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GOSPEL ORDER

Gospel order refers, as we understand it, to that pattern and rule of the Gospel as set forth in the New Testament. It can as easily be referred to as New Testament order, which is not the same order often referred to by the organized religious bodies of this world.

Order, according to worldly religious societies, refers to either their denomination, or some subdivision thereof. For instance: The Roman Catholic body is an umbrella organization. Within its, structure are many diverse orders which have their own religious rules and doctrines. The ecumenical nature of Catholicism allows these differences in doctrine and rules in order to prevent major schisms in the hierarchy of that body. It is somewhat like the structure of the AFL-CIO, with different unions in affiliation.

The common useage of the word order, in the religious sense, is inherited from Rome via Protestantism. Thus, Protestants often view the Church as universal (the same as Rome), made up of denominations, or orders. Even among many Baptists, this useage has been adopted. They will sometimes refer to those of our order, in the sense of our denomination. However, a denomination is a fraction of the whole number, while the church of Jesus Christ is not a fraction. It is His body. Thus, it is not a denomination or an order. It is a living organism made up of "members in particular" for whom Christ died, and who have been brought into the Body by the internal work of the Spirit.

Gospel or New Testament order applies to the church of Jesus Christ which is established in the faith once delivered to the saints. This order can be categorized in three components: viz, (1) purity of doctrine, (2) purity of practice, and (3) purity of deportment. While all three are vital to establish a church in the Gospel, doctrinal purity is most crucial; a departure from which

is a departure from the truth. "whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God." (II John 9) "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be manifest that they were not all of us." (I John 2:19) Thus they became antichrist (I John 2:18).

Purity of practice lies in following the pattern of the New Testament church as laid down by the apostles, and as recorded by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures. A departure from this is the unwarranted introduction of carnal opinions or customs. It is presumptuous sin to attempt to improve upon God's own provision for His church.

Purity in deportment refers to the Holy Spirit's effectual work in believers, of a godly walk and conversation. A departure from this demonstrates the wicked character of nominal believers devoid of spiritual grace in the heart.

Where the first is missing, there is no church. Where the second is missing, there is not an established church. Where the third is not found, the witness of spiritual life is missing.

1. Purity of Doctrine

The church is the pillar and ground of the truth. It is of necessity that the church possess the doctrines of Christ and preserve them in this world. The members in their Holy Spirit-calling are made free from sin, and are divinely taught the truth of free grace. Only such are candidates for church membership. As Paul wrote: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed FROM THE HEART (not head) that form of doctrine which was delivered you." (Romans 6:18) Such as these will "continue stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. . ." (Acts 2:42)

The church cannot tolerate heresy in doctrine. Its purity is demanded of Gospel order. "Now I beseech you, brethren mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." (I Cor. 16:17-18)

It is the church which must believe the doctrine. Too often we've seen ministers go to Arminian bodies, preach the doctrine of free grace (which is commendable. Paul did the same in the synagogues), and then insist that particular congregation is The Church, to the exclusion of all others. Indeed,

some even preach that none but such as they will be married to Christ! Yet, often when the minister moves on to greener pastures, the congregation calls Arminian pastors. These congregations are not churches. The minister may indeed have preached the truth of free grace, but such a body cannot be a "pillar and ground of the truth".

Thus, the church **MUST** be pure in doctrine. We need not dwell on this subject, since this magazine is devoted to free grace with no mixture of carnal reason, tradition, or opinion; and certainly not mixed with freewillism!

2. Purity of Practice

For the church of Christ no other foundation in doctrine, faith, or practice can be acceptable; for other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Christ." (I Cor. 3:11) "Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's works shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." (I Cor. 3:13) The church is "built upon the foundation of the apostles." (Eph. 2:20) To add to this foundation anything which is not inspired of the Holy Ghost, and found in the New Testament can be nothing less than wood, hay, or stubble.

When the early church found some persons teaching circumcision in the churches, it was quickly stopped. Circumcision among Jewish converts had good historical and Biblical foundations in the Jewish worship. Such a foundation cannot be claimed for Sunday Schools, Associations, Instrumental music, mission practices, training unions, vacation Bible schools, choirs, etc. Yet, even this Old Testament practice was condemned by the church as unwarranted by the Apostles! "Forasmuch as we have heard that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment: (Acts 15)

It is the historic position of the church that the Scriptures are "the only rule of FAITH and PRACTICE." So state all Baptist articles of faith. If the Scriptures are the only rule for practice, then only from the Scriptures can we draw our practice. The true church must abide in those which are commanded, and reject all practices not so commanded.

These practices include such things as (1) baptizing those believers who bring forth 'fruits meet for repentance.'" (Luke 3:8); (2) observing the Lord's Supper with unleavened bread and wine, (I Cor. 11:23 cf); (3) washing the

saints' feet, (John 13:1-17, 1 Tim. 5:10): (4) singing, (Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16); (5) Praying, (Acts 12:12); (6) preaching, (Titus 1:3); (7) fasting (Matt. 6:16, Matt. 9:15, Acts 13:2, I Cor. 7:5); and (8) feast of charity, (Jude 12, II Peter 2:13).

For the sake of brevity, we cannot deal with each of these, but from time to time we will deal with them in this magazine, d.v.

Practice also includes the role or function of the Gospel ministry by (1) pastor-teachers who are also evangelists, and (2) deacons as the servants of the churches. The point of this article is that purity in practice is inclusive of all things given in the Scriptures; and the leaving off of all manmade practices designed to "advance" the church. If the Apostles did not establish them in the church, no one else has authority to do so. Surely a child of God's free grace ought to beware of anyone who feels his natural mind to be an aid to God's Wisdom. Practice includes the prohibitive behaviors of the Scriptures, and the steps an offended party must follow to reconcile an offending brother or sister. Gospel order forbids gossiping, back-biting, slander, and other unchristian like behaviors.

3. Purity of Deportment

God's people are called to a holy life and conversation. That which most clearly demonstrates the sovereignty of God, is: a transformed walk and conversion from a life of sin to one of sanctification to God's glory and the believer's joy.

It is vain and hypocritical to speak of believing in the sovereignty of God while walking in rebellion to His commandments. It just CANNOT BE DONE with consistency by a true child of God's redeeming and regenerating grace.

The entire religious world gives lip-service to "godly living." Ah, how popular it is! How politically and socially expedient it seems! How lucrative it has become! The Moral Majority is heard talking in high-sounding platitudes of morality on the one hand; while endorsing a "born-again" fornicator on the other! They speak loudly against abortion (which we agree is a horrible wrong) yet they are in favor of spawning children out of wedlock! "Consistency, thou art a pearl!"

The point is: the church must walk according to a "Thus saith the Lord" for its only standard. It must, at times, violate the law of the ungodly in order to

keep the commandments of Christ. At times, it must offend Arminian religionists, in order to hold fast to that which God has enjoined upon it.

Profanity, evil communication, drunkenness, covetousness, gossiping, back-biting, talebearing, unruly, fornication, adultery, strife, eating things strangled, eating blood, and many, many more are evils which every church and its members are to shun, "redeeming the time." Every categorized prohibition from evil in the New Testament is bound upon the church. An unregenerate person cannot walk in good works; the saints cannot do it on their own; yet the powerful work of grace within their souls does accomplish it! ". . . because greater is He that is IN you, than he that is in the world." (I John 4:4b).

Of all the commandments which God has given the church, there is one which is superlative; through it, all the rest are made easy: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." (John 13:35)

Consider, that members of a family seldom commit those offenses which are condemned by the family, while in the family's presence. The break-up of families has led to a break-down in law. In the church, love knits the hearts of the saints together, and "love covereth a multitude of sins," and restrains offenses between members. Thus, with this holy love the children of God walk in godliness; their conversation is in godliness.

This love is the chief commandment, and it cannot be known outside the true church. In fact, those who have never seen or felt it, have no way of feeling its absence. We have never seen it outside the church; seldom seen it in a church not fully established. In those churches which are ordered by love, you will find members living strict, godly lives. You'll find them exceedingly careful to guard each other from things that offend the church. In such churches, you will find strict discipline insisted upon, yet rarely being exercised.

It is imperative that the church nourish love, and encourage it to warmth when it appears to be cold in a brother or sister. The church have ever been under severe attack both from without and from within. When troubles arise... and they MUST . . ."Offensives MUST come, but woe to them by whom they come"... the church's best defense is LOVE. It must ever be the believer's mind to let others prattle, gossip, and stir up strife; but not to let themselves fall victims to such behavior. An enemy may be won by love;

possibly in no other way. The Scriptures teach us to "speak no evil," and this is binding even if it is a true report! "Let your communication be, Yea, yea; nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." (Matt. 5:37) And of course, "If ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same!" (Matt. 5:46)

A good rule for practical godly living is this: Let us ever be found DOING what others say ought to be done. The world expects more of believers in Christ than they expect of themselves. They have sufficient witness in nature to know what the pure church ought to be! With regard to those make-believe commandments which they advocate: let us never be tempted to observe them. It would lead us into the same ruinous state it has led all others who walk according to the course of this world.

The doctrine, practice, and deportment of the Church of Jesus Christ adorns the blessed Gospel as nothing else can. It is good to know there is yet preserved in this earth a refuge for those who desire Gospel Order.- S.C.P.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

By Grady E. Dearman

When, at the first, we began to consider the publication of a periodical for the edification of God's people we were uncertain of a number of things. Among those concerns was a proper title for the writing, and; whether God had ordered circumstances so as to use such a paper for His glory.

As to a proper name, we finally settled upon "The Predestinarian". There was some advice that we should not be so overt as to use such a title; that it would (in effect) be throwing down the gauntlet. This was, and is not, our purpose. We simply desired to announce who we were without "beating around the bush." We are not publishing this small magazine for the world. The world has its own publishing establishments. Prior to the first issue of The Predestinarian, a dear sister in Arkansas asked us of the nature of the publication. Our answer to her was, "Sister Dorothy, it's a love letter to all our brethren."

Our Lord did not pray for the world. John 17:9. And John the apostle warned "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." I John 2:15. In the Gospel according to John, Chapter 13:1 ". . . having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." Our concern is not for the

world, but for those that are not of the world.

As to our major concern: would the work be used of God?; we can say, only, that events have been so arranged as to lead us to believe that such is the case.

We have received many letters from many children of God, offering advice which the Apostle Paul never professed to have fully learned, "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings." If this is your language keep walking; seek not to go beyond that measure; seek not to rush or explore further revelations of Christ in your strength for you will gather up to yourself of the flesh which the Lord will burn up. If you have a little desire after the knowledge of Christ, walk in Him, walk in this humble, slow, lowly way until He is pleased to shine more manifestly into your heart. This is the way in which Christ is honoured. The Word of God abounds with this declaration in essence, "They shall not be ashamed that wait for Me." Only the Lord's people have grace to wait for Him. The Lord's dear people wait because they are solemnly and substantially taught that that is the most which they can do; they cannot but wait. Left to themselves they do worse than nothing; they feel painfully the solemn question of the dear Redeemer to the disciples, "Will ye also go away?" It brings them to a stop; they feel the awful propensity of their heart to go back and walk no more with Him. They see in their hearts the very hell of sin, the complete ability to commit every sin which would lay them under eternal condemnation. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him."

There is no knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ apart from the Holy Ghost. There is no real preaching or receiving of Christ but by the application and authority and wisdom and enlightenment of the Holy Ghost, and those quickened into divine life are given a gracious understanding of the Person of the Holy Ghost — not that they can comprehend Him —but they are given that discernment as to whether the blessings they think they have are of God or not. If that is as far as you can go, and at times you sink so low as to cast everything away and have to begin again, I say, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him."

There is a growing downwards and the more we know of the truth, and the more the winds and storms beat upon our poor little profession the more we shall feel a need of keeping in Christ, taking root downwards. Do we know anything about the afflictions and trials and persecutions of the soul which

have caused us to cry unto the Lord? This is receiving Christ. The Thessalonians experience this. The Apostle Paul in writing to them could testify, "Our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost," but he said "Having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost." Have you received Christ in much affliction? What kind of affliction is it? I desire to pause and ponder upon these experimental points, because unless we have any sensible testimony with our spirits that we have received Christ there is no point in considering the latter part of the verse which will concern you if you are exercised. You will say, Do not get on too quickly because I am not sure whether I have received Christ Jesus the Lord.

"Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I His, or am I not?"

You may not be able to sing that. Is there a religion lower than this? There most certainly is; there is a receiving of Christ by those who are painfully conscious of their lack of hunger or thirst after Him, so that they are ashamed to appear in the company of the Lord's people, for their very appearance seems to give a lie to their profession; their going Chapel gives the appearance of more than they have. If you have so far received the Lord Jesus keep walking; you shall not be ashamed.

"Burst through the clouds,
O source of light!
Let joy succeed the weeping night;
Thy beams shall make my desert blow,

The fruit appear the spices flow." This is receiving Christ when the Lord wonderfully and sovereignly and unexpectedly melts the heart and He comes when you least expect Him, He visits your soul in a moment of time and He will answer all the objections of unbelief, all the unsuitability of your present employment. You may be engaged with things which though lawful, are taking too much of your attention, but the Lord will prove to you that He is a God of sovereign grace.

A poor child of God who is receiving Christ by the teaching of the Spirit struggles not merely with sin as such but with the legality which so besets the conscience, so that when he goes to prayer in seeking after a blessing,

legality is found in his conscience which proves a hindrance to coming to Christ. Though he goes on his knees and begins to pray the adversary says, "You are praying to purchase a blessing from Christ by your fervency in prayer." So he may go on for months and years being repeatedly disappointed. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." But you say, surely that is not receiving Christ. It most certainly is; it is having a solid faith in the Saviour. There will come a day, and most likely not when he has been seeking at all but has lapsed into some indifference and carnality, when he may be near despair and seeking to fill his time and affections with things of this life, feeling there is no mercy for him and then the Lord comes.

If you have known any of this I say unto you, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him," because you will prove, if you are a born-again sinner that the legality that you experience in your seeking days, gains in strength rather than diminishes as the years pass by. You will find there is much which gathers round your soul, that suggests that as you have made such a lengthy profession of Christ you ought to be able to approach Him with freedom and liberty and be well established in the way; but the Apostle declares, "As ye have therefore received Christ." "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. 1:6) What is the beginning? Or do we despise the beginning? I feel persuaded that as we move along in life's journey we shall be led to prize some of those tiny things which once we were ashamed of. We could not mention those incidents as being evidences of divine life, but as we look back they are still living, they still retain a sweetness and unction, whereas some greater things pass away and we suspect that there was much of self pleasing and flesh at the time. They sound well but soon lose their power. "As ye have therefore received Christ." If we received Christ in these humble evidences, so walk in them. There will be a desire, as some of these blessings are brought to the remembrance, to walk in the same places again, to have just a crumb of mercy; there will be a renewal of the grace of humility which is verily present in a born-again believer, in one who confesses that he has so little religion, who is really conscious that he is, for the most part, sin and dung and dross, of the earth earthy. When under that sensible teaching he does not possess much religion.

I would speak faithfully to you who have long been in the way. Have you got beyond the brokenness, the contrition, the humility of spirit, the nothingness which marked the days of your first love, when you felt to be the least, the most insignificant; or have you now become established so that you can look

down on others? There are so many who can lightly say, I know where you are, and I know the pathway. They would not say that if they knew, because to be in some things is deep and painful. All that the child of God wants is the testimony of the Spirit; he minds not how it comes or what the instrument is; it is Christ's voice he wants to hear. There is a desire for vital communications from heaven; nothing less will do, We believe in the power of a Triune Jehovah to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him; we believe as the Lord Jesus gathered up that doctrine by saying, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (John 6:44) We believe equally that the Lord does draw the chosen race by His sweet resistless grace. He draws them effectually, He makes Himself known unto them.

I want to refer for a moment to these little marks, these negative marks. Though you may not feel to have received anything positive concerning doctrine or experience, yet you may be assured you have received something of both if there is a change in your practice, because real religion produces fruit. There is a separation wrought in the spirit, and where necessary, and it is almost bound to be so in the degenerate day in which we live, a separation from outward things as well; so, though you may not be able to point to positive things, if you can really feel a separation from the world you desire the things of God, you feel to love the things of the Spirit.

"We want to feel, we want to see
We want to know thee more;
We want sweet foretastes of Thy love;
As we have had before."

That in essence, though not wholly your own language, may be the desire of your heart. If that is so, though you cannot see your signs, nevertheless you receive the truth because the Lord prayed for the whole of His dear people unto His Father, "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy Word is truth." We would press this point in faithfulness because we live in a day when there is much prosperity in the things of this life and many good things are given to professing people and they are appropriated as being evidences of grace. I wish to protest against that erroneous teaching and declare that it is possible that a man may be honoured in everything he puts his hand to if he lives according to the Word of God legally, and yet go to hell at last. Where there is the Spirit's work then there will be separation from the world, if necessary to the disadvantage of our prosperity in this life, because the fruit of the Spirit has ever been as with Moses, that a man chooses "rather to suffer

affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." A very solemn line of teaching is this. If you know the Truth, if you have received Christ, you will experience the sanctifying effects . . . I mean not just in things which are conspicuous but everyday things . . . the things which it behooves you to attend to as a poor creature, domestic things, the daily round, the common task. These things under the sweetness of a drop of the honey of the Gospel will become irksome and unsavoury; there will be a laying aside of all things in spirit as you desire to commune and converse with your Lord.

"May I still enjoy this feeling,
In all need to Jesus go;
Prove His wounds each day more
healing,

And Himself more deeply know." This is the language, there is the walk, a constant ongoing in a desire that we may know more of Christ. Have we wondered at times whether we know anything at all? Are you seeking to know more of Christ and yet wondering whether you know anything? This is the paradoxical experience of the Lord's dear people. They say, "If only He would speak to me." You ask them "Why is it that you are so anxious to see Him?" The poor sinner says, "I do not know that I know Him." What a mystery, and yet how blessed to have thus received Christ Jesus the Lord in such a real and humble way. This teaching brings a man, a woman, to acknowledge that Christ is all and in all. It brings him to this:

"I can do nothing without Three;
My strength is wholly thine;
Withered and barren should I be,
If severed from the Vine."

You will feel your complete dependence upon Him for life, for will, for power, and where that teaching is present and lively the walk will necessarily be humble and circumspect, because the sinner is conscious of his liability to fall just as much as David and Peter did. He will not walk with head uplifted, will not rejoice with pride over his brother and sister, but tremble and so will work out his own salvation with fear and trembling, for he knows by the witness of the Spirit as well as by particular fallings and re-coverings that it is God alone that worketh in him both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Have you received Christ in this way? As Micah has it, "When I fall, I shall arise." Walk in Christ that way, press on. The more conscious we are of our

propensity to complete backsliding apart from the constant maintenance of the Spirit's work in our soul, the more tenderly we shall walk, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him."

We would desire to consider a few of these positive ways in which a child of God does receive Christ Jesus the Lord. Some may feel, "This is where I most certainly will be left behind;" but if we have the negative marks we shall most certainly have the positive marks, and it will be found that it is by the reception of these truths that we have negative evidences as well. What are these sweet and blessed positive things which entail receiving Christ Jesus the Lord?

The Lord works in the heart a sense of need and satisfies that need. He satisfies it in His own way and measure, and in that degree and in that time which He sees good. How many times have you felt to give up in despair and yet something secret has touched your heart and you have pressed on until the next time? Again you have felt ready to give up and you have looked back at the time before and said, "That spot will never come again, I shall never have that same earnest." So there is an acknowledgement that once before you had something! As you then "receive Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." You are looking for the same things and fulfilling this exhortation. This is a point that one often tries to make concerning the exhortations, and I would desire to testify of them again, that the exhortations are fulfilled in the people of God. They are put there not as a warning, not even as a point of counsel but as being suited, under the Spirit's teaching, to a sinner who has them brought by the Spirit's power into His very pathway. As he feels to sink, so the Lord will bring a particular exhortation to his case and he will feel his inability to cleave to it and yet see the suitability of it to his case. His prayer will go out, Lord fill this in my experience. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." The Lord will fulfil this in you and me if we are His people. He will keep us walking in this real dependent and watchful way.

Consider for a moment briefly the sum and substance of all the exhortations in God's Word. They add up to this: WATCHFULNESS, PERSEVERANCE and ENDURANCE. Look at your exercises, look at the negative side, look at the void in your poor heart. What are your desires? I would be watchful, I would persevere, I do desire to endure. What has prompted those desires? It has been a revelation of my fickleness, weakness, carnality. From whence did you receive that teaching?

You may say, "Is this gracious teaching?" Yes it is; and the Lord furthermore will teach you that it is useful and beneficial to you. It is good for a man to be afflicted. O says Jeremiah, "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." How does he hope and quietly wait? As the Lord shows him that he deserves nothing but condemnation, nothing but indignation, nothing but death, nothing but punishment. "When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth." Receiving Christ, receiving a knowledge of sinner-ship, being laid low in the dust of self abasement, even when humbled at the foot of the cross to have some soul-crucifying view of the awful root of pride which is so lively — this will make you seek after what this ordinance sets forth. "If ye be dead with Christ." This is the vital point and what we need in this day; we want a death wound.

"Convince us of our sin.
Then lead to Jesus' blood;
And to our wondering view reveal
The secret love of God."
No man can truly say
That Jesus is the Lord,
Unless thou take the veil away,
And breathe the living word."

Is anyone seeking after that one-word religion, to be able to say "Lord"? Have you been on your knees craving that you might utter "Lord" with faith, to feel the witness of heaven that the Lord has put into your heart a living cry? You have received Christ Jesus the Lord as the antidote of death, as the Saviour of sinners, as the only remedy for your soul's malady.

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." Why does this word link the reception with the walk? Because we have a carnal nature and that carnal nature is basically proud and independent and this is made manifest when a child of God is born again. Speaking of the law literally, under the Mosaic dispensation, the apostle Paul asked this question: "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions." That needs be our spiritual experience and it will be if we receive Christ Jesus the Lord. We shall receive the law, it will be applied to our conscience and our sin will become exceedingly lively, "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived." Sin took on so much power and life and energy. "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him" in this way, because from the moment that you received this

truth in the heart there will be an added conflict because the flesh, your proud flesh and my proud flesh, will seek to get above this law to receive Christ; the devil will use such subtle ways. He appears as an angel of light and says, "What you need is more faith, to hope in the Lord Jesus Christ" and he will get you working for your religion, and if any encourage you and point out verses of Scripture which suit your case, and you are left to embrace them, you may even go through this ordinance and say this word was applied and helped me; yet it is all of the flesh. But as you have really received the condemnation so keep walking in a lowly, waiting path, waiting for something solid, something from God's own mouth which has the witness that you are a child of God.

The dear Redeemer has given us an infallible mark in the Word of God as to what receiving Christ is. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Ah, says the poor soul, that is what I long for; I long for liberty. Have you had a sip of liberty? Now we come to more positive things which have encouraged you. You say, I did feel some sweet uplift in my poor heart, not under any words necessarily but as it were the Lord drew near to me and I felt some little hope springing up in my heart; then it gradually faded away and now I feel to be in bondage. Did that blessing come through your energy, through your seeking and earnestness of petitions? No, you say, it came so tenderly, so unexpectedly; it brought me near, melted me, put everything right in a moment. That is the order of this pathway, "I am the Way the Truth and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me." Here is the doctrine, "Ye are complete in Him." The apostle has laid a foundation in all his epistles and doctrine is vital to a child of God; doctrine is heaven when sealed in the heart so that one has a glimpse of one's standing. If the Lord has breathed by the Holy Ghost spiritual life into your never-dying soul you will go to heaven as a babe in arms if so be you are born again of the Spirit. This is why I would emphasize as the dear Redeemer declared, "Ye must be born again." The vital thing in religion is not great things, it is having something real; it is not how much the Lord does for you, but has He done anything for you? This is the question and that will be a question to you amidst all your profession of faith, all your services, prayers, talking, and reading; is there anything which came sovereignly with a divine teaching into your soul, something which brought you down and crumbled you at the footstool of mercy? If it did it brought forth fruit in the knowledge of Christ, not a sentimental knowledge but a knowledge of the spiritual application of the truth, that which the apostle John speaks of in his epistle, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." Yet he was writing to "little children" who were in need of exhortation and counsel and guidance;

but he said, "Ye have an unction". He was testifying to the way in which every vital truth in doctrine and experience and in the fruit and practice is received into the soul; this is with an unction which this world, either professing or profane, knows nothing of. "But ye know Him" says Christ to His disciples, "Ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Have you received anything of Christ? Have you received the Spirit of Christ? For "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Whatever he may know about religion, however many tears of sorrow or joy he sheds he knows nothing about religion if he has not the Spirit of Christ. This Spirit of Christ is the work of the Holy Ghost because the entire knowledge which the church has concerning the Lord Jesus Christ is the work of the Holy Ghost and there will not be anything of Christ's work, sufferings, life, death and resurrection which He efficaciously wrought out, but what it shall be eventually translated into His mystical body of the church; every drop of Christ's fulness will be revealed to the church, "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."

If we have a little hope that Christ has been received into our hearts unctuously, though not with many words, not with a great noise; if we have a hope that He stole into our hearts with sweetness, and love, perfumed our troubled breasts with a little peace and gave us a little desire, then there is a sweet and blessed hope that Christ is dwelling in our hearts the hope of glory. This is walking in Him because it has a secret and sweet effect in the child of God to make him shrivel to nothingness. He wants to abide in union with the Lamb; he wants to get inside this living Vine; he wants to abide in Christ; he hears with joy and trembling the exhortation of John, "Little children abide in Him." That will be our desire as we hear that Spirit's voice; we shall be glad to take the lowest room, to be crucified with Christ. I do not mean it is compatible to our flesh and blood, but under this unctuous teaching we shall gladly follow Him, if so be He goes before.

"His Spirit's voice I hear,
The way I walk cannot be wrong,
If Jesus be but there."

You will keep watching to see if Christ is there. It will be a mercy if you know when He is not; that will be probably very often in your experience and you will hang your head and mourn and you will not go on. You say is this walking in Him? It is; because as you have received this liberty that "Without me you can do nothing," so walk in Him. This is solid and unctuous and vital religion.

"The strength of every tempted son
Consist in standing still."

What a hard thing it is! The flesh says you must get on the move, believe, repent, turn to Christ, see where you have gone wrong. But the one who has been slain by the Word of God feels helpless and undone, he wants the Lord to look upon him, smile upon him, and bring him into life. What sweet recovering grace as these truths are received into your heart! You begin to rejoice in them with a Spirit-given hope that gradually receives unction and power. It has not come all at once, but the truth in doctrine affects your spirit, and you rejoice in it and you are found walking in this way, so that when the adversary tempts you to give up and afflicts your soul and points out your sins, your poor little faith begins to turn to the atonement, you begin to look for intercession and an effectual Mediator, you begin to understand the necessity of a great High Priest who is able to save to the uttermost, and you begin to understand that this High Priest is One who must be Omniscient, who must know everything about you. This truth becomes your meat and drink and you are enabled, even as a result of the devil's temptations at times, to go to the Lord with a "Thou knowest", Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest all my heart's deception. You feel you do not understand the ramifications of your own evil and wicked heart but you come to the Lord with a sense that He knows all about you. "My groaning is not hid from thee.' My real groans and those that seem hypocritical, Thou knowest them all. You are receiving Christ Jesus the Lord. "We have not an high Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." So you receive Christ Jesus the Lord, I mean by the Spirit's whisper, and imperceptible power in the soul; you do not feel comforted by it, but under temptation your thoughts go forwards and you receive Christ Jesus and you are walking in Him; you are walking in the same way, it is compatible with the way you have received.

"By their fruits ye shall know them.' You might see a person who began well in a solid profession of faith, but later you find they have departed into some mixture of faith and works and you know by their fruit you can be rightly

suspicious of the beginning; but with a child of God who seems such a poor thing at the beginning, you find him hobbling along through the journey resting hard upon the finished salvation of the Gospel. It is true of him as in the Song of Solomon, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" She has received Christ as One who is such a suitable Saviour, One who is able to bear the weight of a helpless sinner, Who is so suitable to lean upon in this wilderness way. Are you leaning upon Christ? You say it is a grief to me that I trust Him so little; is it a grief that you do not love Him more, that you do not lean harder, that you do not go to Him in every difficulty? You say it is not only a grief but a shame; but my pride says I must use faith, and make sure I do not trouble the Lord with this or that. The Lord will disappoint you, and you have to come to the Lord with confession of sin about the way you treated Him, and He will receive you and you will receive Him as a double Saviour and enter into the truth, "She hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." There are double sins in the church of God. They are not just like the world, just profane and immoral, you have grace-sins as well. You have a heavier burden than the world has; but wonder of wonders you have a Burden-Bearer and your desire will be to cast all your care upon Him, for He Gareth for you. You will want these things to meet in your experience. Where will they meet? In trials and tribulations, in sorrow and distress, as increasingly you have to come to Him for more things than you ever imagined you would do. You will find He is your all and in all.

"I cannot keep Thee in my sight,
Nor can I think one thought aright,
Unless Thy Spirit guide."

Now the poor sinner receives Christ in the atonement. This is a sacred and blessed and solid point. We shall need the blood in our religion if we are born of the Spirit. "When I see the blood I will pass over you." This will be a point with us as sin is felt on the conscience and none feel it there but those who are really convinced by the Holy Ghost, and you will know that nothing but the blood of Christ can really atone and really satisfy. A hope in this will at times be revealed, a hope as to the sufficiency of Christ's blood to wash away even your sins. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous." "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." You will know if you have received Christ in two ways: negatively in this respect, that you do not feel your conscience purged and you cannot be satisfied by the clearest explanation of the Gospel message because you will have the Spirit's

witness in your heart that things are not completely clear in your conscience. So walk ye in Him. When that blessed day comes that a little sweet solid hope is given in the precious atonement then you will walk in Him in a way that you have never done before, you will rejoice in Christ Jesus and make no provision for the flesh. Blessed rejoicing — rejoicing in Him — what a walking that is!

May the Lord help us as we attend to the ordinance to realize what this sets forth, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him;" what it is to be brought down to consider from whence this figure comes and what it sets forth. It was a figure even to Christ. In Matthew 3, when Christ came to John and John said to Him, "Comest Thou to me?" the Lord said, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." The dear Redeemer was Himself baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, and His baptism was fulfilled in Gethsemane and Calvary and when He cried, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" May the Lord pardon every sin for Jesus sake. Amen
Mr. P. Brunner, October, 1980

LIFE FIRST, THEN MOVEMENT **By Walter B. Branning**

[W.E. Best, who wrote Regeneration and Conversion (Sept. 1980 issue), observes the fact that "Regeneration precedes the sanctifying influence of the Gospel. It is contrary to both the Scriptures and an inward experience of grace to believe otherwise. The following comments were received by one of our subscribers, which caused us to appreciate our feeble efforts to set forth what we hope has graciously been taught us. Hence, we desire to share his views with our other readers. — Editors]

In an association of separatist fundamentalist denomination their creed truly states the order, having regeneration precede repentance and faith. Do you know who wanted this part of the creed changed, to have repentance and faith precede regeneration? Why, certain ministers of the Association of Regular Baptists! (It must be said however, that there are a growing number of ministers of this association lately espousing the doctrines of grace). So many Baptists, both Separatist and Southern and American (formerly Northern Convention) use the "walk up front and commit yourself and accept Jesus" ploy in which the outward ceremony of decision is substituted for inward repentance, that this is probably the reason the above mentioned

gentlemen wanted the creed changed at this point.

Some object to the term "Calvinist" as if it meant that persons termed "Calvinists" are persons who accept all that Calvin taught. However I believe the term is used of those who accept in-the main the viewpoint of the doctrines of grace as expressed in the standard "Calvinist" creeds such as, the London and Philadelphia Baptist Confessions, the Westminster Confession and the Synod of Dort. Only some Arminian "populist" (ed.) shallow minded preachers suppose "Calvin invented his five points." (There were no five points, of course, until the Remonstrants followers of Arminius raised five points in which they rejected or questioned the "Reformed Faith.") It was a remarkable thing that though the Reformation began separately in different parts of Europe, yet each of the Reformers preached absolute predestination and unconditional election, entire grace and justification by faith alone. Martin Luther, in his reply to Erasmus' book on freewill, defended predestination with as much vigor and greater vehemence than did Calvin later! In fact, he congratulated the scholar, Erasmus, for getting at the heart of the difference between the Protestants and the Romanists. He stated that he was tired of debating about popes, councils, etc. The heart of the real difference — the foundation of the merit-error system of Rome was freewill. Luther said that a man might be said to possess freewill to buy a farm or not, and such earthly matters, but that in the matter of spiritual things he is dead, depraved and his will enslaved to sin. He might have a certain power to refrain from outward crime, work what men might call civil righteousness, but he had no power to do anything good in the sight of God. Everything he did, in God's sight, without grace and faith is only sin. His prayers are sin, his good works are sin, however outwardly they might appear correct to man, their motives were for self, not for the glory of God. Man only sins until regenerated by God. He defends, in the book, *The Bondage of the Will*, the necessity for election.

I read an article several years ago by a present-day predestinarian of the Church of England that said that the early Reformers of the Church of England did not receive their doctrines called Calvinism from Calvin, but derived them directly from the Bible.

LeFebvre, the French professor at the Sorbonne (the heart of Roman orthodoxy) prior to Luther, was granted an experience and true view of the doctrines of grace. This old gentleman used to travel around with a young pupil, the then devout Romanist, Fare, to place flowers at the foot of holy images and shrines. Both longed for a moral and spiritual reformation of the church.

Lefebvre began to prepare a book of daily devotions, the doings and views of "the saints". Suddenly he was filled with revulsion! What superstition and ignorance is this I am fostering? He began to search the Scriptures. He was given to see that they were the sole authority, that salvation was by grace alone, through faith alone: which faith was a gift to the elect. Soon he was expounding the glorious truths to his students. Now note the contrast. Soon his students gave up the wild, dissipated lives in which college students often indulge. They became serious and sober, many experiencing for themselves the gift of grace, and affirming salvation by faith without works, yet they began for the first time to do good works. The other students in the college championed Catholic works; most had no goodworks and many' were immoral. A restless and evil professor, who loved disputes. raised persecution against Lefebvre and against a Romish bishop who championed grace, demanding they be put to death. (The bishop compromised to save his life). Lefebvre had to flee to Strasbourg.

Zwingli also preached predestination, while Fang also became a champion of the doctrines of grace; so also, Knox later fled for his life to Geneva and was greatly confirmed in the doctrines of grace by the great teacher, John Calvin. Calvin expounded the doctrines of grace believed by all the Reformers but laid a greater emphasis on them and made them to be the heart of his system of doctrine.

A lady. asked a Reformed Presbyterian minister to explain to her the difference between Calvinism and Arminian-ism. "I hate that term Calvinism_ said he: Let us rather call it the doctrines of grace or the doctrine of the sovereignty of God.

Yours truly, Walter B. Branning

It has been said thousands of times, by many who even claim to believe in free grace, that preaching these doctrines will "kill a church". The above examples of the effect of this being preached to the conversion of multitudes demonstrate the contrary. If those who claimed to believe them, fearing nothing man can do, dare to proclaim the truth, who can say what an awakening would be forthcoming. One can preach for years, very truthfully, what the Gospel is "not", yet never actually preach the Gospel. S.C.P.

"MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD"
By Gilbert Beebe, 1845

[Gilbert Beebe is to the Predestinarian Baptists of the Old School what J.C. Philpot was to the Strict Baptists of England. The major difference today is that J.C. Philpot's writings have been in wide circulation in the past three or four decades, whereas Gilbert Beebe is still rather unknown even to Old School Baptists. Yet, he was the first editor of the SIGNS of The Times, established in 1832, which is the oldest Baptist publication in America in continuous circulation. The paper, and Beebe's name has been a household word in many homes in the past. As we can, we will attempt to give him a respectable place in our reading audience.]

"My kingdom is not of this world." Thus spake the Son of God when, mantled in the flesh, He stood arraigned at the bar of Pilate; and when, if there had been anything in the elements of this world which could contribute to the defence or benefit of His kingdom, they must have been called forth into action. All the interests of the kingdom which He claimed as His Own, centered in Him, and the destiny of that kingdom, for weal or woe, was at that important moment hinged upon the result of what was at that time progressing. None of the princes of this world knew Him; He had not made a revelation of what He was, even to those who sat empowered to deliver Him to death. He had not labored in His ministry to make Himself familiar to the crowned heads of the nations of the earth; He had proposed no treaties or terms of alliance with them; nor had He called on them, or any of them, to propose terms for His acceptance; for the nature of His kingdom was so radically different from every kingdom under heaven, that it was not possible that an alliance could be entered into that which could subserve the true interests of either party.

His kingdom truly was destined to encounter the violence, enmity, wrath, strife, and persecution of kingdoms and men, both in her King, and in the subjects of her government. The powers which should oppose Him in person and in His people, were not such as He was compelled to succumb to for want of power to resist, for He reminded Pilate that he would not have had any power if it had not been given him; and on another occasion He declared that He was able to call on His Father, who would instantly honor His requisition for more than twelve legions of angels — a force sufficient to overwhelm all earthly powers engaged against Him; but how, in that case, could the Scriptures be fulfilled? Not an intimation was made of raising up an earthly force to resist the assaults of the enemies of His kingdom, even if a

force had been requisite, He would have called them from the heavenly world.

We may well conclude, that if in that most trying hour, when His holy soul was pressed within Him, He had nothing to ask of the rulers of this world, there never could a period arrive when the powers of earthly princes should be required to defend Him or His cause. To those who tempted Him with their questions concerning tribute money, He said, "Render unto Caesar the things which belong to Caesar, and unto Cod the things which belong to Cod;" thus clearly intimating that the governments were not only distant from each other, but that the distinction should be perpetual; and that the requisitions of Caesar, or of the governments of the nations, had to do with men, as citizens of the world, and that their obligation to earthly magistrates and rulers was not relaxed nor abolished by the administration of His laws. And again, that the things of God were not to be rendered to Caesar, but unto God.

Things of a civil nature, relating to the natural rights of men, were to be settled by God's own providential appointment, by human legislation; but the things aside from a respect for and obedience to earthly potentates, in natural matters, belonging to God, such as matters of faith, of conscience, of religion, were not things over which the kings of the earth had any supervision or power, and things in which His subjects were not at liberty, under any circumstances, to submit to the dictation or legislation of any other than God Himself.

The kingdom of Jesus is not of this world, in its origin, elements, provisions, policy, protection, government, or destiny. Its origin is heaven — it is a heavenly kingdom. The King is the Lord from heaven; Ile said, "I proceeded forth and came out from the Father;" and again, What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where Ile was before," &c. The subjects of ill's kingdom are of the same origin; for, "Both Ile that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one, for which cause Ile is not ashamed to call them brethren;" and He said, "Thine they were, and Thou gayest them me." "According as Ile hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world," &c. The laws for the regulation of this heavenly kingdom are not of earthly enactment. Christ, the Anointed of the Father, is the sole Legislator, and He, by His Spirit, writes His laws upon, and sets it up in the hearts of His children. The elements, or component parts, viewed separately or collectively, are all of God, and every plant that the heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up. The provisions on which this kingdom is sustained, were

given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and being prior to, could not be of the world. Grace, mercy, peace, righteousness, and truth, with all things else necessary for the consummation of the everlasting and unchanging decree of God, were treasured up in the Head of the Church before the world began; and all the provisions of His spiritual house on which His poor are fed, were brought down from the abounding and overflowing fountain from which every good and perfect gift cometh. And he will abundantly bless her provisions and fill her poor with bread.

The policy of this kingdom is from above, "For our conversation is in heaven," and it is therefore as becometh the children of God. All earthly religions have to depend on human policy, human wisdom, and humanely devised means: but not so with the kingdom which no man can see except he be born again.

The protection of that kingdom is of Him who is a wall of fire round about it, and the glory in its midst. All antichristian religious establishments desire the arm of human government — regal power, and human means, for their protection; but not so the kingdom of Jesus Christ, — the eternal God is the refuge of His people, and underneath them are the everlasting arms.

All provision on which the subjects of the kingdom of our Lord are fed, comforted, instructed, and secured, are spiritual, and therefore cannot emanate from any other than a spiritual fountain. Although the world, the flesh, and Satan have volunteered, like the aliens about Jerusalem in the days of Nehemiah, to furnish God's people with food, the order of the government forbids the traffic with them; and it is impossible that the children of the kingdom should be fed with any other food than that which God has graciously provided, and abundantly blessed.

Should the government of the kingdom of our Redeemer be to any extent divided with angels or men, whatsoever part or portion these should administer, must necessarily detract so much from the power and glory of Christ. "The government shall be upon His shoulder; and of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end." So stands the record of the Holy One. The subjects of His government are forbidden to call any man master, or father, as their Master and spiritual Progenitor is in heaven, and nothing can be born of the flesh but flesh; so that without being born again no man can see the kingdom of God. A legislature of unregenerate men who cannot see the kingdom, would be very poorly qualified to legislate for a kingdom which is to them absolutely invisible; and if there were none but

regenerated men seated in legislation they being by the new birth qualified to see the kingdom of God, would to a man, know by the same illuminating work of the Spirit, that they could do nothing to aid in the legislative or executive departments of the Messiah's kingdom.

The destiny of the kingdom of which we write, differs essentially from that of all other kingdoms. The best systems of human government are destined to crumble to the ground. In the providence of God, empires are founded, kingdoms and republics are raised up, they reach their climax, and then decline, and finally cease to be reckoned among the things that be; but the kingdom of Jesus is an everlasting kingdom, and a dominion that shall never end. It shall never be changed, superseded, or transferred to other hands. The mountains shall depart, the hills shall be removed, the earth and sea shall pass away, and all the elements of this world shall be dissolved; but the kingdom of our God shall survive them all, and flourish in eternal bloom. How presumptuous, then, for monarchs of the earth, whose transient glory is as a withering flower, or human legislatures, which God shall obliterate, to prepare the way of the rising empire of His Son, to reach forth the guilt-polluted fingers of their power, to point out the course in which God requires His children to move.

Seeing, then, that we look for such things — seeing that we have received a kingdom which is not of this world, which cannot be moved — let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire.

Editorials of the Signs, Vol. II

MAN'S GOINGS ARE OF THE LORD

By Woodrow Hudson

"Man's goings are of the Lord: how can a man then understand his own way?"

— Proverbs 20:24

Some may attempt to use this Scripture to justify oneself for his wickedness, wrong doings, etc. Or one may use this text as a shield or cloke for his faughts, sins, etc. But a quickened child of God understands the admonition, "As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God." (1 Peter 2:16) "And not rather, (as we be slanderously

reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? Whose damnation is just." (Romans 3:8)

We need the Spirit of God to enable us to rightly divide the word of truth. Why was this text written? I believe that satan tempts the children of God in order to harden their hearts and they attempt to use grace, predestination, etc. as a shield for their sins. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth lie any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (James 1:13-15).

"Man's goings are of the Lord." I believe this means that God has determined, purposed and decreed our travails, pathway, course and the direction of our life. Therefore we will have all the fiery trials, tribulations, heartaches, troubles, stumbling blocks in our pathway that God Almighty has purposed that we will have. This Scripture is true to His children: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." (Rom.8:28) For example, our tribulations are not pleasant to the flesh, but the Lord uses them as a means to teach us patience. (but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience." (Romans 5:3)

The Lord also uses the trials of our faith as a means to teach us patience. "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." (James 1:1-3)

"How can a man then understand his own way?" Since we cannot see nor understand what lies in our path, we have to travel by faith and not by sight. Is not it a great blessing that the Lord gives us that faith? "By faith, Abraham when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." (Hebrews 11:8)

I believe the Lord gives us the desire to keep pressing on doing that which is right and acceptable in the sight of the Lord. Even though we meet with many trials, afflictions, troubles as we travel upon this earth and at times we may be brought down so low that we do not know which way to go or which way to turn; somehow or another, the Lord brings us out of them. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." (Psalm 34:19) "For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again, but

the wicked shall fall into mischief." (Prov. 24:16)

The comfort of the text is that the Lord has determined our course or pathway and we will travel all the dangerous paths that the Lord has decreed, determined, or purpose. One may not feel the presence of the Lord but this great God is tenderly watching over all and He cares for you. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

PRESUMPTUOUS SIN **From the Gospel Standard, 1843**

In reading over the statement of an inquirer, who calls himself "A Rejected One", there seems a work of grace begun in his soul, but that work not sufficiently completed for him to form a judgment of his own state. Whether he feel "a rejected one" or not, I can tell him, I hope for his comfort, that while reprobates are fatally guilty of presumption, which is the great transgression, every one of God's children are also more or less guilty of presumption; and where the Holy Ghost is the teacher, conviction of presumption, among many other things, is brought home to the conscience. It is the power of God the Holy Ghost that brings upon the conscience this conviction of presumption. The Spirit of the Lord sheds light into the soul, and by that light the natural propensities are discovered, such as pride, lust, and other presumptuous sins too abominable and filthy to mention, but which every child of God feels guilty of when he is thus enlightened by the Spirit of God. A great many of the Lord's children are, brought into this state, and they are left in this state for years, and this seems to be the bewildered state of the inquirer; and while in this state he may well make the inquiry whether he belongs to the Lord's family or not. But if the Spirit of the Lord has begun a work, that work will be completed in him in the Lord's own time. It is evident to me that if the work had been fully completed in the inquirer's soul, he would not have made the inquiry; he would have known it by a manifestation of the pardoning and redeeming love of the Lord Jesus Christ; he would have had a felt possession of the Holy Ghost in his soul, purging his conscience from the guilt of presumptuous sins and of every other contamination, and the glory of the Lord would have filled his soul. He would have had an evidence, a felt evidence in his soul, that his sins were all forgiven; and the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus would have made him free from the law of sin and death.

This is the fruit of deliverance, and every one of the Lord's family must be brought in some degree or other into this state; and by this the spiritually taught have divine eyesight given to them by the Holy Ghost to discern the living family of God from the dead, empty professors. Now you would naturally suppose, being thus delivered, thus sanctified, thus justified, and thus glorified, that presumptuous sins and every sinful propensity were destroyed; but alas! it is very often the case that the conflict is more fierce than ever. The soul of man may be regenerated, but the flesh remains the same, with all its wicked propensities; there will be the same presumptuous sins and pride, and every other vile corruption to contend with; and in your Bible readings you will be troubled with the same lewd and presumptuous wanderings, as if all hell were let loose upon you. It is the devil that fills you with presumption and all kinds of abominations; or rather, those presumptuous sins and those abominations are already in you, and the devil brings them into action.

Now this distresses the soul beyond measure; nevertheless, it is a part of the fire that we are to be tried with. Were I to tell my own experience, I have been in this fire hundreds of times, I might say thousands of times, during the last fifty-one years. The moment I have taken up the Bible, some vile thought has darted into my mind, and I have been obliged to lay it down again. I have then endeavored to pray the Lord that He would subdue this devil within me, and taken up the Bible again; but I have not read more than half a dozen words before I was in precisely the same situation. I have been plagued in this manner for days and weeks together, and this is a part of the fire and a part of the cross, which every one of the Lord's family must endure at times, and very often too. I have been brought into so wretched a state, that I feared the devil had taken possession of me. both body and soul; and I have been brought to see myself in such a light, that I have conceived myself to be worse than the very devil, and if anybody ought to be damned I ought; and yet, after the Lord has blessedly brought me to see myself as Paul describes: "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death," blessedly feeling that I was in Christ Jesus.

I will give you a specimen of my experience a few weeks ago. I read the book, *The Life of Henry Tanner*, with much sweetness, after which I laid it down, and the thought came over my mind, "What a glorious proof is that book of the spirituality of the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ in the soul!" The thought had scarcely gone over my mind when I felt the overpowering love of the Lord Jesus Christ flow into my soul, the Spirit of the Lord indeed bearing witness with my spirit that I was one of His spiritual family. O the joy

and peace I then felt! I poured out the overflowing of my soul to the Lord in a flood of tears; yea, and I received fresh manifestations and more love, and my tears flowed afresh. I was overpowered with a sense of the presence of the Lord blessedly felt in my soul, and my tongue was loosed with such a flow of blessings and thanksgiving that I have scarcely ever experienced since the Lord first manifested His redeeming love in my heart. I am a poor fearful creature, but the Lord blessed me and comforted me with this sweet love visit; and this is another evidence that "The law of the Spirit of life in .Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." Now after this you would naturally suppose that I should never be guilty of presumptuous sins any more; but two days had not passed before I was convicted, in the court of conscience, of presumptuous sins which made me hold down my head in shame and confusion of face. Therefore, I should conclude that the ignorance, pride, and presumptuous sins that the inquirer feels in his soul are things the family of God are plagued with.

Signed — G.I).