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“GOD HATH CALLED US TO PEACE”

By S. C. Phillips

“ *But God hath called us to peace.*” - I Corinthians 7:15

“*And the way of peace have they not known.*”
- Romans 3:17

God has said of someone — I do not say He said it to me — , that He “hath called us to peace.” There IS someone He has called to peace, and I do not say it was you. But, it is certain that God has called someone to peace. He also says of someone else, “The way of peace have they not known.” So someone is called to peace, and someone has never known the way of peace. This is evident from the portions of the texts quoted above. I shall not deal with them in their contextual setting — I’ll leave that to the reader. Rather, I hope, the Lord willing, to deal specifically and practically with the truths thus stated in a more general application.

Of all the precious prizes the poor saints of God on earth possess, it is the peace of God. The peace of God that passeth all understanding they have experienced in their deliverance from the powerful dominions of sin. The peace of God in the fellowship of the church of God, is one of its greatest and most blissful graces they have experienced in this life. They have felt the sweet flow of spiritual fellowship from breast to breast, and they need no text to cause them to embrace one another and greet one another with the holy kiss. Never would a young saint ever believe that they should ever feel any discord in this heavenly grace in their blissful, radiant soul while in their first love. Ah! how horrible, to feel it gone! How miserable the coldness, and how disillusioned the spirit, when this peace is breached and the Blessed Spirit withdraws His felt-presence from those who are “called to peace.”

Never have I experienced more heartrending agony than I do for Zion’s sake. I

go mourning and distressed with my heart reaching out fervently for the poor suffering saint torn asunder by the present strife among them. I realize many wish nothing said, hoping it will just “go away”; and find them blundering from one sad experience to another, and then waiting fearfully for the next. The peace of Zion needs emphasis, and particularly the remedy given in the “way of peace.”

Brethren, I have a burden for the peace of the church, and silence is not the remedy. Here I am, whatever I am, esteemed at least by the churches I serve as a man of God entrusted with the care of the flock. To say nothing, for fear of man, is to be no better than those hirelings who flee when the wolf comes.

This address is a general address. I see no need for partiality. I ask the reader not to be so liberal as to give this to that other brother, but keep it closer home. I often hear reports of troubles among others not associated with our churches. Reports which are often reported gleefully, no less, and this adds to my afflictions. Shall any one tribe of spiritual Israel rejoice over the afflictions and distresses of the other tribes? Is it not true that when one member of the body of Christ suffers, we all suffer? If so, wherein can any boast, rather than mourn? I cannot believe that associations and chains of correspondences are churches; or that they are of divine origin. But I do see and recognize those *churches* in them, as churches of Christ. Collectively, they are the members of the body of Christ.

Occasionally I'm given opportunity to speak in various associations and correspondences. And I have found the same love, the same rejoicing in free grace, the same presence of the Spirit of God among them as is found among our independent churches. They have the same joys, the same afflictions, the same crosses, the same experiences, etc., as are found in any one

correspondence of them, or among us.

When the Zion Landmark correspondence suffered their distresses, I was also distressed and grieved. When the Signs correspondence suffered the same tribulations, my heart was equally grieved. And when our own churches answer “not in peace”, I am distressed. No tribe has a monopoly on peace. There has never been a division with all the goats on one side, and all the sheep on the other. None have a monopoly on the truth, nor on the blessed felt-presence of the Spirit of God. The church is one body, notwithstanding the peculiarities and personalities which dwell in it.

And Zion, as a whole body — regardless of affiliations — is in the throes of convulsion as great as ever before. The poor sheep of Christ's pasture in all of them are in great distress. Ah, my brethren, where is our peace when Zion mourns? We each have our differences (and I ask none to sacrifice truth for peace sake, nor advocate union), but the sad consequences of the present general rupture of peace throughout Zion must alarm and perplex whoever that people is that “is called to peace.”

Surely if there be any who “have not known the way of peace,” then there must be “a way of peace” of which they are in ignorance.

Ah, dear saint, surely of all people on earth, you must have known the way of peace through the sufferings and forgiveness, and mercies of Christ. Can one ever forget it — really lose it? Surely not! Would such a merciful God love such with an everlasting love, send His darling Son to bleed and die, and send His Holy Spirit to one for this very end — to “call us to peace” — and have failed to make provision in His decrees and appointments to maintain it once it was bestowed? Can any imagine such a needful provision being left out of the Gospel way by the Eternal I Am? Surely no believer can say

so. Where, then, is the appointed “way of peace”? It is surely found in Gospel Order, for this order pertains to the Gospel of peace.

The very best I can do is to give you the letter of this **WAY OF PEACE**. I would to God He would give us all the spirit of it. The precious Saviour of His church gave the order of it, and here is the letter of it as given:

“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him **ALONE**: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, **THEN** take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear **THEM**, it unto the **CHURCH**: but if he neglect to **HEAR** the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.” (Matthew 18:15 - 17)

This is the most fundamental church order. All other grievances pale into insignificance before the words of Jesus for the peace of His own blood-bought church. Let men say who is in or out of “order”. Let them say what churches are in or out of order; let them say what they will about order - but let us know and consider this: that such an individual or church body that violates this order is surely “out of order.” Here is the primary source of **ALL** our divisions, i.e., all members and churches without exception violate this way of peace in one way or the other at times. The answer to almost every problem facing the church of Jesus Christ in this upheaval is found right here. Bear with me as I attempt to set forth this way of peace, and forgive me of my plainness of speech.

As mentioned before, this word of our Blessed Saviour is Gospel order. First, it is according to the Gospel of peace. For those who “have been called to peace” and have known the way of peace in times past, it is glad tidings when applied by the Spirit to

follow this rule and dwell in peace with brethren. So many poor sheep have been so torned and mauled by strife and discord that they can hardly dare to hope they will ever return to that first love when the peace of God was shed abroad in their hearts, and the love of the saints so warmly embraced them. That Christ Jesus did indeed provide a “way of peace”, and that it can be re-established again by His appointed way so that joy and rejoicing may again be heard in the streets of Zion; and that the inhabitants of this holy city can again find protection by those they freely love — surely, that is good news, or the Gospel. Second that it is “order”, can be clearly seen in the passage by anyone who can read. It is set forth in an order. It sets forth four clear steps in a specific orderly outline or arrangement. If such is not “gospel order”, I fail to comprehend anything else that can better qualify for that which is called “church order.”

In this simple, easy-to-be-understood order, the sweet love of Jesus to His precious lambs and sheep — as the Bishop or Shepherd of His Own flock — and the infinite wisdom of God, are set forth as a sure “way of peace” for them in His church. Let one scoff if they will; let him laugh if he dare — but this, at this present time, is most serious and needful of a full re-examination by **ALL** members and churches, in **ALL** independent and corresponding affiliations. Only such as are Isolated from current events in the churches; or, calloused in their hearts; or, those who “have never known the way of peace” can deny the serious and urgent need to return to this divinely appointed “way oh peace.”

Why? Because it is self-evident that there has **NEVER** been, nor ever can be, a division among the churches except there **FIRST** be an *offending* party and an *offended* party. And this way of peace, as ordained by Christ, deals very specifically with the order of His church in dealing with brethren in this condition

before it breaches the peace of the brotherhood. I beg of you, now, to consider seriously with me the four steps found in the instructions of the Lord cited above.

Step One, “If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him *alone*.”

Some individuals are hard to offend, while others are very sensitive and easily offended. When one is called to peace in Christ, he comes with much of his Adam nature with him. As we all know by experience, this nature is hard to subdue. The quickened saint is riot biologically changed. He carries on a constant warfare between the outer man and inner man of the heart. Being “called to peace and the fellowship of the church, his fleshly nature will often offend.

And too, some who *profess* outwardly what appears to be an experience of grace may not necessarily “have known the way of peace.” If one has not been “called to peace” he cannot long appear peaceful. There are some who are wolves in sheep clothing who have crept in awares. Such as these will surely try and vex the peace of the saints and of the church, robbing both of the joy and fellowship first found so sweet in their first love.

Some are young lambs who blunders into trespasses unwillingly and ignorantly, being unskillful in the word. Of the sheep it is said that “in many things we all offend.” (James 3:2) Seeing it is so that “we **ALL** offend,” the Lord has graciously, out of His great love and care for us, provided this as the very **FIRST** step in Gospel Order in our dealings one with another. It is right here, at this step, that the first breach of peace is always made.

After the trespass is committed, unwittingly or otherwise, the *offended* brother or sister is ordered by the Lord to go to the *trespasser* and “tell him his fault between thee and him *alone*.” How often we hear individuals speaks of others offending them. And how often do we ask: “Did you tell him

before you told me.” If not, this too, is disorder—and the greater offense! It is as this very point **EVERY** disorder begins.

Can we see the wisdom of Jesus in making this the first rule in His church? Consider, if you will, that Old Baptists — more than any other people — fear to offend one of God’s children. Out of this fear and carefulness, Old Baptists, from ministers to the youngest lambs, have developed a manner of communication which is characterized by vagueness or ambiguity. Ask almost any elder a simple question and see how long it will take him to answer it! Indeed, when he is through, see if you received an answer to your question at all! They expect, or necessitate, you to “read between the lines,” so to speak. Reading “between the lines” is the most dangerous kind of communication, since one can readily read something never intended as easily as what was meant. Thus, “If a brother trespass against thee,” the Lord said, “go to him alone.” That is, clarify the issue at hand; try to communicate his fault “between him and thee alone.” That is far better than allowing a misunderstanding to destroy both your own peace and that of the church. This **FIRST STEP** is mandatory in a grievance, and is the easiest of them all to perform.

“Tell him his fault between thee and him.” Notice He does not say “faults.” A specific “fault between him and thee” is intended — the fault that is the trespass. All of us have many faults, but all of them do not offend. But that particular fault which is the source of the trespass and offense is the sole subject to be corrected. Not faults which one adds to the grievance, but this one is the matter to be settled. You’ll never make a perfect man out of your brother by getting him to lay aside all his faults! He can’t do that. A man cannot change himself, but he can change a behavior if he knows what it is that offends. So tell him **FIRST**, and gain the brother.

Finally, in this first step, the *offended*

party is the one required to go and talk to the *offending* party. Not the other way around! He may not know you are offended, so the burden is placed upon the offended, rather than the trespasser. In reality, seldom does the trespasser even suspect he has offended anyone. Thus the Lord makes the offended party responsible to initiate the reconciliation. If the trespass is not great enough for the offended party to follow this step, then he must drop it and say nothing to anyone else about it. To do so would then involve him in a greater offense than his brother by disobeying the commandment of Jesus.

Most of all, and this is the greater purpose, if he goes to the offender first he is most likely to “gain” his brother. Few are found in the church who wish to disturb the peace of another. It is very easy to gain a brother when one goes to him first, before going to others. At this point, he feels no need to defend himself or lay counter-charges against the offended brother.

Step Two, “But if he will not hear thee, **THEN** take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

The Lord has not subjected His church to the receiving of hearsay in its deliberations in offenses. Such as “have never known the way of peace” will also bear false witness. The children of God, too, in times of troubles are most often cast down and in the flesh, rather than in the Spirit. The flesh is capable of most any kind of transgression when the Spirit of God releases them to themselves. Thus, the church of God cannot, in Gospel order, receive an accusation unsupported by more reliable witnesses than the aggrieved participants.

But notice that at this step, the purpose still remains to “gain” the brother or sister. Discipline, at any step, is not designed to “get rid of members.” That is the ultimate sorrow. The whole order given by Christ is based

upon love and restoring or maintaining the peace of His children. The witnesses are there to help restore the peace and fellowship of estranged brethren; to prevent other charges, and counter-charges which will make reconciliation more difficult.

How simple it is for someone to say or do something unwittingly and offend a brother or sister, for “we **ALL** offend.” how often are these simple rules of order neglected at the very outset and result in a division in the fellowship of the church. Once a church is divided, far too often sister churches seem to feel that they must decide which side is in “order” and thus divide associations or fellowships of churches. And sadly, how often other associations or fellowships are forced to divide one way or the other over a rupture in peace wholly unknown to them. And all this grief when the matter should have been resolved at the very beginning by this divine order. Who among us can possibly desire to be the cause of such widespread dissolution in the peace of Zion? Who at the very beginning, ever suspected their obstinate heart could cause so much destruction!

Read the words of Jesus in this same chapter which brought forth this discussion of these rules: “But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.” Then surely it is worse to offend one (let alone thousands) of Gods people than to drown! And He also further said: “Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but **WOE TO THAT MAN** by whom the offense cometh!” Ah, dear ones, how serious the matter of which we write!

Step Three. “And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church.”

The steps herein are set forth so clearly, in such an orderly way, “that a wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein.” All

of us – every member, every elder, every church — if we are indeed “called to peace” are absolutely bound to follow them to the very letter, or be in gross disorder.

The question before the church at this step involves, first of all, have the previous steps been complied with by the parties involved? If not, the church has more than one offender before it to deal with: the first trespasser, and the other violator of Gospel order. If the steps have been taken, the church as a body now must labor to reconcile the parties. The primary purpose still remains, to “gain” the brother. All arguments in love, with all necessary Scriptural exhortations, admonitions, and instructions for correction are to be used by the church to reclaim an erring brother. Let it be remembered what the Holy Ghost has said through James, “Brethren, if any of **YOU** do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.” (James 5:20) That is the end, or purpose, for each step in Gospel labor. It is based upon love, and has as its end the fruit of the Spirit — the peace of the church of God.

Step Four, now if “He shall neglect to hear the church,” there is no further recourse open. The “Woe to that man is now his. “Let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. (Matt. 18:17) He is hereby delivered to the world because of offenses.

The church is composed of all its members. If the steps **HAVE BEEN FOLLOWED** in both the letter and spirit of them — for reclamation of the brother). then ALL the members without exception have spoken, “Let him be unto thee (the whole body of the church) as an heathen man and a publican.” Or as such as they “who have never known the way of peace.

In the past, this article could stop here. But today, it is needful of further comments,

seeing this order is too generally ignored and most often violated. All the above is found in the context of a church’s peaceful deliberations to maintain their own peace and common accord in fellowship one with another. There is no Scriptural authority given for any other church, association, peace council, etc., to become involved in this process. “Tell it to the **CHURCH**” is the final step. It is the church, and church alone in which “Christ has pre-eminence” and the church is required by Gospel order to maintain the peace for those “who have been called to peace.”

Often a church will violate Gospel order out of fear of losing the fellowship of certain other churches. But let them be mindful, that Christ is the Head of the body, and “to obey is better than sacrifice.” Whenever an individual, or church, takes the stand to act according to the truth of God, that individual or church must bear the consequences of that act. There is no room for compromise in this order without being delivered to troubles and confusion. Any church, for fear of man, that violates this rule to hold the peace of unruly bodies elsewhere, will certainly find that peace shall not be theirs, for God is the sole “author of peace.” The saints of God have this law written upon their hearts, i.e., “And Him only shalt thou serve.”

It is yet possible, today, to follow good Gospel order, and yet suffer a division because another basic rule has long been neglected. But when both rules are followed, division is impossible. The rule of which I speak is that of receiving and dismissing member by unanimous consent. That, as all will agree, is Old Baptist rule, and certainly it is Scriptural rule. Two-thirds, or a majority, is **NOT** the **CHURCH**. The church is **THE ASSEMBLY**, the whole assembly. A minority is not “the church” nor any portion of the whole the church. When one is added to the church, they are added to the church, not

to a minority or majority thereof. Thus, if one is excluded by **THE CHURCH**, it is the exclusion from the whole — not a portion of it. Far too many elders and members have forgotten this rule.

It is Scriptural order, not Old Baptist tradition or custom. On the day of Pentecost, the disciples are described as being “all with one accord” when the Holy Spirit came upon them. (Acts 2:1) When Ananias and his wife were struck down by the Holy Ghost, the church is said to have been “all with one accord in Solomon’s porch”. (Acts 5:12) When the dispute was settled over the question of circumcision, the report sent abroad said “It seem good unto us, being assembled **WITH ONE ACCORD**, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul.” (Acts 15:25) Paul, writing to the Philippians urged them to “fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, **BEING OF ONE ACCORD**, of **ONE** mind.” (Phil. 2:2)

If there be another rule, I have not found it, except it be Robert’s *Rules of Order*, which is of, and for the world. But the point I wish to make is this: There has never been a division in a church where these rules were followed. It is past time for sound churches to get back to some of these first principles of good order. Until this is done, I see no let-up in the discord, confusion, divisions and sufferings of our churches. I would to God He will work in each of us to faithfully follow His simple instructions.

The correspondence chains are being, or have already, been torn up by their roots as tares among the wheat. Their day has ended. The day of associations as “advisory councils” also has set. The churches no longer can put their trust in the arm and wisdom of flesh. These rules are set forth for our peace. **Prize them.**

THE LITTLE ZION ASSOCIATION of Predestinarian Primitive Baptist churches will convene, the Lord willing, on the **SECOND** Sunday in September, and Friday night and Saturday before, (September 10,11,12) with Palestine Church in Laurel, Mississippi. The meeting house is located two blocks east on Bush Dairy Road and Highway 15 N. Take 15 north from Laurel, to the place where the highway becomes four-lanes a few miles north of town. Turn right, go one block. For information, call Grady E. Dearman (601) 425-2415. Believers in free grace will certainly find a warm welcome.

“GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD”

By. W. W. Hudson

“And He said unto them, go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.” - Mark 16:15

These words were directed from Jesus to the eleven apostles. Notice that this commission or command was given after Jesus had risen from the grave. (Judas had already hanged himself.)

We have a prayer in our heart that God will bless us to rightly divide the word of truth. As the Lord enables us, let us first consider the setting. This commission was different from the first commission that Jesus had given the apostles.

The first commission was limited to the Jews in the flesh. “These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them saying, “*Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*” (Matt. 5-6) We may wonder, why did Jesus tell them not to go into the way of the Gentiles? First, let us notice that Jesus was born under the law. He said that He had come not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it.

Under the law, only the Jews enjoyed the ordinances, ceremonies, etc., “Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.” (Rom. 9:4-5) The promises under the *law* did not embrace the Gentiles. The only exception we know of is any who desired to be adopted among the Jews. Notice Exodus 12:48-49. The Gentile, or stranger, would be under the law as the Jews and he would be circumcised, and then he would be as one that was born in the land. (Notice the 48th verse and you will see that this is adoption.) The Children of Israel in all their generations were commanded to observe the passover. The expression, “No stranger shall eat thereof” has reference to the Gentiles. (See Exodus 12:42-43)

“And Aaron shall hear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually.” (Exo. 28:29) Notice that Aaron, the first high priest under the law, was commanded to only bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart. The Gentiles were shut out! This is a type of Jesus making intercession for Spiritual Israel, which is composed of both Jews and Gentiles. Verses 15 through 28 gives the description of the breastplate. We call your attention to the 21st verse which states that the “stones shall be with the names of the Children of Israel, twelve, according to their names-”

To sum it up, we can see that the priests under the law did not minister to the Gentiles. For example, notice this command “And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, speak unto the Children of Israel, saying - ” (Lev. 4:1-2) If you read on, you will see that this is

describing the procedure for the sin offering. The expression “speak unto the Children of Israel” is in Leviticus 1:1. In Leviticus 9:3 we read, “And unto the Children of Israel thou shalt speak, saying, take ye a kid of the goats for a sin offering; and a calf and a lamb, both of the first year, without blemish, for a burnt-offering.”

The address to the Children of Israel reminds us of the Epistles in the New Testament. flow about Ephesians 1:1 for an example: “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, to the **SAINTS** which are at Ephesus, and to the **FAITHFUL** in Christ Jesus” This Epistle of Paul was not to the world in general, but it is directed to the church at Ephesus and also embraces Gods people in this day and time. Why? Because Paul stated that this Epistle was also written to the “faithful in Christ Jesus.”

Also, the Gentiles were classified as heathen by the Jews. “And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship: that we *should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.*” (Gal. 2:9) We can see that the primary mission of Paul was to preach to the Gentiles. Remember, the circumcision refers to the Jews. (Rom. 4:9, Gal. 2:7. Eph. 2:11)

The first commission, which was limited to the natural Jews, was under the law. Remember that all the ceremonies under the law were limited to natural Israel.

The second commission (“Go ye into all the world”) embraces both Jew and Gentiles. The apostles were commanded to go and preach, and God would direct the preached word to the hearts of His people.

On the day of Pentecost, the apostles were filled with the holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues, as **THE SPIRIT GAVE** them utterance. (Acts 2:4) Many were amazed at this, but some said the men were

full of new wine. Now Peter was filled with the Holy Ghost when he preached, and **GOD prepared** the hearts of those to receive the preaching, and they were pricked in their heart. Now, all that heard Peter's preaching were **NOT** pricked in their hearts. Some that hear the preached word in this day and time do not get anything out of the preaching because their hearts have not been prepared to receive it. "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is **FROM** the Lord." (Prov. 16:1) "For unto **US** was the Gospel preached, **AS WELL AS UNTO** them: But the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed **WITH FAITH IN THEM** that heard it." (Heb. 4:2) This Scripture proves that if we rejoice within our hearts in hearing a Gospel sermon, the Lord has blessed us with the gift to hear. (See Prov. 8:34).

At this point we must be careful, and trust that God will enable us to enter into these deep treasures. Now, let us ask ourselves this question: Does this second commission only embrace Spiritual Israel? "Go ye into all the world." What world does this have reference to?

Let us examine John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." We believe that this Scripture has reference to God's people. One definition of world is: "A class of persons regarded as a body' and distinguished by some characteristic." John 3:16 certainly cannot have reference to the universal world, because there is a people that God does not love, "Jacob have I loved, But Esau have I hated." (Romans 9:13)

"I pray for them; I pray **NOT** for the world, but for them which Thou hast given me; for they are Thine." (John 17:9) The word *world* in this Scripture and the word *world* in John 3:16 cannot mean the same. Why? Do

you believe that Jesus would pray for a people that He loves? Therefore, the *world* in John 17:9 means the universal world. Jesus only prays for his people, and we do not read in Scriptures that Jesus prays or makes intercession for all of mankind. "And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is in the mind of the spirit, because He maketh *intercession for the saints* according to the will of God." (Rom. 8:27)

To sum it up, the *world* in John 3 16 means God's people, and the *world* in John 17:9 means all of mankind.

"Go ye into all the world." If this only means God's people, how were the Apostles to know who were sheep and who were goats? Man looks on the outward appearance, but it is God that looks on the heart. (I Sam. 16:7) If the *world* here only means the "sheep world," why did Jesus say, "he that believeth not shall be damned." Do not we believe that **ALL** of God's people shall be saved, and not one of them shall be damned? What about the parable of the sower? (Matt. 13:2-23) Some seed fell by the wayside, some in stony places, some among thorns, and the word did not bear fruit in these places. Yet, it did bear fruit in the **GOOD** ground, and we believe it was **PREPARED** by God. (see Proverbs 16:1)

The apostles were commanded (we believe this also embraces the ministers of God in this age) to preach where God has impressed them to go - and not to limit themselves to the Jews, but to go into all the world, which means both Jews and Gentiles. It is God that **GIVES** the increase. "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase." (I Cor. 3:6)

"Go ye into all the world." We may think of it in this way: beforehand, the Gentiles were shut out, but now the door is open. "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed **BOLD**, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, arid judge

yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.” (Acts 13:46)

As the Lord enables us, let us put the pieces together: the law was given to natural Israel, and Jesus came to fulfill that law. (Matt. 5:17) “He went unto his own, and His own received Him not.” (John 1:11) The priests under the Levitical priesthood only offered sacrifices for the children of Israel. The priest bore upon his breastplate the names of the Children of Israel. Jesus, our High Priest, bore the sins of His people upon His shoulders. He offered Himself as a sacrifice for His people, both Jews and Gentiles. His blood has broken down the middle wall of partition between the Jews and the Gentiles. (Eph. 2:14)

The command that Jesus gave: “Go ye unto all the world,” implied that the Gospel was to be preached both to the Jews and the Gentiles. The Gentiles were no longer shut out. The new covenant embraced God’s people among both Jews and Gentiles.

God sent Peter to preach to some Gentiles in the house of Cornelius. (Read Acts 10:148) We will quote verses 44-47: “While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy’ Ghost fell on all them which heard the word, and they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?” We understand this to be the first sermon that was preached to the Gentiles. Notice that the Jews had first received the Holy Ghost. (2nd chap. of Acts) The 45th verse proves that some Jews went with Peter to the house of Cornelius. These Jews were astonished that the Holy Ghost was poured out upon the Gentiles.

This is a broad subject, and we have tried

to be brief. We ask the reader to carefully study the Scriptures and see if these views meet the test of the Scriptures. — SIGNS, June, 1971

PROVE YOUR OWN SELVES

By Waddell Moore

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith: prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates.” — II Corinthians 13:5

Thus the apostle to the Gentiles, inspired by the Holy Spirit, enjoins those who profess to a faith in Christ Jesus, and who hold themselves, in hope, to be the children of God.

I want it understood in the beginning that I do not believe that the doctrine of sovereign grace teaches us that we have the right of living a life of ungodliness; but rather, it teaches the opposite. Where grace is planted in the soul, it will bring forth within and manifest itself by godly, sober, righteous living outwardly. Neither do I believe the exhortations of the Gospel to be conditional: that we can obey or disobey them when and if we desire; nor if we obey, we will enjoy a temporal salvation in time; and if we disobey, we will lose only the joys of our “time” salvation, but will still be saved in eternity. “Give ear O heavens, and I will speak; and hear O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, My speech **SHALL** distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass.” (Deut. 32:1,2) The rain and dew will rot dry, or dead grass. But though it appear dead, the rain will cause that which has life to put forth anew and prosper. Its invigorating influence will **NOT** give life, but

it **MANIFEST** life. Live seed in dry ground will not come up and produce. But when the rain falls, it will send forth the blade and then the ear; so when the exhortations of the Gospel are applied by the Holy Spirit, the inward principle of life and godliness will manifest itself by obedience.

As seed without life will not sprout and bring forth, but will rot; so the gospel to a graceless Calvinist will corrupt him. He has a head-knowledge (but not a heart-knowledge) that salvation is by grace. There being no living principle of life and grace within; and as the stony-ground hearers, whose faith was head faith, and as the seed that fell among the thorns, he thinks he has the right of living a life of ungodliness and still can be saved. His reasoning is that of "let us do evil that good may come, whose damnation is just," according to the apostle. To him the Gospel is a savor unto death, but to those that possess the divine principle of life and godliness by regeneration, it is the savor of life, and life will manifest itself. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and **MAKETH** it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so **SHALL** My word be that goeth out of My mouth: It shall not return unto Me void, but **IT** shall accomplish that which I please, and **IT SHALL** prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isa. 55:9-11) Though the apostles and prophets were doing the vocal speaking, it was God Himself speaking through them. "For the prophecy came not in old times by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1:21) The Holy Ghost formed the thought and shaped the words and caused them to be spoken, and the purpose was, "That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished

unto all **GOOD WORKS.**" (II Tim. 3:17)

Jesus said that in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. Listen to Paul addressing the saints of Colosse: "We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all saints, for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of truth of the Gospel; which is come unto you, as it is in all the world, and **BRINGETH FORTH FRUIT, AS IT DOTHTH IN YOU**, since the day ye heard of it, and **KNEW** the **GRACE OF GOD** in truth." (Col. 1:3-6)

We are aware that the Scriptures teach that the Gospel net draws into it "both good and bad," that is: regenerated children of God and hypocrites. But, the profession of being His children without possessing His Spirit and grace, will be of no avail in the last day. They will be like the foolish virgins and shall hear "Depart from me, for I never knew you." The good man (Christ) "soweth good seed" (children born again) "in the kingdom" (church), "but while men slept" (those responsible for tending the kingdom), "their enemy the devil sowed tares (hypocrites) among the wheat." A mere profession, no matter how faithful to contribute to the treasury and to meet with the saints, will avail nothing at the last day. Like the Pharisees, such have their reward here, by being looked upon as a great worker for the Lord. "Ye must be born again." (John 3:3-5)

Those who are quickened and given divine, spiritual life, have been raised up and made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. They are saved by **HIS** grace without any human effort whatsoever. We are told in the revealed word, that those who are quickened, are the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus **UNTO GOOD WORKS**, which God hath ordained that we should walk in them.

(Eph. 2:10) Our only Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we **MUST** be saved) told those that are His workmanship by regeneration, (and called to an effectual vocation or profession in Him) “ye have riot chosen me, but I have chosen you, and **ORDAINED** you, that ye should go and bring forth **FRUIT**, and that your fruit should remain, etc.” (John 15:16) Can any reasonable persons, especially those who have been taught in Spirit and truth that God is sovereign and that His grace is irresistible, imagine that what has been ordained of God will not come to pass? And certainly Jesus Christ is God manifested in the flesh. It most surely will at the appointed place and time. “The Lord of hosts hath sworn, Saying, As I thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand.” (Isa. 14:24)

I understand that this fruit is principally **INTERNAL**, that the fruit of the Spirit are these: Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, **GOODNESS**, faith, meekness, **TEMPERANCE**: against such there is no law. (Gal. 5:22,23) We also read that as many are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God. Where there is a leading, is there not also a following? We think so. After the apostle had enumerated the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit, he also said: “And they that **ARE CHRIST’S** have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” (Gal. 1:23) That is, they mortified the affections and lusts of the flesh by the Spirit of God in them. Our Lord says that a good tree will bear good fruit, and we cannot know another’s heart, except by his outward works. The works that we prove for ourselves, to see whether **WE** be in the faith or not, are our outward works. Read James, chapter 2, but let not him that readeth think that outward works alone will justify him, or increase the stars in his crown, for Paul said that unless his works are done through charity (love, which is the

fruit of God’s grace), it is of no benefit to him, nor would he be anything. (I Cor. 13:1-3) Paul and James are in harmony in their teaching, for James is not teaching a salvation by works, but rather the proof of faith **BY** his works.

This is strong teaching, and lest some babe in Christ (who is under conviction and in the process of conversion) should read this and become discouraged, let me say to you that I am not proclaiming perfection in the flesh, for there is not a just man on earth that doeth good and sinneth not. Your trials, afflictions and chastisements are **YOUR** manifestations of being drafted into God’s army, and that you are a citizen of the heavenly kingdom. As good soldiers are trained and tried before they have been proven, so you must go through these trials. But as gold and silver is tried by fire, so we must have the dross removed from us before we can shine brightly in His army and prove ourselves. Faint not! No doubt you have prayed and begged God to make you sinless now, (I did, for sin was such a thorn in my flesh and my desire was that I should be like my Savior) but, remember the answer that God gave to Paul when he thrice prayed that the thorn be removed from him, “My grace is sufficient for thee.” As that sanctified principle in you is perfect and is Christ formed in you the hope of glory, as you grow in grace and knowledge of Christ, it will cause you to overcome, “For greater is **HE** that is in you, than he that is in the world.” (satan) Without these afflictions, trials and chastisements, you would not be a son, but a bastard. Rest assured that God cannot lie and that He is faithful to **HIS** promises. He will not let Satan have you except to try you. The promise is not that He will deliver **FROM**, but **OUT** of all our troubles.

Salvation can be viewed in three phases, that is: we have been saved, are being saved, and shall be saved, or, as Paul stated it: “Who

DELIVERED us from so great a death, and **DOTH** deliver: in whom we trust that He will **YET** deliver us.” (II Cor. 1:10) Without going into a long dissertation, I will let what Paul wrote to Timothy and Titus suffice: “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. But is now made **MANIFEST** by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who **HATH** abolished death, and brought life and immortality **TO LIGHT** through the Gospel.” (II Tim. 1:9-10) Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration. and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through .Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to **MAINTAIN GOOD WORKS**. These things are good and profitable to men. (Titus : 3:5-8) For the grace of God that bringeth salvation (not in word only, but by irresistible grace) bath appeared to all men, teaching **US** that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live **SOBERLY, RIGHTEOUSLY,** and **GODLY,** in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people **ZEALOUS OF GOOD WORKS**. (Titus 2:11-14) Good works are the marks that manifest them as being peculiar. This is the faith that was once delivered to the saints arid is to be earnestly contended for.

THE ARMINIAN SKELETON By William Huntington, 1794

Note: The title above is of a book Mr. Huntington wrote in defense of free grace during the rapid rise of freewillism in England. The book “dissected and anatomised” the Arminian doctrine of Universal Charity. The following article is taken from the “Epistle Dedicatory” prefixed to the second edition. We hope eventually to republish this masterpiece on free grace. We have made this selection for its boldness, and defense of our faith, which are so greatly needed today.

Learning or eloquence you know, “I have none, but such as I have give I you.” I here present you with *the Arminian Skeleton*, together with an account of the anatomizing of Arminius, which I hope God will own and bless you. I am well aware of all the envenomed artillery which malice is likely to discharge from her quiver: I sat down, and counted the cost before I began to build; and found, upon a proper computation, that it amounts to no more than this. “That which is highly esteemed amongst men is abomination in the sight of God. God is on my side, I will not fear. What can man do unto me?”

I have written what I believe in my conscience to be the truth; and “the lip of truth shall be established in the earth,” though ten thousand set themselves against it. Arid “a lying tongue is but for a moment,” though all the world support it. I have endeavoured in some things, to imitate young Elihu with Job; that is, not to “accept any man’s person, nor give flattering titles to man, lest my Maker should take me away,” (Job 32:21-22)

I know some of you, who are simple souls, but rather nearsighted, would like it better if there were smoother things, a softer language, and less fiery zeal in it. To which I

answer, Though some upright men may be astonished at this, yet the innocent is to “stir up himself against the hypocrite.” (Job 17:8) I ought not to aim at men-pleasing; Christ alone is my Master; it is Him I took for my wages, and to Him I must stand or fall. The divinity and the language I got on my knees, in answer to prayer, and by the mere dent of hard study; and, when you have read it through, I am ready to appeal to your conscience, whether the doctrine and experience be from heaven or of men. If it be of men, the Arminians will love it, though it is sure to come to nought; but if it be of God, they will hate it, though it cannot be overthrown.

This I am sure of; the doctrines which I have here written are “not of man; for I learned them not of man, neither was I taught them, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.” For I had been some months in the glorious liberty of the Gospel before I went to *hear* the Gospel at all; and from this consideration I am warmly attached to the blessed tuition of that great Prophet of the church, Christ Jesus my Lord; and do most heartily acquiesce with pious Job, in his confession arid question, “Behold, God exalteth by His power; who teacheth like Him?” (Job 36:22)

Some may say, it is presumptuous in such a babe as myself to take so capital an error as Arminianism by the collar. To which I answer, God sometimes, “out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, ordains strength to perfect praise, that He may still the enemy and the avenger.” (Psa. 8:2; Matt. 21:16) But perhaps my reader is one of that stamp that has a hope of all the world being saved, whether they hold a truth or a lie. If thy faith is thus founded, its basis is nothing but falsehood, and God will “sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow such hiding place.” (Isa. 28:17) Take heed, therefore, lest thou shouldest be drowned in destruction and perdition. Such a false hope, and such a “gospel”, is all thine own; it never

came from God. If thy soul had suffered under the severity of the law, as some have, and thy deliverance from guilt and wrath had come to thy heart by faith in Christ’s atonement, the same Spirit that wrought faith in thee would have led thee into the truth of God’s election, that God might have **ALL** the glory, and boasting be excluded. If this by thy blessed experience, thou wilt be valiant for **THE TRUTH**, and, as a good soldier of Christ, “fight the good fight of faith,” and “contend for that faith which was once delivered to the saints.” But, if thy religion be taken up upon trust only, and it is a matter of indifference with thee what thou art established in, truth or error, thy religion has no root at all in Christ; thou wouldst sell all for less than thirty pieces of silver; yea, for one morsel of bread thou wouldst transgress; for thy faith stands in the wisdom of men, not in the power of God; and therefore thy faith cannot be genuine, nor its basis firm.

Every essential truth that we part with is an infinite *loss*; and we daily see an awful departure from the doctrines of the Gospel. Errors gain ground; and champions for the truth are but few in number when compared to the other host. (I wonder what he would say today? —S.C.P) If thou are a child of God by faith, see to the ground-work of it. Hast thou the faith of God’s elect? let election be its basis. Hast thou a justifying faith? let imputed righteousness be its basis. Hast thou a victorious faith? thy victory lies in a Saviour’s arms. Hast thou a purifying faith? Then faith fetches its purifying efficacy from a Saviour’s blood. Give up none of these truths; for, if we think truth is *not worth contending for*, we may expect the Spirit to clap His wings, and lake His light from us. You read of a bird of the air carrying a voice, and of that which hath wings declaring a matter; and woe to our souls when God departs from us! But, if thou canst not digest the doctrine herein contained, thou must wait

till the day of doom, when the Gospel net will be drawn to the end of time – its last shore – and then thou shalt see all Adam’s offsprings assembled in a valley called “the valley of decision;” perhaps so called because the Lord will decide the long controversy between the children of God and the children of the flesh, about the doctrine of sovereign grace and those of fallen nature; “Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; get ye down, for the press is full, the fats overflow, for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.” (Joel 3:13,14) I know a controversial writer is *always* deemed to be in his own spirit: however, God “hath a controversy with the nations;” (Jer. 25:31) and His ministers “shall teach His people the difference between the holy and the profane; and in controversy they shall stand in judgment.” (Ezek. 44:23,24) God’s decree shall not always be called *horrible*, nor an everlasting righteousness be called *imputed nonsense*. Vindictive Justice shall avenge the quarrel of Sovereign Mercy, so soon as old Time shall bring on “the day of the Lord’s vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.” (Isa. 34:8) What thou hast to say against the truths herein contained will cause but little trouble to me: God’s approbation, and the testimony of a good conscience, are sufficient to support any faithful servant of the Lord under the scourge of tongues.

I believe this work will be very offensive to the devil, because I have been often violently tempted since I have been at it; but those that honor God, God will honor. I also think it will be a comfort to some, because at times I have been much comforted myself. And I hope it will not be altogether without power; because I got most of it on my knees, in answer to prayer; and we all know that God never gives a stone for bread, nor a serpent for a fish.

To expect salvation from truth only for ourselves, without any regard to the rising generation, is to be like Ephraim – empty vines, and to bring forth fruit only to ourselves. But, if God gives us enlargement of heart, as He did to Solomon, compared to the sand on the sea-shore, we shall take all the elect into our hears, down to the end of time – the uttermost shore of this confused and sin-disordered world: therefore we ought to contend for God’s truth, and to leave our testimonies on record, that others, who come after us, may tread in our steps; and not leave volumes of free-agency, human merit, and a pack of nonsense behind. (!!!!) We may be sure they will bring enough of this trash in their hearts when they come into this world, therefore we need not add to their abundance. I doubt not but many of the rising generation, when they come to be called by grace, and read some of their father’s treatises about free-agency and sinless perfection, will cry out, as the Gentiles did in the days of old, “Surely our fathers have inherited lies.” (Jer. 16:19)

It is doubtless our blessing to pray for the increase of Christ’s kingdom, and for more light and knowledge of the truth; to labour day and night in God’s vineyard, and to be charitable to the necessities to the uttermost of our power; but *never strive against God’s decrees in order to please rebels*, or make the Bible comport with the pride of wretched and depraved nature: the man that doth this *is allied to Satan*, and engaged in the war of devils: “Let not him that girdeth on the harness boast himself as he that putteth it off.” (I Kings 20:11) I know some of you, among whom I labour are much tinctured with that abominable doctrine called “free-agency;” and your life and walk proclaim it as loud as your tongues; for it is visible that the world loves her own, and that you love it: being crafty, I have caught some of you who are of this stamp with guile. To talk of free-agency and

good works, while the feet run to evil, is nothing but sounding the trumpet of an hypocrite. I am sure you never learned this Satanic trick from my mouth, nor from my life.

I think it my calling, “as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance,” lest ye be led away with the errors of the wicked; and fall from your own steadfastness.

If God of his infinite mercy keep you from Arminianism (freewillism), Arianism (one who denies the eternal Sonship of Christ), and Antinomianism, (God the author of sin; that the child of God has no law to obey) I think you are Christians indeed. I rank the errors of Arminianism at the front, because the others are not so well masked. While the Arminian is robbing you of the doctrine of sovereign grace, he puts the fable of sinless perfection into your hand, as a rattle to amuse you, while he robs and plunders your conscience; and while he is teaching you to resist the sovereign will of God, he endeavours to charm your ears with free-agency. But the Arian is more open; he proclaims to every one that goes by that he is a fool. However, they are all three agreed against Christ; the Arminian cries down His merit; the Arian cries down His divinity; and the Antinomian cries down the revelation of Him to the heart. May God turn their hearts to the truth, and keep your souls from turning to their errors!

Fret not yourselves about my creating to myself enemies; it is better to be hated by all the world, for the truth’s sake, than to lie one week under the dreadful apprehensions of God’s wrath, and the severe lashes of a guilty conscience: “When God gives peace, who can create trouble?” A man’s spirit will sustain any outward affliction; “but a wounded spirit none can bear.”

The sovereignty of divine grace, displayed in the revelation of Christ to my soul, was the

first saving truth that ever God made known to me: and, as I could not find one person in a thousand that had ever seen or felt the same power, it convinced me still more that what God had done for me was a sovereign act. I have since been more confirmed in it, because it was revealed to me who never expected it, and is withheld from thousands who are working hard to get it. These things led me to see that “the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong;” but that both the prize and the victory are “of God, who sheweth mercy.” This, and the other connected doctrines, being revealed by God Himself to my soul, I think I am duty-bound to enforce and defend, with such abilities as God shall think proper to furnish me with.

To my own Master I expect to stand or fall; and, if this my testimony in behalf of His sovereignty be a false one, He has wisdom enough to overthrow it, and power sufficient to punish me for it. But I know it is the testimony that lie revealed to me; the testimony impressed on my conscience; the testimony of His own word and Spirit; the testimony that Himself bore: the testimony that God will ever honour; and the testimony that He never did, nor ever will, disdain to own.

Arminianism at present sadly obscures the truth of God. Popery and that system will one day unite under one displayed banner, and out of each host the elect of God will one day be called; and a light sufficient will be given them to discover the enemies of their liberties, to which, by a covenant of sovereign grace, they were predestinated. These things considered, have led me to bring in a few more witnesses against Universal Charity, in order to push the sentence a little more home into the compassionate bowels of rebellious nature.

If my reader be inquisitive to know what I mean by the term “Universal Charity;” be it known to him, that I do **NOT** mean that love

and liberality that is required by the second table of the moral law; far from it. For I know that in this sense a man is to love his neighbor as himself; and, if he be able, lie is to shew it by a generous relief of him in his necessities. According to my ability, I have no objection to be weighed in an even balance with any accuser that I have in the world, with respect to this commodity.

NOR do I mean that affection which every converted soul should shew to his neighbor, in reproving him, exhorting him, praying for him, or holding forth the Gospel to him, which (if blessed by God to his conversion) is that charity which covereth a multitude of sins. In this respect I could spend and be spent for my neighbor; and have labored as hard, and suffered as much, in behalf of their souls, as those who have pretended to exceed the bowels of God Himself in the behalf of sinners. But the universal charity aimed at in this work, **IS THAT PRETENDED LOVE** of erroneous professors, who are contending for the salvation of **ALL THE WORLD**, and disputing against the sovereignty of God, and against His word in the behalf of them. Surely if this spirit came from God, it would never cavil against His sovereign will.

The Saviour rebuked this in Peter, as coming from the devil; "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." (Matt. 16:23) Thus the Saviour shews that every spirit which takes the part of flesh and blood, and rebels against the will of God, is from the devil himself.

Men of this temper seem to measure God by themselves; because they pretend to shew so much love to apostate rebels, and those that bear the condemned image of Adam. They think that God's everlasting love must run in this their pretended channel, and that God is altogether such an one as themselves; for which wretched comparison God says He will

reprove them. (Psa.1:21) From this pretended affection, influenced by a spirit of rebellion against God, comes all the universal doctrines that we hear of in our days. God's love, which in every age has appeared discriminating, is fixed upon all the human race, they tell us; when the Saviour declares it to be sovereign; "for many be called, but few chosen." (Matt. 20:16) Some declare that God chose all alike (if such a choice can be); but the Saviour says that He chose His people out of the world. (John 15:19)

They tell us that Christ redeemed all men; when the Scriptures declare that God redeemed His elect *from* among men. (Rev. 14:4) If God redeemed *some* from among *others*, then those that the elect were redeemed from, were not redeemed. When God gave Egypt for Israel's ransom He gave no ransom for Egypt. If the wicked are a ransom for the righteous, and transgressors for the upright, (Prov. 21:18) then those wicked transgressors had no ransom paid for them, however the doctrine of universal redemption is earnestly insisted upon. But I defy the world ever to get one text of Scripture to prove it. Christ says, "I lay down my life for the sheep," (John 10:15). But all are not sheep. They that are the chosen flock of God are redeemed; "I lay down my life for the *sheep*." All that the Saviour died for were ordained to life; and those that are thus chosen and redeemed must be brought to receive the grace of faith; for "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." (Acts 13:48) But some are not chosen; these are not sheep, therefore the gift of faith is withheld from them: "But ye believe not, because ye are **NOT** of my sheep, as I said unto you." (John 10:26) Christ, in the 12th verse, had called them hirelings, and in the next place He told them that they were not of His sheep; and that was the reason why the gift of faith was withheld from them: "When the Jews heard this, then they took up stones to stone Him."

(John 10:31)

As universal redemption cannot be proved from the Bible, I am sure it can not be taken or supported from any observations that can be made on the conduct of the world; for the generality of mankind give us **NO** proof, by their conduct, of their being washed in a Redeemer's blood, or of their being "redeemed from a vain conversation." (I Peter 1:18)

Thus these universal bowels of corrupt nature, that sound so universally in their compassions towards the inhabitants of earth and hell, are set up as a standard for God to work by, and have brought forth the doctrines of universal grace and universal redemption, which I believe to be nothing but universal lies. Hence I conclude that those persons who pretend to have so much "love" for poor sinners as to make the grace of God, and the redemption of the Saviour, come over to *their* standard, is a pretended charity, which comes not from God, but from themselves, because it favours falsehood more than truth; and whilst sounding out universal grace, it bears a false witness, contradicts the Scriptures and rebels against the sovereignty of God, in perverting his word to please men. Surely, "there is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord." (Prov. 21:30)

I fear that some have been so strenuous for *universal*, that they have neglected *particular* redemption. Every man that is saved must experience redemption for himself; it must be known by every particular sheep of the Saviour's fold. Universal redemption will afford but little comfort to one in rebellion against God, condemned by his own conscience, and who never was purged from his guilt, nor redeemed from his vain conversation. Thus redemption becomes *particular* to every chosen vessel: nor can it ever be proved to be universal, until we have gotten the universal testimony of every man in the world having received it; which I see no

likelihood of at present. Reader, fare thee well.

— William Huntington

**"DEARLY BELOVED, AVENGE NOT
YOURSELVES."**— Rom. 12:19

By Gilbert Beebe, 1856

Who that read the solemn admonitions with which the New Testament abounds, do not feel deeply humbled under a sense of their shortcomings, and propensity to err? Were we not in the flesh, and exposed to temptations, we should not require to be thus frequently admonished; but such is our present exposure to the alluring vanities of the world, the corruptions of our own carnal nature and the temptations of Satan, that we need every admonition that is given us in the Scriptures, and we also need abundance of grace to incline and enable us to heed them. Among other trials which are common to the saints of God, their exposure to unjust injuries in their persons, their reputation, their property, or what is by far more trying to them, in that which brings down on them the unprovoked censure, suspicion and disfellowship of those whom they esteem as the excellent of the earth, among whom is all their delight. This, although more cruel than the grave, is sometimes the lot of the dear children of God, and while called to pass through these bitter waters of Meribah, while chafed and fretted in their feelings, how very apt is their carnal nature to suggest to them the idea of retaliation.

Our carnal minds will urge that it is just and right that we should resent the injury done us, and smite those who have wantonly smitten us, and deal to them a just retribution for their wicked assault upon us. Self-preservation is said to be among the fixed laws of our nature, and it is sometimes mistaken by even the children of God for a law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. But

we, alas, have found it to be a “law of our members, warring against the law of our mind” Under **NO** circumstances are the disciples of Christ to administer retribution to those from whom they have received injuries. “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves.” Your cause is before the Lord, and perfectly under His control. He will judge His people, and “avenge His own elect who cry unto Him night and day” “ There are several good reasons why the saints should not attempt to avenge themselves, of which we will call the attention of our readers to a few;

I. Because we are *forbidden* to do so, not only in our text, but also in many other portions of the word. This, in the absence of all other considerations, is a sufficient reason. We cannot avenge ourselves, nor attempt to do so, without involving ourselves in an act of disobedience to our Lord and Master. He has, both by precept and example, pointed out to us the better way. By precept He has commanded us to “love our enemies, bless them that curse us, and do good to them who despitefully use and persecute us,” and if they smite us on one cheek, turn to them the other also; if they violently take away our coat, give them our cloak also. As we reverence him, let us regard His authority. In His example He was meek and lowly; He gave His back to them who scourged Him, and His cheek to them who plucked off the hair. When He was reviled, He reviled not again; when He was reproached, insulted, slandered, rudely led away to be crucified, “as a lamb is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep is dumb before his shearers, so He opened not His mouth.” And when writhing in agony and blood upon the cross of Calvary, condemned as a criminal to die a painful and ignominious death, though He could command the hosts of heaven, and had power to summon all the legions of mighty angels, He called not for vengeance, but He cried, “Father, forgive!” Righteous precept; blessed example. Dearly

beloved, let us obey the command, and follow the example of our blessed Saviour.

2. Another reason why we should not avenge ourselves, is our incompetency to accurately estimate the amount of injury received, the criminality of the motive of the offender, and the amount of retribution due to the transgressor. Both from the world and from the brethren, we are liable to receive injuries. From the world we have no right to expect anything less, and from the brethren whom we hold near and dear, we shall sometimes encounter such treatment as is calculated to wound the spirit by which we are sealed, and provoke the corrupt passions of our yet unsubdued and sinful natures. When in conflict with the world, let us remember that our God has said, “Vengeance is **MINE**, I will repay,” and leave the matter with Him who “knows how to deliver the tempted, and reserve the ungodly” to be punished. He will preserve His people from the wicked who are His hand and His sword; or, as the poet has said,

“When men of spite against me join,
They are the sword, the hand is thine.”

And when from the brethren we are made to feel the force of the words of the psalmist, “It was not an enemy that reproached me; then could I have borne it; neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him; but it was thou, a man, mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in Company.” (Psa. 55:12-14) While in this world of conflicts, sorrows and afflictions, it is impossible but that offenses will come among the disciples. See Luke 17:1. But when offended by a brother or sister, instead of laboring for redress, or for the punishment of the offender, the divine rule is clearly given us, and we are commanded by our Lord Jesus to labor according to the rule to reclaim the offending brother. (See article on “He Hath

Called Us To Peace,” page 25) If he hear thee, well, thou hast gained thy brother; but if unsuccessful in laboring to reclaim him, conclude not that his is an hopeless case, for the failure may be in part, or wholly attributable to thyself; take the second step; take with thee one or two faithful brethren, who are prepared to give wholesome advice, and to judge impartially between you; and let it still be the grand object to gain the erring brother, and if this second step should fail to reclaim him, still presume not to decide the ease yourself. You can neither search the heart nor try the reins of the delinquent brother. Do as your Lord directs you, tell it to the church. The Lord is there. God is in His holy temple, and He will judge His people. Let all the saints look to Him for counsel, and ask of Him, and He will give you that wisdom which comes down from heaven, which is pure, peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, without partiality or hypocrisy; such wisdom He will give to His saints, and not upbraid them, and such wisdom we greatly need to direct us in the judgment of all the difficulties which occur among the saints.

3. We should not avenge ourselves, because to do so would be a usurpation of a prerogative which belongs only to the Lord. It is treason when the subjects of any government usurp the prerogatives of the king or sovereign to whom their obedience is due. None who possess the Spirit of Christ would willingly and understandingly grasp His sceptre, or attempt to seize His crown. But they all, while here in the flesh, possess a fleshly nature, which is full of opposition to that which is good, and it is from the polluted fountain that all our corruptions flow. From whence come wars and fightings? Come they not of your own lusts? The saints have never been afflicted with any conflict among themselves, which were not attributable to their own fleshly lusts; for that which is born of God cannot commit sin; and if we, as

christians, possessed nothing about us that is not born of God, we should neither be disturbed with sins, trials nor conflicts one with another. Under all these considerations it is exceedingly improper that dearly beloved brethren should avenge themselves.

4. Were we allowed to so avenge ourselves, such are our liabilities to err, we might severely injure those for whom Christ has died, without securing to ourselves anything more than the gratification of a vindictive and revengeful feeling of the flesh, which should rather be denied and crucified. It is greatly to be feared that christians sometimes mistake their carnal passions which are aroused to resentment of real or supposed injuries, for a justifiable grief of spirit, and their attempts to avenge themselves, for an obedience to the divine rule which requires us to labor to reclaim such as have departed from the order of the house of God. Liable, therefore, as we are to err, it becomes us the more earnestly to take heed to the admonition, “Avenge not yourselves.”

5. The relationship in which we stand to each other, as dearly beloved brethren, presents another good reason why we should not avenge ourselves. When Moses saw two of the Hebrews striving together, he reproved them, saying, “Sirs, ye are brethren, why do ye wrong one to another?” As a fraternity bound by the most sacred considerations, to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace, we should rather give place to wrath, than attempt to avenge ourselves. The saints of God are not only brethren, but they are dearly beloved. Dearly beloved of God, for, “God who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.” Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God. Such was His love that He spared not His own Son, but delivered

Him up for us all. And our Redeemer has also said, when lifting His eyes to heaven and addressing His Father, "That thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me; and O righteous Father, thou lovest me before the foundation of the world." As God has SO loved them before the world began, and given such incontestable evidences of His love towards them, is it meet that we should attempt to retaliate on them, when we feel confident that they have injured us? As we love the Lord supremely, will we not rather for His sake suffer the wrong for a season, until He is pleased to reclaim the wayward? But the saints are not only dearly beloved of God, but they are dearly beloved one of another, and as we love Him who begat them, we also love them that are begotten of Him, and His solemn charge and new commandment to them was that they should love one another. How can we obey this new and blessed commandment, if we seek to avenge ourselves?

6. Aside from the wickedness of disobeying this command, if there were no law against it, should the saints attempt the administration of retributive justice, they would make wretched work, cause trouble for the saints, and make a thorny pillow to recline their own head upon. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" But what can be more unchristian, or more unpleasant, than for brethren to indulge in hard feelings, and hard sayings, and unkind actions one toward another?

To the foregoing we might add many other reasons why the saints should riot avenge themselves. The whole spirit and letter of the Gospel forbids it; the law of Christ written in our hearts forbids it. Then from all these considerations, dearly beloved brethren, let brotherly love continue; let love be without dissimulation, and love one another with a pure heart fervently. Avenge not yourselves.

Grieve not the holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice, and be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. And while in love we admonish one another, and with much long-suffering reprove those who err, let us at the same time remember how much our brethren have to bear from us, and how much our God has forgiven us. We are not to be remiss in faithfully laboring to reclaim the erring, but let it be in meekness, considering that we also are subject to many temptations. — Selected from the new release of *Editorials of Gilbert Beebe*.

HE CHANGETH NOT

By T.W., Gospel Standard, 1846

In compliance with your wish, I take up a few leisure moments to write. But what I can say to give you satisfaction I know not. That I am nothing and feel so, I well know; and the longer I live the more I think that I realise it. We do not like these humbling lessons; yet the great apostle of the Gentiles could say he took pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake; for "when I am weak then am I Strong." As to such a spirit as this, I must say I am many, many a time at a stand-still; and all I can do is to mourn my barrenness and nothingness before the Lord, and in my very soul cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

Ah! what should I do, or whither flee, if God in His love to His people could change? Notwithstanding all my unprofitableness and spiritual ruin by nature, the good, the sweet hope at the bottom, that He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, is a support to my soul. And when enabled to look back and realise how precious He was to me when He

first brought me to the enjoyment of what He is to me in the pardon of all my sin, in the destruction of the blackness of my soul under the horror of Satan, unbelief, and despair, and in the enjoyment of the infinite purity of His righteousness as my very own; and the many sweet glimpses I have enjoyed of the same since, under the many low circumstances I have passed through, and the sins and sharp sorrows of soul I have suffered in every circumstance of life —prosperity as well as adversity — it is a hope nothing seems able to destroy, that He will love me to the end, and love me out of the very being of sin into His own perfect likeness, which is *love*. It is faith's secret enjoyment of this that makes such a poor thing as I am hobble on as I do, and shake myself from the dust; arid when I see Him as He is, (and I sometimes think I shall) I verily believe I shall never want to see anything else, even in heaven, that can bear a comparison with Him. And I am sure, grace must be free indeed which gave a worm like me such a hope.

You know not what a beggar I am obliged to be from day to day. It would be the strangest collection of words and breathings ever brought together, were it possible to bring to mortal ears my cries to God under my load of sin. O! there is no telling my feelings to any one but Jesus Christ in prayer. And is it not an abounding and unspeakable mercy to know His name, and to be blessed to agonise such broken, disjointed, and unconnected expressions as we utter before Him? But there is a Scripture which stoops lower than our lowest state, namely, "We know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

By this Scripture we are given to understand that it is impossible for a believer

to make known what he feels before his God, in that none but God the Spirit can do so. O what a mystery is here! And O what a mystery is couched in our salvation! When the Lord of life and glory, as the poet says, had not only to sink as low as I, but lower too, rightfully and feelingly to succour, and effectually to deliver them who are tempted. O the deep things of God! Well may it be said, the "unsearchable riches of Christ!" How does the profession of the day dwindle into nothing when contrasted with the momentous experience couched in the path of many of the Lord's family in this wilderness below!

My friends, my pen has been running freely in what I have been scribbling to you; yet, when I began, as I have said, I knew not what to say. Perhaps you know a little about it, and as I felt a little of freedom and a flowing therein, perhaps also in a little measure you will be able to add on its perusal, "As in water face answereth to face, so does the heart of man to man." Adieu! for the present. I would believe for myself as well as you, that Jesus having loved His own which were in the world, He loveth them unto the end.

—Manchester, Nov. 6, 1846

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

We wish to express our appreciation to all of you in your support of this endeavor; and especially for the subscriptions received, renewed, and given as gifts to others. Please check your address label for expiration date.

Many of you received a sample in the past couple of months of the last two issues. This was made possible by gifts of friends. We received over 1200 addresses from a sincere and lovely brother who loves the truth of free grace, and has for years yearned over you in the cause of God and truth. We hope

you found something of value to you in your spiritual sojourn here below. We do not expect you to agree with all we set forth, though we ourselves believe them truth. Yet, we are not “standards of orthodoxy” for others to follow. We have no party spirit, nor private hobby-horses to ride; save only we love the truth of free grace, and labor night and day to try in our feeble way to set this forth for His poor and scatter flock. Grace to you.