

All Rights Reserved By HDM For This Digital Publication
Copyright 2000 Holiness Data Ministry

Duplication of this CD by any means is forbidden, and
copies of individual files must be made in accordance with
the restrictions stated in the B4UCopy.txt file on this CD.

PARKER MAXEY'S EDITORIALS -- (1989)

Editorials from The Missionary Revivalist
Compiled by Duane V. Maxey

* * * * *

Digital Edition 09/04/2000
By Holiness Data Ministry

* * * * *

January, 1989 Editorial
"THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS"
Jeremiah 23:6

It is a great privilege and honor to be a member of a church organization that upholds the Biblical doctrine of holiness of heart and life with a burden and passion to evangelize a world lost in sin and on their way to a devil's hell. Privileges and blessings carry with them responsibilities, however, that must not be denied or overlooked. Let us note at least one of these.

There is law of righteousness that carries with it moral obligations. The subject of righteousness appears often throughout the Bible. We read in Genesis 15:6 where Abraham believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness."

I Samuel 26:3 talks about rendering to every man according to his righteousness.

In Job 27:6, Job testifies, "My righteousness I hold fast." In 29:14 he talks about "being clothed with righteousness." In 36:3 Job ascribes "righteousness to my Maker."

It is interesting and enlightening to run references throughout the Bible that have to do with righteousness. Following are just a few of them:

Ps. 17:15, "behold thy face in righteousness"

Ps. 23:3, "leadeth me in the paths of righteousness"

Ps. 48:10, "right hand is full of righteousness"

Ps. 96:13, "judge the world with righteousness"

Ps. 111:3, "his righteousness endureth forever"

Prov. 11:19, "righteousness tendeth to life"

Prov. 14:34, "righteousness exalteth a nation"

Isa. 32:1, "a king shall reign in righteousness"

Isa. 59:17, "put on righteousness as a breastplate"

Hos. 10:12, "sow to yourselves in righteousness"

Matt. 6:33, "seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness"

Luke 1:75, we are to live "in holiness and righteousness before him"

Acts 13:10, "devil, thou enemy of all righteousness"

I Cor. 15:34, "awake to righteousness, and sin not"

I Tim. 6:11, "follow after righteousness, godliness"

I John 3:10, "whosoever that doeth not righteousness is not of God"

Righteousness roots in the word "right." Righteousness springs from the great law of right that pervades all relationships of man to God His Maker, and to his fellow-man. Righteousness is the recognition of these rights and the fulfillment of their claims. I John 5:17 tells us that "all unrighteousness is sin." The world is living in sin because it is living in unrighteousness. Men, as a whole, are not fulfilling their moral obligations.

Righteousness involves God, man and self. This is the message Paul preached to Felix--being right with God; being right with man; being right with one's self. When Paul finished his message "Felix trembled." The word "trembled" is better translated "terrified." Why? Paul was simply pointing out to Felix that he was violating the law of righteousness and he must face that at the judgment.

God has certain rights in us. Of Him, by Him, and for Him are all things. He is the author of our being. He created us for His own purposes. Not to respect this is to defraud Him of His right and to break the fundamental law of righteousness. We owe it to God to submit to Him, to love Him, to fear Him, to trust Him, to promote His cause. The subject is exhaustible--it includes praying, giving, going, obeying. One cannot break the law of righteousness with, out sinning.

To fulfill all righteousness we are under certain obligations to our fellow-men. We owe a debt to mankind. Next to God, man has been our greatest benefactor. In the area of human

relationships alone the subject is inexhaustible. The law of righteousness comes to play in all our relationships with every member of the human race. Not to treat our fellow man right is to sin--members of our immediate family, our relatives, our co-laborers, the people we worship with, the people we do business with, our enemies, etc.

We face rights or obligations we owe to ourselves as an immortal being created in the image of God. The law of righteousness has tentacles that reach out into every facet and recess of man's triune being-body, mind and spirit. Again the subject of righteousness in relationship to one's self is inexhaustible. We sin against our own self when we fail to let God have total control of our life.

There is no escaping the law of righteousness nor the fact that we will, at the end of life, be judged by it. Cain asked, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Judah was gripped with fear, "How shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me?" It was said of Queen Esther, "And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" And the list could go on and on.

The law of righteousness has tentacles that reach out into every facet and recess of life including all relationships between moral beings. Let us take one example for illustration to which all Bible Missionary Church members can relate. When we are received into the membership of a local Bible Missionary church we vow to live according to the General and Special Rules of the Bible Missionary Church, which includes faithfully paying our tithes into that local church on a regular basis. There is a statement in our manual that reads: "If the time should ever come when you do not feel that you can conscientiously live according to the General and Special Rules of The Bible Missionary Church or if you should become guilty of any conduct that is unbecoming to a Christian, will you voluntarily, and of your own free will, withdraw your membership from the Bible Missionary Church?" To this an affirmative answer is required.

Pastors of Bible Missionary Churches are under obligation to see that all funds raised in the local church or its departments for Home and Foreign Missions and for District or General expense are submitted promptly to the treasurer of the department for which they were raised. He has no authority to retain or refuse to act according to our manual instructions. It is the law of our church which we voluntarily vow to keep when we become a member. Our General Conference is the only legislative body we have. No single member, elder, layman, officer, or board in our church can alter, change or modify what our General Conference sets forth without violating the law of righteousness. Any individual who refuses to pay his tithe into the local church of which he is a member is under moral obligation to withdraw his membership. And when he or she does, they lose all their privileges of membership.

Some have endeavored to get around the law of righteousness when it has become "sticky" by falling back on a philosophy that assumes that the end justifies the means. Take Peter for example. He must have felt safer not to identify with Christ at the time of His arrest. When the cock crew he recovered from his unrighteous act (Remember: "All unrighteousness is sin" I John 5:17) by a thorough, heartbroken humbleness, repentance, confession and a merciful restoration. Peter might have wanted to have his sin forever hidden but we all know about it!

Technical cover ups, maneuverings and manipulating will not cover moral wrongs, The end does not justify the means if the means are not according to righteousness. Two wrongs will not make a right. Jesus detested whited sepulchres. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold [resist, set aside, ignore, endeavor to alter or qualify] the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom. 1:18).

In a day that is not far,
At the blazing judgment bar,
Even now the awful summons I can hear;
I must meet the mighty God,
I must face His holy word,
I must stand before the judgment bar.

I must meet each broken vow,
That I hold so lightly now,
Every heartache I have caused, each sigh, each tear;
Things that time cannot erase,
I must meet them face to face
When I stand before the judgment bar.

It is no wonder Felix was terrified, when he thought of judgment. Paul tells us in the second chapter of Romans that judgment will be according to truth, our personal deeds, with no respect of persons. God help us all not to violate the law of righteousness.

* * * * *

February, 1989 Editorial
LIVING TO GLORIFY GOD

When Charles Finney was converted he took as his motto for life I Corinthians 10:31, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God, and he lived up to it and was able to maintain a constant victorious life.

This would be an excellent motto for every newly born again child of God to adopt and live by daffy. It would settle a lot of questions and solve a lot of problems for the individual himself as well as to give him a consistent life for others to observe and enable him to have a profitable influence.

For illustration, and we trust, edification, let us cite just one item that men confront that is peculiar only to the male species and which has been controversial in these latter days among holiness people--the question of "facial hair." Perhaps a strange subject for an editorial. Perhaps! But shouldn't something be said at this bringing in of a new innovation to the holiness ranks of our day? Smooth shaven men has been, on the whole, the unwritten rule for men of holiness profession, especially among the ministry, but also as well among those laymen who profess a vital experience of salvation.

All kinds of questions arise at this point! Is the growing of a mustache, and/or a beard or both, wrong for a professed Christian? Is it a sin?

God created man with a beard and mustache. It is always there whether kept to skin level or let show out. If it is wrong to grow a beard or mustache or both, when does it become wrong to be other than smooth shaven and when is it not wrong?

Several things must be taken into consideration before an intelligent answer can be given or judgment brought to bear on those who wear a beard or a mustache.

Climactic consideration. Many times those who live in the far north country where cold reaches far below the zero level have worn a full beard and mustache to help protect the face from the sub-zero weather. No criticism would be made for such.

Life style. There are some men who have consistently worn a beard or mustache, either or both, and it has been their life style. With these it is not a matter of shifting to keep abreast of "style." To be critical of such would not be justified.

History. I have on my book shelves books written during the great revivals of Methodism containing pictures of the great holiness preachers of that day with full flowing beards and mustaches. Some wore only mustaches. In my childhood I recall vividly some of these great Spirit-anointed preachers of the gospel with well groomed full beards. In that day there was no question raised or problem involved.

Custom. In some countries (Mexico, for example) it is customary for the men to wear mustaches. A missionary working in that country should not be criticized or unChristianized to follow that custom. In fact, it might be best to follow the custom although they would probably be accepted if they did not follow the custom because of their being of a foreign country.

Disfigured faces. Some men have left their beard grow to cover ugly scars and facial disfigurements. Such would be understandable:

Rebellion. In the decade of the 60's, due to the influence of "rock-'n-roll" music, immorality sponsored mostly by godless television, the drug traffic, the unisex influence, one of the great signs of rebellion in that decade was long hair on men, beards, etc. Decent men shunned being identified with that and as a result were clean shaven.

The gendering of pride. A mustache and/or beard or both can, to the individual, become a sign of carnal pride. I have heard, as well as many who will read these lines, dear Brother H. B. Huffman relate his "mustache" experience. As a young man he took it upon himself to grow a mustache--not unusual for young men to go through this stage. He took great pride in keeping his mustache "trimmed to neatness and perfection." While walking to church one Sunday morning with his gold cane and striped trousers and neatly trimmed mustache--he was a very zealous Christian when this took place--he testified later that he heard the voice of the Spirit ask him a very embarrassing question: "Why are you so interested in that mustache and taking such pains to make it look so perfect?" The motive of his heart was laid bare. He saw it was not for the glory of God

but the pride of his heart and the attention he was enjoying from it. He was passing a neighbor's house at the time and without hesitation he went in, borrowed his friend's razor and cut it off "dry" and cold. "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." He never hesitated for a second thought when the Spirit revealed his heart motive but obeyed the Spirit's check at once.

Let us come now to a final word about this whole matter of beards and mustaches. What position should a Christian take in this our day?

The Christian position. While the mustache and long hair as a sign of rebellion were prominent in the decade of the 60's, it is not considered particularly so in this decade. But leaving generalities and bringing the issue right down to "where the rubber meets the road," the acceptable style for the children of God among the men folk of our day is to be smooth shaven. Any other style than this carries a stigma with it not to the glory of God. A Holy Ghost filled individual will not seek to be a "pacesetter" along these lines. The very familiar lines are so appropriate at this point:

Be not the first
By whom the new is tried,
Nor yet the last
To lay the old aside!

To say the least, a sudden change from "smooth shaven" to wearing a mustache or beard, either or both, whatever the heart motive may be, suggests a spirit of insubordination, rebellion to outward holy standards of living not to the glory of God and bears an influence of independency that militates against deep spirituality and a heart of submission to God!

United Parcel Service is ranked by Fortune Magazine as the top model company in the United States. They have adopted a dress code for the men who work for them. Their employed men must be neatly dressed, clean cut, no beard or mustache, no hair down on their collar. When they are hired to work for the company they are given so much time to meet the dress requirements and if they fail to do so are immediately fired. According to a statement made by this company they claim that the most upright, honorable men should and will dress this way. It is a mark of integrity by this company.

This should say something to professed holiness people and their influence among the people in the world!

* * * * *

March, 1989 Editorial
LIFE IN CHRIST MADE VISIBLE

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you" 2 Cor. 13:11.

In this verse of Scripture Paul is urging the Corinthians to rejoice (a more accurate translation of the word "farewell"), and in exhorting them to rejoice he speaks in four present imperatives. The first two constitute a call to a Christian's duty as a member of the body of Christ; the second two reveal the method to be put into practice that would make this possible, and then the verse ends with the outcome when and if the imperatives are followed. The whole verse constitutes a timely exhortation for Christians living in this day. We note:

THE CALL. This involves two things and is best translated in the passive voice. In the first place we are exhorted to "be perfect." Putting it in the passive voice it would read like this, "Let yourselves be steadily perfected." H. Orton Wiley would term this "progressive sanctification" or growth in grace following the initial crisis experience of being sanctified wholly. Peter exhorts Christians to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Surely, as Christians we are to constantly be on the increase in the grace of God and the ethics of the Christian life. In another place in the Bible we are called upon to adorn the gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul exhorts Christians (Romans 13:8) to "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." Again in Romans we read, "Let love be without dissimulation (hypocrisy or empty profession)." Do we find this among the body of professed holiness people today? We are witnessing the scattering of "the power of the holy people." There is a breaking up, a fragmenting going on among the holiness churches of this day. Brethren, this puts us all in danger--"But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." No one seems to be guilty, however. It is always the other person, the other crowd. How timely then, this exhortation "to let yourselves be steadily perfected." If we are to make it in these days it all boils down to an individual matter and in the words of Saint Peter exhorting Christians in the light of the near coming of the Lord, "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness."

In the second place we are exhorted to "be of good comfort." Putting this in the passive voice we would say, "let yourselves be exhorted," or rather what the Apostle is saying here is: "heed my appeal." As Christians we are asked to receive the admonition that will lead to the perfecting of the Christian life in its relationship to the body of Christ. Are my life, my thoughts, my words, my actions such that edify the body of Christ? Am I big enough to allow the other fellow room in the body of Christ if he does not agree altogether with me? Let us notice briefly:

THE METHOD that should be employed to make unity in the body of Christ a reality. This also involves two things and both of these also are expressed in the imperative mood. It is readily accepted that within the experience of Christian perfection there is plenty room for growth, but how is this to be accomplished? We have the answer in these next two imperatives. First we are to "Be of one mind." We read in Romans 12:16 and 15:5, "Be of the same mind one toward another." "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus." In Philippians 2:1, 2 we read: "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." We see according to these Scriptures that the key to the perfecting of our lives together as a part of the body of Christ is a common commitment to the love and truth of the gospel of Christ. United, if you please, in one common and glorious cause and that is the glory of God in the salvation of one

another and of lost humanity. Let us get beyond contending for our little sectarian groups and let the Blessed Holy Spirit thrust us out into one great and glorious effort to reach the lost.

The second imperative in the method here presented is to "Live in peace." What does this involve? It involves the fellowship of believers in this commitment. It is "harvest" time. Surely the holy people of God should be able to unite in this one great concern! Paul brings this thought out clearly in Philippians 2:5 when he writes, "Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." What the Apostle Paul is here saying could be put in these words:

Fill up and complete my joy by living in harmony and being of the same mind and one in purpose, having the same love, being in full accord and of one harmonious mind and intention."

THE RESULTS of these admonitions and exhortations, if constantly observed, will be the encouraging promise that "the God of love and peace shall be with you." This Scripture is extremely suggestive and at the same time convicting: Only by channeling the love and peace of God to others can we as holiness people continue to enjoy the blessing of the presence of the God of love and peace ourselves.

William Carey, facing the evangelization of India's millions, expressed the thought that underlies the words of the verse of Scripture presented here as found in this book of 2 Corinthians 13:11 when he wrote: "What is there in the whole world worth living for but the glory of God and the salvation of the souls of men, or the glory of God in the salvation of souls?" The glory of God should be primary and this should issue in the salvation of men.

Should there not be the concentration of mind and will on this single object and should there not be a laying aside of everything that would hinder the accomplishment of that end, that I may by all means save some," and should there not be a self-discipline adopted for the successful carrying out of this great enterprise?

God grant that this may be so in these last days! The one hindering cause today is the same Paul faced in his day--the Church was yet carnal!

* * * * *

April, 1989 Editorial
ORTHODOXY

It was Daniel Steele who, in his book, *The Gospel of the Comforter*, wrote the chapter entitled "The Holy Spirit The Conservator of Orthodoxy."

Orthodoxy, derived from two Greek words (orthos and doxa), can be translated "right thought" or "correct belief," and is related to orthopraxy, which means "correct conduct." Orthodoxy is most easily understood in contrast with the unorthodox, defined first as heterodoxy (a divergent mode of belief) and then as heresy (a condemned choice of belief). (Beacon Dictionary of Theology, p. 378)

Daniel Steele states that "the term 'Orthodoxy' signifies right beliefs in respect to fundamental Christian doctrines. These are the supreme divinity of Jesus Christ, the divine personality and the work of the Holy Spirit, the threefold personality of the one divine substance, the substitutional atonement, justification by faith, regeneration and sanctification by the Holy Spirit--both rendered necessary by original sin (a tendency toward sin born in fallen man)--the future judgment of the race, assigning some to eternal rewards and others to endless punishments, according to the permanent character voluntarily chosen in this life, the only probation. This, as I understand it, is the substance of orthodoxy In all ages of the Church it has been an important question how to preserve evangelical truth in the belief of those who profess faith in Christ A favorite method is to require the theological teachers to subscribe at stated intervals to a well-defined formulary of doctrines. But the Holy Spirit has not emphasized any portion of the Bible as a shorter catechism embodying the substance of revealed truth It is my purpose., to show a better way, the New Testament way, of conserving orthodoxy; a way that always succeeds wherever it is faithfully followed.

"The fulness of the Holy Spirit in pastor and people will always insure a correct theology. St. John in his First Epistle, 2:20-27, regards the anointing or full baptism of the Spirit as the great safeguard against being drawn away by the falsity of antichrist The natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit, and he discredits Jesus when He says, 'I and my Father are one.' Therefore this doctrine of the Godhead of Christ, which is fundamental to the evangelical system, is preserved and rendered vital in the Christian consciousness only by the Holy Spirit.

"(It is) the Holy Spirit in the believer that preserves, vitalizes and makes real to the consciousness all the essential truths of the gospel. The spirit of inspiration has recorded these truths in the Bible; but if He had not made them real and living in the Christian experience, they, and the Bible too, would have perished long ago. History is full of instances of essential truth dropping first out of experience, then out of the creed. Thus justification by faith in Jesus Christ disappeared from the Roman Catholic Church and left the world in darkness for a thousand years."

In order to become a member of any specific church group there are always certain requirements to be met. These vary from one group to another. Among the more conservative holiness groups there are both heart (inner) requirements and outer (dress and certain conduct) standards to be met. This has always been so among the holiness churches across the years.

The Pharisees during Jesus' days on earth had their requirements. They started out with the purpose of conserving a true heart and vital life experience with a clear outward manifestation of these in dress and conduct. In Jesus' days He said about them, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees ye have no part in the kingdom of heaven." Their religion had become external and had lost the heart out of vital Christian experience.

I am sure all would agree that standards of holy living (both inner and outer) should stem from convictions of the heart and not just a mental consent of the mind in order to meet membership requirements of any particular group. And was this just what Jesus was meaning when He said that a man's righteousness should exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees? They were like whited sepulchres according to Jesus--far different on the inside than the outside would

appear to be. However, history proves that most of our outward standards displayed by our people are adhered to because they are set forth as membership requirements of the group one chooses to become a member of. I say history will verify this observation, for has it not been repeated over and over across the centuries? Groups that have been "strict" have been flooded almost instantly with worldly outward standards as soon as pressure was let off or leadership ceased to emphasize the outer. Do you suppose that we have anything spectacular to boast about at this point, that we would be any different? How soon would our little Zion be flooded with "worldliness" if present requirements would be thought not so necessary or Biblical after all?

The secret for possessing and retaining Bible standards of holy living is that they become in the individual heart the fruits of a genuine saving and sanctifying grace. This would lead us to conclude that when we go all out to fight for the Bible standard of holy living alone, we are fighting the battle too far down the hillside! The number one task of the church is to get the church sanctified holy. It is a death to self experience that will bring standards of conviction to the heart and life. It will be more than a matter of meeting membership requirements of any particular group.

About now I can hear someone say, "Well, should we not ever preach Bible standards of holy living?" Certainly! The Bible in all its truths should be proclaimed with no uncertain sound. Standards should be pro claimed clearly, exegetically and experientially from the lips of anointed men who themselves know what it is all about from personal experience. They should be testified to by those whom the Holy Spirit has enlightened to His honor and glory. The manifest presence and power of the Holy Spirit accompanying such a testimony and witness strikes conviction to the unenlightened. No preacher can take the people farther than he himself has gone.

The blessed Holy Ghost within the heart in His purifying power and presence is the key. He alone will make what may appear to be a membership requirement a mighty personal heart conviction and He alone will conserve His work within the heart. When worldliness begins to appear within the body of Christ the Holy Spirit has already been long gone.

Believe it or not, people have not always left one group because of Bible standards, but because the great Conservator has withdrawn. It will take nothing less than a Holy Ghost revival to restore His presence within the heart until once more He rings the bell of the inner heart and from that inner conscious presence of the Holy One will come the outer manifestation of the inner reality of a Divine Presence that is genuine.

Nothing short of a genuine Holy Ghost revival of holiness of heart and life will meet the need of the hour!

Who, if any, in this hour, can stand up and make any boast? The midnight hour is upon us. The trumpet of His second coming is about to sound. How many are prepared for that hour?

* * * * *

May, 1989 Editorial

"WITH GREAT POWER GAVE THE APOSTLES WITNESS"

Acts 4:33

In the new birth experience there are four concomitants (attendant conditions) that take place simultaneously. That is to say, the moment an individual meets the conditions to be saved he is instantaneously forgiven, justified, regenerated and adopted into the family of God. As paradoxical as it might seem, these four concomitants must take place in a given order and each ahead of the other. Logically and experientially God must forgive a sinner before He can justify him. He sovereignly forgives us on the basis of the confession of our sins and the shed blood of Jesus Christ (Isa. 55:7; Eph. 4:32). In the justification of a sinner God clears him before the judgment bar of God after he has thoroughly repented of and forsaken every sin. "Justification" is a legal term and has to do with law courts. Before we can enter a holy Heaven we must be clear before the judgment bar of God. Once again God accomplishes this for the sinner on the basis of his repentance and faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:1; 8:33, 34). Then there is the parental aspect of the new birth which takes place in the divine act of regeneration when a sinner becomes spiritually alive (John 3:1-8). But here again, logically and experientially this cannot take place until one is sovereignly forgiven and judiciously justified before the judgment bar of God. The last act of the new birth is that of adoption into the family of God and one must be alive, born again, before adoption can take place (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5). So here we see the four concomitants of the new birth experience and all in that moment a sinner repents of sin and rests his faith in the promise of God to save him.

Likewise there are four concomitants in the second definite work of grace in sanctifying a regenerated soul entirely. As in the first work of grace, these must take place in a logical order, one each before the other, although the entire work is done instantaneously, as paradoxical as this must seem.

The four concomitants of the second work of grace are, first, the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire (Matt. 3:11). A regenerated man is alive spiritually, but soon learns that he has within his heart a nature contrary to the nature of God and the nature of holiness. When proper conditions are met and confession of this condition is made, God will come to that heart unhindered now in all His working power. The first thing that then happens, and the second concomitant of the second work of grace, is the cleansing of the heart from original sin (Acts 15:8, 9); thirdly, there will be the empowering for service (Acts 1:8); and finally and fourthly, the sealing of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13; 4:30; I Cor. 1:21, 22).

These four concomitants of both the first work of grace and the second work of grace are the common lot of all who experience initial salvation and entire sanctification. To these great blood-bought privileges every heart will respond in one way or another in giving great witness to what has taken place within his heart. As there are no two individuals alike, so there will be a variety of expression of the great work of God done in the soul. Let us note what happened to a few we read about in the word of God:

"The Blind Man witnessed to Christ's sight-giving power (John 9:25); the Demoniac witnessed to Christ's delivering grace (Mark 5:20); the Leper witnessed to Christ's cleansing touch (Mark 1:45); the Woman witnessed to Christ's satisfying love (Luke 7:37); the Crooked Woman witnessed to Christ's straightening might (Luke 13:13); the Raised Man witnessed to Christ's quickening life (Luke 7:15); the Disciples witnessed to Christ's excellent glory (John and Luke 14;

2 Peter 1:16); the Saints at Thessalonica witnessed to Christ's effective working (I Thess. 1:9, 10)." (Pulpit Helps)

God does outstanding things for His people and to these witness should be given. How natural it was for the lame man to leap and dance for joy when his ankle bones were instantaneously made whole; how natural it was for the blind man to witness to new sight; how fitting it was at Pentecost for those 120 to give expression to what had taken place in their hearts in the cleansing and filling with the Holy Ghost! And so it will be with every soul who has received of the Lord the miraculous work of His grace in his heart.

To the two works of grace (the new birth and entire sanctification) there is the witness of the Spirit. J. A. Wood states it this way: "It is a sweet, inward persuasion of the Spirit that God, for Christ's sake, has either pardoned my sins and regenerated my soul, or that the blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed it from all sin." There is a spirit-voice to a spirit-ear and the communication is intelligible. To reason ourselves into the belief that we are wholly sanctified in the absence of this witness would be wholly perilous.

(Rev. J. A. Wood): There is a great variety of expression in personal experience both in regeneration and entire sanctification. "Some are exercised in one way, some in another. Sometimes there is an unusual illumination of soul. Sometimes a sweet resting and sinking into Christ. Sometimes great joy and ecstasy, though this is not the general experience. Sometimes there is an astonishing increase of faith, and assurance that all sin is gone. Sometimes an overwhelming sense of the divine presence. Sometimes the cleansing energy comes in a mighty torrent, and sometimes in a gentle breeze. Glory to God! although there is a diversity of operation both with respect to the divine and human spirit, yet the blessed results are the same. Let us never make out a way for God, but seek the cleansing power of the Holy Ghost, until it comes, just as He pleased to manifest it." (Foundations of Doctrine, p. 109).

"Sanctified souls are inclined to name the blessing after their principal sensation, harmonizing with their emotional experience.

"One person realizes principally a marked increase of faith, and he calls it 'the rest of faith.'

"Another is conscious of a deep, sweet resting in Christ, and he calls it 'resting in God.'

"Another is permeated with a sense of the divine presence, and filled with ecstatic rapture, and calls it 'the fullness of God.'

"Another feels his heart subdued, melted, refined and filled with God, and calls it 'holiness.'

"Another realizes principally a river of sweet, holy love flowing through the soul, and he calls it 'perfect love.'

"Another is prostrated under the power of the refining and sin-killing Spirit, and calls it 'the baptism of the Holy Ghost.'

"And another realizes principally a heaven of sweetness in complete submission to God, and he calls it 'entire sanctification.'

While another may feel clearly and strongly conscious of complete conformity to al the will of God and call it 'Christian perfection.' If genuine, the work wrought in each ease is essentially the same," (Perfect Love, pp. 124, 125, quoted in Foundations Doctrine, p, 110,)

We noted to begin with that with great power the apostles gave witness." One of the things absent from our midst far more than it should be is this very thing--"the power of our witness to the work of God in our heart."

God grant that Acts 1:8 will be mightily fulfilled in the children of God in these last days prior to His coming again! And may it be said of us as it was about the apostles, And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all,"

* * * * *

June, 1989 Editorial
IT TAKES ONE TO MAKE ONE

When the Philistines invaded Israel's territory and the giant Goliath put out the challenge for someone to face him in battle, no one, not even Saul, responded. For forty days Goliath, this uncircumcised Philistine, the enemy of God's people, defied the army of Israel. "Give me a man to fight with me," he challenged. It would be a fight unto death. The loser would be servant to the winner. God's cause was at stake. Not a single person in Saul's army came forth to meet the challenge. No one stood up in that hour.

It took David. Read about it in the seventeenth chapter of I Samuel. David put his life on the line for God. He stood with courage and faith in a Sovereign God whom Goliath had defied. It was God and His glory that was at stake. As he ran to meet the giant with his sling and five smooth stones he cried out, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel" (I Sam. 17:45, 46). In the Name of the Lord of Hosts David became a giant killer.

After David became king many giant killers arose in Israel. Why were there no giant killers in Saul's army? Saul never proved himself in the crucial hours of life. He failed the test in the crisis hours of his life. He wasn't a giant killer. It takes one to make one.

With David the story is one of victory upon victory. Earlier he had confronted a lion and a bear and successfully saved his father's lamb and now, when he met the challenge of the giant Goliath, he became a giant killer. Is it any wonder that giant killers arose around him? Read about them in I Chronicles chapters eleven and twelve. It talks about "the mighty men whom David had." Notice what it says about them: they were men who "brake through the host of the Philistines... men of war fit for the battle., they were mighty men of valor, famous throughout the house of their fathers., men that had understanding of the times... they were not of double heart they could keep rank., they came with a perfect heart., they were expert in war." Read about their accomplishments in these chapters. They were truly giant killers. What made the difference between Saul and David? David possessed these qualities. He was a giant killer, It takes one to make one.

Right here I am reminded of a verse of Scripture found in the book of Revelation 12:11, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

Serving God is a life or death matter. There are many giants alive in the world today, enemies of the Cross of Jesus Christ, but the greatest of these is that giant of "inbred sin," called "original sin," better known as "carnality." It is that "giant" that is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. It lurks in the heart of every unsanctified soul. Like Goliath of old it challenges, "Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us." What a true picture this is--people who hanker after the world, are worldly minded, manifest unholy attitudes, fuss over the standards of holy living, unsettled in a genuine sanctified experience, reaching out for things and more things, dissatisfied with their lot in life, possessing carnal traits of jealousy, envy, malice, guile, evil speakings. Paul wrote, "And I, brethren, could not write unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?"

The battle has been raging as long as the church has been in existence. Many a church program is being carried on, but "Goliath" still challenges and still defies the God of sanctifying grace. The "suppressionists" work at the impossible job of trying to "hold" the "old man" of sin down, but he is always breaking out on them, and they have always been plagued with the spirit of worldliness. The "counteractionists" depend upon the enduement of the power of the Holy Spirit, but find themselves plagued with the "sin nature."

There are not many, comparatively, giant killers around today. Why? It takes one to make one. Thank God for the "second blessing" holiness people of this day. Our greatest task is to see that people are sanctified wholly. When David cut Goliath's head off there was no doubt that the giant was dead. As a result Judah arose and shouted and pursued the Philistines to the gates of Ekron, which means eradication. The mighty baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire that purifies the heart from "inbred sin" puts worldliness (the Philistines) to flight and burns out all the carnal traits of sin. Moreover "David took the head of the Philistine [evidence of Goliath's death] and brought it

to Jerusalem." Thank God we can keep the blessing all the way through until we get to heaven, the New Jerusalem.

David became a great "giant." Around him arose giants. Pastor, are there any giants around you? Are you a giant? Have you met and experienced the slaying of that giant of "inbred sins" in your heart? Are people around you experiencing deliverance from the carnal mind? Are people being sanctified wholly? This is the one great need of the church. God can then make out of His sanctified ones giants of prayer, intercession, soul winners. Giants of faith, giants of love!

Remember, it takes one to make one!

* * * * *

July, 1989 Editorial
OUR FATHER

One of the main things Jesus taught us in the Lord's prayer found in Luke 11:1-4 is a child's approach to His heavenly Father.

When it comes to songs and scripture, words do not always come through clear to the children. A new Sunday school teacher had to iron out some problems with the Lord's prayer with her class of children. One child kept repeating, "Howard be thy name." Another prayed, "Lead us not into Penn Station." Still another surprised the teacher with, "Our Father, who art in heaven, how'd you know my name?"

Jesus taught the disciples, "When ye pray, say, Our Father." It carries with it the thought of approaching the Father as a child would approach an earthly father, yet in a deeper sense. A child should:

Respond to his heavenly Father (or an earthly father as far as that is concerned), with a spirit of:

1. Hopelessness and helplessness within himself. Jesus taught us this in the first beatitude in the Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." A newborn babe and even in early childhood, a child is certainly helpless and hopeless in itself even to stay alive. He needs protection. He needs provisions. Apart from God a soul is totally hopeless and helpless, and until we realize that and admit it we will not be recipients of all that God is and wants to be and will be to us as immortal souls.

2. Humbleness. The spirit of arrogancy has no place in a helpless person. What person in the whole world of mankind possesses anything when it comes to personality, talent, that has not come to him unbidden and apart from any personal merit of his own? And who can fully exploit all a person is or can be apart from Him who holdeth all things, even our breath that we breathe apart from Him?

3. Honesty. "God is light and in him is no darkness at all Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." How foolish, then, is it not to be honest all the way to the very centrality of our being.

4. Honoring Father as head. We owe it to God and to ourselves to recognize that we are not the head, but our Father is and rightfully so. How consoling it is to repeat over and over, "our Father, my Father!" How our hearts should rise in praise to Him that this is so.

5. Home instinct. There is born within every soul a hunger for some place we can call home. It is our heavenly Father who has planted that instinct within our heart and it is our Father who said, "I go to prepare a place for you"--Home, our heavenly home!

Recognition. As He is our heavenly Father we should recognize our obligation to love Him. God is love and we should respond to that infinite love that is so lavishly poured out on us. We do not always recognize God's love to us, for He loves us in the context of our immortal life and not just in reference to our life here on this earth. What we deem might be a blessing to us here and now might be in the light of our immortal soul, a curse rather than a blessing. The great test of our love to God is to keep His commandments. Did He not give us the key to our fullness and happiness when He said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments"? And His commandments are not grievous to those whose hearts are made perfect toward Him.

We need to further recognize that He has come to implant His very life within us. Paul summed it up when he said, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Finally, we need to recognize that He loves not only me and mine but He loves the world of mankind and to have His love within me I will share that love with Him.

Respect. There is every reason in the world that we should respect God as our heavenly Father. In the first place He is a sovereign being. The sovereignty of God screams at us throughout the pages of holy writ. It was God that created the world. It was God that created man. It was God that placed man in the Garden of Eden. It was God that put man to the test of obedience. It was God that destroyed the antediluvian world. It was God that confused the tongues at Babel. It was God that initiated the great plan of redemption. And we could go on and on throughout the Bible. He, God, is Sovereign! Not to recognize the Sovereignty of God is to sin not only against God Himself but against our own immortal soul.

God assigned Moses as His instrument by whom He would deliver His own people out of Egyptian bondage. Moses went out on his own to accomplish the task. After forty years of herding sheep on the back side of the desert Moses caught on that it was God who would deliver His own people, but would use him, Moses, as His instrument. After this Moses was known as the meekest man in the Bible. He learned respect for God's Sovereignty.

Perhaps the cap-sheaf of respect in the end is to respect the fact that God has created us free moral agents --the one greatest power an infinite, eternal, sovereign God could bestow on a

created being. God help us not to sin against our own freedom of will! To do so carries eternal, irreversible results.

* * * * *

August, 1989 Editorial

THE DEVIL AND THE CHURCH

We read in the golden text of the Bible, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." The inference here is not that God is out to save all mankind regardless, but to save the "whosoever" that "believeth in him."

We quote here in part from an article written by E. M. Bounds: "The very heart of this disgraceful apostasy, this dethroning Christ and enthroning the devil, is to remove the Holy Spirit from His leadership in the Church and put in unspiritual men as leaders to plan for and direct the Church The strong hands of men of great ability and men with the powers of leadership have often displaced God's leadership. The ambition for leadership and the enthronement of man-leadership, is the doom and seal of apostasy. There is no leadership in God's Church but the leadership of the Holy Spirit. The man who has the most of God's Spirit is God's chosen leader, ambitious and zealous of the Spirit's sovereignty, ambitious to be the least, the slave of all.

"There are two ways of directing the Church. God's way and the devil's way. God's way and man's way of running the Church are entirely at poles. Man's wise plans, happy expedients are easy solutions, are Satan's devices. The cross is retired, the world comes in, self-denial is eliminated, all seems bright, cheerful and prosperous, but Satan's hand is on the ark, men's schemes prevail, the Church fails under these "ways," pet devices of men, and the bankruptcy is so complete that the court of heaven will not even appoint a receiver for the collapsed and beggarly corporation.

"All God's plans have the mark of the cross on them, and all His plans have death to self in them. All God's plans have crucifixion to the world in them. But men's plans ignore the offense of the cross or despise it. Men's plans have no profound, stern or self-immolating denial in them. Their gain is the world. How much of these destructive elements, esteemed by men, does the devil bring into the Church, until all the high, unworldly and holy aims, and heavenly objects of the Church are retired and forgotten?

"One of these taking, man-savouring, Satanic devices is to pervert the aims of the Church after this manner of statement and effort, so that the main object of the Church today is not so much to save individuals out of society, as to save society, not to save souls so much as to save the bodies of men, not to save men out of a community. The world, not the individual, is the subject of redemption.

"This popular, seductive and deadly fallacy entirely subverts the very foundation of Christ's Church. Its materializing trend is so strong that it will sweep away every vestige of the spiritual and eternal if we do not watch, work and speak with sleepless vigilance, tireless energy, and fearless boldness. The attitude and open declaration of much of the religious teaching we now

hear is in the same strain and spirit which characterized Unitarian, Jewish, or rationalistic utterances half a century ago.

"The phrase 'to save the world,' has a pompous sounding; and right taking to flesh and blood is it for the Church to apply itself to bettering the temporal surroundings of the individual, and improve his sanitary conditions; to lessen the bad smells that greet his nose, and to diminish the bacteria in his water All this sounds finely, and agrees well with a material age, and becomes practical in operation, and evident and imposing in results. But does this agree with the sublime dignity and essential aim of the church?

"The purposes of the Church of God rise in sublime grandeur above these childish dreams and effete philosophies. Its purpose is to regenerate and sanctify the individual, to make him holy and prepare him by a course of purifying and training for the high pursuits of an eternal life. The Church is like the seine cast into the sea. The purpose is not to change the sea so much as to catch the fishes out of the sea. Let the sea roll on in its essential nature, but the net catches its fishes. No bigger fools would ever be found than fishermen who were spending all their force trying by some chemical process to change the essential elements of the sea, vainly hoping thereby to improve the stock of the fish that they had not and never could catch. By this method, personal holiness, the great desideratum for church operation and ends, would be impossible, and heaven would be stricken from creed and life and hope.

"To save the world and ignore the individual, is not only utopian, but every way damaging The Church is distinctly, pre-eminently and absolutely a spiritual institution, that is, an institution created, vitalized, possessed and directed by the Spirit of God. Her machinery, rites, forms, services and officers have no comeliness, no pertinency, no power, save as they are depositions and channels of the Holy Spirit. It is the indwelling and inspiration which make its divine being and secure its divine end. If the devil can by any methods shut the Holy Spirit out from the Church, he has effectually barred the Church from being God's Church on earth. He accomplishes this by retiring from the Church the agencies or agents which the Holy Spirit uses, and displaces them by the natural, which are rarely if ever the media of His energy. Christ announced the universal invariable law when He said, 'That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit,' The church may have a holy preacher, a man of great prayerfulness, of great grace, filled with the Spirit. But if Satan can by any method retire him, and put a man of no prayerfulness, plausible, eloquent and popular, the Church may seem to have fulfilled its purpose but in reality it is a failure!"

No church or denomination is stronger spiritually than the individuals that compose it. If a church is worldly it is because its pastor and individual members are worldly. If a denomination goes down it is because its pastor and members go down. If a church does not reach out for lost humanity to get them individually into a vital Christian experience it is because the pastor and the members are not in a vital experience that drives them out to get individuals into a vital Christian experience.

Nothing short of holiness of heart in individual members will accomplish the task of building the kingdom of God. Jesus said, "I will build my church," but He will do this through

sanctified individuals through whom He can work--who will be His hands, His feet, His voice
--men that will be alert to hear His voice and do His will!

God help us these days to stay on the main line with our Lord!

* * * * *

September, 1989 Editorial
PRECIOUS THINGS IN THE BIBLE

The word precious, as recorded in Strong Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, occurs seventy-six times in the Bible. According to Webster's New World Dictionary, the word "precious" means "of great price or value; costly; of great desirability; beloved; dear." It also means high-priced, inestimable, rare, choice, exquisite, highly esteemed, cherished, treasured, prized, valued, adored.

We want to note seven places in the Bible where this word is used:

1. Psalm 139:17 "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!" We read in Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." The thoughts that God has of man are of great price to Him and are of great value to us. Surely they should be highly esteemed, cherished and treasured by every human being, for God is no respecter of persons. He is not willing that any should perish, but that his life should end in victory and glory and an eternity of bliss with Him in Heaven. Praise God!

2. II Peter 1:2-4 "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

Oh, how precious are God's promises! How we should value them; how we should hold them dear to our heart, a foundation for our faith to rest upon. The greatness of God's promises are revealed in the fact that "He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, [and] how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

3. II Peter 1:1 "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." How we should treasure and cherish a genuine faith, especially when we learn in the Bible that "without faith it is impossible to please God: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

We realize how precious this faith is when the word teaches us that "the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back [from this way of faith], my soul shall have no pleasure in him."

May it be said of every one of us that "we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."

4. I Peter 2:6, 7 "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious."

I Peter 1:18, 19 "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

The object of our faith is Jesus Christ and the price He paid for our redemption was His blood. How precious is Jesus to our heart! How costly was the price He paid for our redemption! The least we can do is to fall at His feet in full surrender to Him and His will for us for without Him is nothing but darkness, hopelessness and despair. He is the desire of all nations and peoples. Can we say "nothing else but Him desired?" Can we sing with the song writer:

"Nothing between my soul and my Saviour;
Naught of this world's delusive dreams.
I have renounced all sinful pleasures,
Jesus is mine, let nothing between.

"Nothing between like worldly pleasure,
Habits of life, though harmless they seem.
Must not my soul from Him ever sever,
He is my all, let nothing between.

"Nothing between my soul and the Saviour;
So that His blessed face may be seen,
Nothing preventing the least of His favor,
Keep the way clear, let nothing between."

5. Proverbs 3:15 "She [wisdom and understanding] is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her." Wisdom in the book of Proverbs is the adumbration (foreshadowing) of the Holy Spirit which was outpoured at Pentecost on the hundred and twenty in the upper room. The most precious and invaluable gift that we can possess this side of heaven is the coming of the Holy Spirit in His fullness to indwell our heart. He is the Wisdom of God and is more precious to possess than rubies.

6. I Peter 1:7 "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

It is through the trials and hard places that our heavenly Father permits to come to us that we are matured, grow in His grace and are strengthened in our faith that is so valuable to us.

Someone asked George Mueller the secret of his strong faith. He replied: "By standing firm amid severe testings." The pure in heart may be troubled, immature, and at times sorely tempted, yea, tried by fire. The trial of our faith God calls precious for it is His allowable way of bringing us to maturity and making us more like Him.

7. Psalm 116:15, 72:14 "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." "He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight." We read in I Corinthians 15:55-57, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Thank God, Jesus took the sting out of death and turned death into a precious thing for His blood bought ones!

Praise God for the precious things of the Bible!

* * * * *

October, 1989 Editorial

THE PECULIAR PEOPLE OF GOD

This will be my last editorial to The Missionary Revivalist readers. The September 1989 issue completed twenty-four years for me as editor. My resignation as editor will be effective with this issue. I am most grateful to our church for the honor and privilege they have allowed me to serve in this capacity. Elsewhere in this paper will be an announcement of the new editor chosen by the General Board of the Bible Missionary Church to carry on this phase of our work. In every General Conference that has come and gone while I have been editor our people have granted me an overwhelming vote of confidence to continue as editor and I leave this office only because God's leadership in my life will make it impossible for me to continue in this capacity.

My last exhortation to you and the burden of my heart is that each one of you personally who reads these words will, by the grace of God, so live a holy life that the eternal Spirit will, in that day when we will be called upon to stand in the presence of a Sovereign and holy God, be able to "present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." There is a scripture found in Titus 2:11-14 that I want you to think seriously upon.

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath 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."

The living of a holy life from day to day is of tremendous importance. The sainted Wesley observed in his day that many people obtained the experience of heart purity, but comparatively few lived the life for any length of time. If that was so in his day, I wonder about us today! There is so much to draw us away from a holy, Spirit-filled life in these days we need to be so careful that

we do not miss "serving [God] without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life," right here and now! God plans by His grace to see us through if we will only do our part on the human side.

Our continual victory and hope lies in the fact of our becoming "the peculiar people of God." The word "peculiar" is thought of as meaning something odd or strange. In this setting, however, this word is translated from a Greek word made up of two words (periousi), meaning "around" (peri) and "to be" (ousi), bringing to our mind a rich, meaningful and comforting thought. This can be pictured as a dot within a circle. As the circle is around the dot, so God is around each one of His saints that has been wholly given over to Him. I like the term "sold out lock-stock-and-barrel" to God once and for all. The circle monopolizes the dot, has the dot within itself. So it is with God and us. We are His own private, unique possession. God has reserved His sanctified ones for Himself. "The church of the Thessalonians in God" (I Thess. 1:1) carries the same idea. It is locative of sphere, that is, it is in the sphere of God, circumscribed by God, surrounded by Him. It is the saints' position in the Lord. If we make it to heaven we must, at any cost, keep spiritually alive by keeping ourselves within this circle.

It is a place of high privilege. We read in I Peter 2:7, "Unto you who believe," is the preciousness, i.e., the preciousness of Jesus is imputed to us. The Son dwells in the bosom of the Father, closest to the Father's affections. In Christ we are brought into that favored place closest to the Father's affections. The Father loves us as much as His only begotten Son.

It is a place of protection. Place a dot outside of the circle and draw an arrow from that dot to the dot inside the circle. Label that dot a temptation. The arrow cannot reach the dot except it go through the circle. Temptation cannot reach us unless it go through the permissive will of God. As we walk in the center of God's will, God will not let the devil confront us with temptation too great for us but will, with the temptation, make a way of escape. Glory to God!

It is a place of provision! God in His WISDOM, plans the test and limits the temptation. God designs to condition us so He can use us for His glory and the salvation of the lost around us. God help us right here to hold fast in every trial and hard place, keep our eyes on Jesus and the glory in our soul. There is no other way that we can be mightily used of God unless He can grind us between the millstones of suffering and trial. It is only then that we can become bread for the hungry multitudes.

God in His LOVE sends the test, and permits the temptation. It is God working to make us more like Himself.

God in His GRACE meets the test and overcomes the temptation. The grace of God, if we will appropriate it, is sufficient to surmount every difficulty, comfort any sorrow, overcome any temptation!

The saint's part in Christian warfare is to walk, work, witness, win in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16, 17). The Spirit impels you one way in order that you may not do the evil Satan would like to entrap you in. Your spiritual enemy impels you the other way in order that you may not do the good you would. Your alternative is to walk in the Spirit. The Spirit is already doing for you what He can.

Your self-hood as a free agent must exert its energies and put forth the decisive act by which you commit yourself to the Spirit's leadership and walk in the Spirit. Here is the secret of victorious, spiritual living. In other words "be constantly conducting yourself in the Spirit." The "dot" is ensphered within the circle. "Be constantly conducting yourself within the sphere of the Spirit."

To live within the circle is synonymous with following in the steps of Jesus. Jesus was our example who walked the path of non-retaliation. He who was betrayed by His disciples, betrayed by the people, betrayed by the Sanhedrin, betrayed by the Romans. Pilate knew Jesus was innocent. Three times he declared His innocence and it was Pilate's duty under Roman law to acquit Him but he feared disgrace. He broke the law to save himself. Jesus was human, sensitive to injustice, cruelty and cowardice of friends and a sense of having been deserted and betrayed but revenge, desire to justify himself, bitterness and self pity.

On the positive side we see in Jesus meekness, gentleness, humility, acceptance, nothing but love for His tormentors, ready to suffer and die for those who had betrayed Him and for the ones who had cowardly forsaken Him. We read in I Peter 2:19-23, "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened now; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."

In my parting words to us as Bible Missionary people and whoever else will read these words, let my final exhortation be from the Word of God, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God" (live within the sphere of God).

* * * * *

THE END