 3:1), and "pure hearts" (Matt. 5:8) in order that we be not condemned with the world !!

The maintenance of a chaste life is partly resultant from this; making "no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:14). Never ought the child of God to be guilty of deliberately being in a position where the flesh has the upper-hand! We must "keep under our body and bring it into subjection" (I Cor. 9:27), for the seeds of wrath are within it, and once permitted to express itself without the restraint of grace and godly power upon it, it shall bring men down to perdition. As we advance in the faith, our knowledge is to be broadened and enlarged, so that we become more aware of the traps and ensnarements of the flesh. This knowledge is intended, according to the merciful provision of the Lord, to assist us in being delivered from temptation and the fruit of sin. In this knowledge we begin to reorder the course of our lives so as not to allow or permit the flesh to be given opportunities of expression. Certainly it ought not to be needful to go into intimate detail on this matter. It is enough to make the following statement: **The child of God is to so order his life as to allow the fuller expression to his faith, and the lesser, (or no) expression for the flesh.** Situations are to be viewed from this spiritual perspective: can the spirit maintain control in this situation? am I strong enough to withstand the temptation involved here? Is it comely for me to be so risky with the relationship to God which I so dearly treasure. It is to be acknowledged that there is a measure of social discomfort created by this deliberation. Some former acquaintances will no longer be close to you — as a matter of fact, you will hesitate to be in their company, for you sense that while before them your flesh is feeding upon the things of earth, while your spirit remains starved, and becomes impoverished. Oh reader, come away from such situations, and be bold about it! "Abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul" (I Pet. 2:11). "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11). You are a child of the King, and as such are to sit at His table, not the table of devils and of the world. It has always been a mystery to me how so many professing Christians could feel at ease around the Devil's children; how they could eat so plenteously at his table, and drink of his abominable drink! It would seem to me to be far more wholesome to feed the soul with eternal food, rather than temporal, that it might be strengthened, and thus the better fitted for glory and God.

### Conclusion

Particularly do I urge upon the young to maintain chastity and purity of mind and body. It is not good that you be defiled; keep yourself pure! Maintain righteousness and a chaste life with godly zeal, for it is a matter that well deserves your zealous attention. You shall be more fitted, then, to enjoy God.