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MISSIONARY REVIVALIST ARTICLES

By Duane V. Maxey

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Digital Edition 09/072000
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CONTENTS

Introduction

Article 1 -- "Such Is The Way"... Of An Apostate Church

Article 2 -- Why Meddle Not With Them That Are Given To Change?

Article 3 -- Will The Circle Be Unbroken In The Sky?

Article 4 -- An Unwelcome Visitor

Article 5 -- A People Laden With Iniquity

Article 6 -- The Call Of Two Masters

Article 7 -- The Revival Of Sin

Article 8 -- Why The Saviour Sighs About Our Size

Article 9 -- Reaching Terminology, Short Of The Terminal

Article 10 -- Convinced By Cows

Article 11 -- "He Will Finish The Work"

Article 12 -- "All These Things Shall Be Finished"

Article 13 -- "In The Spirit, And Not In The Letter"

Article 14 -- Ya Can'T Get To Hellven From Here!

Article 15 -- Dead, But Still Standing

Article 16 -- Brotherly Love

Article 17 -- Gaining A Loss

Article 18 -- Seeing Our Covenant Characteristics

Article 19 -- Champions Of The Night

Article 20 -- Why Repentance Is Imperative

Article 21 -- Seven Things More Blessed To Give

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INTRODUCTION

This is a collection of 21 articles, 20 articles of which were published in The Missionary Revivalist during the time my brother, I. Parker Maxey, was Editor of this paper, plus 1 article that was published only several months after his 24 years as Missionary Revivalist Editor had ended.

A number of these articles are found in two of my other publications -- "Articles of Faith" and "Striking the Source," but there are some articles in this collection that are not found in them. I have chosen to arrange these 22 articles in the chronological sequence of their publication, listing with each the month and year in which it appeared in the Missionary Revivalist. -- DVM

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Article 1

"SUCH IS THE WAY"... OF AN APOSTATE CHURCH

Published in the June, 1969 Missionary Revivalist

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What a joy it is in 1969 to know Jesus! How precious is the indwelling "sanctification of the Spirit"! How priceless is that "belief of the truth" that brings complete deliverance from the carnal mind and joins the soul in sweet fellowship with the "church" that "is subject unto Christ," "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle (in her wedding garment) or any such thing"!

But there are grave, eternal dangers in 1969! Many are "failing of the grace of God" . . . never getting a real experience of true holiness; and many are "fallen from grace" and have become

backslidden in heart. The unregenerate, unsanctified, unconcerned, are populating the professed church in increasing numbers and are fearfully unprepared to meet a holy God at a righteous judgment!

Precious soul, are you sure that you have "the grace of God that bringeth salvation"? Are you a part of the "glorious church without spot or wrinkle"?

In Proverbs 30:20 we find these words: "Such is the way of an adulterous woman . . ." These words refer back to the preceding verse where four different ways are pictured in describing the "way of an adulterous woman," and then the remainder of verse 20 has more to say about her. May we not see in these verses a **PHOTOGRAPH OF THE ADULTEROUS, APOSTATE CHURCH OF THE LATTER TIMES** and **BEWARE . . .** lest we be found in her ranks!

FIRST . . . "Such is the way of an adulterous woman . . ." . . . **"THE WAY OF AN EAGLE IN THE AIR . . ."** The eagle brings to mind the emblem of the **ROMAN EMPIRE** and its world-wide political power. When the Holy Ghost is shut out of the heart, or in grief is forced to withdraw, the church becomes spiritually powerless and socially political. The **POLITICAL DESIGN** of the apostate, anti-christ church is **ROMAN!** Dear hearts, **BEWARE** in these last days of the spirit of the **ROMAN EAGLE!** She has arisen from her nest and is **"IN THE AIR!"** That spirit strikes the individual and the church that fails to obtain or maintain "charity out of a pure heart."

SECOND . . . "Such is the way of an adulterous woman . . ." . . . **THE WAY OF A SERPENT UPON A ROCK...** Here is a picture of the **PIOUS DECEPTION** of a church fallen from grace! It is pictured as on the **ROCK**, Christ Jesus, but in reality this professed church is a snake, full of deadly poison

Precious souls, **BEWARE OF THE SERPENT UPON THE ROCK!** Think of it! Satan cunningly coiled, ready to strike . . . not from bar-room, not from gutters of immorality, but from the steps of the church! It does matter what "church" I attend! It does matter what I believe! Jesus did say, "Upon this rock will I build my church," but it seems plain that countless thousands have been bitten with spiritual death while building in churches where the Holy Ghost has been grieved away. I say these things not to be critical of any man, but from the fear that unless many can be helped to vividly see how deadly the church can be without the Spirit they will be forever lost, and that, while thinking or hoping they are on their way to heaven!

THIRD . . . "Such is the way of an adulterous woman . . ." . . . **"THE WAY OF A SHIP IN THE MIDST OF THE SEA."** May we notice here the **POPULAR DRIFT** of the church in these last days. The **SEA** in the Scripture seems to be typical of **LARGE BODIES OF PEOPLE!** May we see here a church surrounded and supported by great oceans of people? . . . a church of great popularity and great population . . . a world-wide church, driven by the "raging waves of the sea" (Jude 13) "foaming out their own shame!" In Acts 27:13-15 we find mention of a ship that was "loosed" from its anchor and "not long after... **WE LET HER DRIVE,**" said the writer. If our people in the Bible Missionary Church fail to become and remain anchored within the veil of an old-fashioned experience of heartfelt Holiness we shall surely "loose" from the anchor of

God-given convictions and "let her (the fashion of apostate Christendom) drive." The ship mentioned in Acts 27:15 "could not bear up into the wind", and no soul without real Holiness will "bear up" against the tides of worldliness. Until the heart is cleansed from carnality there is a proud shame to bear the reproach of Christ by dressing modestly and walking circumspectly. While the world "foams out its shame" and indecency, do we dare follow its fashions when soon we must all appear before the spotless presence of Him Who was "clothed with a garment DOWN TO THE FEET"? Notice Revelation 1:13, Will He not be "ashamed to call us brethren"? Hebrews 2:11

FOURTH . . . "Such is the way of an adulterous woman" . . . "... THE WAY OF A MAN WITH A MAID..." May we see here the picture of the PERVERTED DOMINION of the world-wide church of the last days. The Man, Christ Jesus is the proper Head of the Church, His maid, or betrothed virgin. The Maiden Church is to be only and directly "subject to Christ" our "orders from headquarters" must first and finally come from our betrothed Husband, Jesus, the Son of God. But here the "adulterous woman" is acting the part of a man with a maid. The woman has "usurped authority over the Man," Christ Jesus. She demands the allegiance and affection that belong only to Christ! She promises forgiveness of sin and all the comforts of heaven to those who are so beguiled as to believe her lie. When my faith is in any earthly organization, and my love is toward any earthly denomination in place of a personal burning affection for Christ it has become perverted. I believe this apostate spirit and church will become more and more demanding as the second coming of Jesus draws near. This "usurped authority" may be used to bring pressure and bloody persecution upon the heads of any who dare to defy such perverted allegiance, and then only the sanctified will stand. Paul said, "She shall be saved . . . if they continue in . . . holiness with sobriety." I Tim. 2:15

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Article 2

WHY MEDDLE NOT WITH THEM THAT ARE GIVEN TO CHANGE?

Proverbs 24:21

Published in the October, 1971 Missionary Revivalist

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In Malachi 3:6 the Lord plainly says, "I change not," but we are living in a generation today that is passionately given to change! May we consider three vital reasons why we should not meddle with and follow the crowd that has given itself over to change in these last days:

FIRST There are SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES today! Webster says "substantial" means: true; not imaginary, solid, firm, stout, ample or large. There are substantial changes today in society, in the home, and in the church visible. They are true changes, not imaginary! When we think back ten, fifteen, or twenty years and remember how things were then and compare them with how things are now it can seem incredible! The world, the home, and the church visible have undergone real and radical changes.. To those who were born after World War II it may seem that "all things continue as they were " but to others who have a few more years behind them the substantial changes of the last ten years are plainly apparent as more than figments of the

imagination. They may parade themselves before our eyes as nightmares, bad dreams, but they are more than imaginations. There are large changes not only in the world and home, but even in the Holiness Movement; changes that are solid, firm, and stout. Once such changes come they are so firmly imbedded, so stoutly upheld by the majority, that any turning back to the old paths seems out of the question.

SECOND . . . There are SUBSTANDARD CHANGES today! Webster defines "substandard" as: below a standard established by law. The world is given to change; not a change that brings things up to God's standard, but rather a change that flaunts God's law and drags society down to bestial behavior. Anything less than what God requires in His Holy Word is "substandard" in His sight! It will not pass the inspection of judgment to come no matter how much it is legalized by men in a Godless society. The world is far, far below God's standard of righteousness and morals are sinking lower and lower in this awful age. Modest attire and the shame of indecency are the objects of scorn by people with substandard persuasions. Even professing Christians have accepted lower standards and higher hem-lines by comparing themselves with others who are worse! But, do we dare embrace what is really "substandard" just because others do worse or do the same? Is not a miss as good as a mile? Will God smile at anything less than what pleases Him just because it isn't as bad as someone else does!

THIRD... There are SUBCONSCIOUS CHANGES today! Subconscious means: occurring without conscious perception, or with only slight perception. The first sight of some evil change may shock us, but as more and more people accept it and practice it we become accustomed to seeing it, and if we aren't careful we will lose sight of how awful it still is in the sight of a Holy God! The devil is doing his utmost to brainwash people into accepting his substandard guides of modesty and behavior. He doesn't come to us and say, "change the manual and disregard the Bible," for he knows that if he can brainwash us into subconsciously accepting his "substandards" we ourselves will change: the manual later and disregard the Bible without his even asking us to do so! There has been no change in the Manual of the Bible Missionary Church or the Bible, (concerning standards) but the grave question is: Have we as individuals inwardly changed our views on vital issues? Is there an unwritten acceptance of what is condemned on paper? Shall we consider that what is practiced and accepted in our midst now is a safe guide to follow? May God help us to take heed to what He has written no matter what others do or how they change, and may no unwritten law supplant His Word and the God-ordained landmarks in our discipline. May we not meddle with them that are given to changes which lean closer to the fashions and fancies of the world and point the finger of scorn toward those who are trying to keep themselves unspotted from the world. If there are changes, may they be changes which will help us get farther from the world, closer to God and closer to all those who are truly strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

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Article 3 WILL THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN IN THE SKY?

Published in the January, 1974 Missionary Revivalist

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"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be... then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered HIS HOUSE TO BE BROKEN UP." Mt. 24:37-43

Jesus here is speaking of the sudden rapture of the church. He tells of some taken and others left. He shows the possibility of a HOUSE being BROKEN UP at the rapture. When He thus speaks of a house being broken up He does not mean that there will be a breaking up of wood or stone, but warns us that FAMILY CIRCLES WILL BE BROKEN UP at the rapture! The solemn question is: Will my family circle be unbroken in the sky?

In Luke 17:26-30 Jesus tells us of two men who are typical of the church at the time of the rapture, saying, "as it was in the days of Noe . . . as it was in the days of Lot... so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man" Lot is typical of that part of the church who barely make it in the rapture themselves and suffer the tragedy of a broken family circle in the sky. Noe is typical of that part of the church who not only make it themselves, but they do not suffer their HOUSE, or family, to be broken up at the rapture.

Before the judgment came in Noah's time "the Lord said unto Noah, come thou and ALL THY HOUSE into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." Gen. 7:1

Lot's house was broken up when he was delivered from judgment on Sodom. A careful study of Genesis 19 proves that at least two of Lot's daughters perished in the dreadful, burning destruction of Sodom! So here we have the picture: at the time of the rapture of the church some family circles will be like those of Lot, suddenly broken, while others will be like that of Noah, unbroken, the whole house saved! Will your family circle be unbroken in the sky? The answer to that question will be found in whether you are in that part of the church which resembles Lot, or in that part of the church which resembles Noah when this sudden rapture occurs.

Why did Noah have an unbroken family circle in his deliverance and Lot a broken circle? Both lived in the midst of moral degradation. Both were declared righteous by the scripture. Both Were "raptured" away before judgment fell. Why then were not both family circles unbroken? A reading of Hebrews 11:7 and a comparison of these two men, Noah and Lot, shows plainly -- why one suffered a broken house and the other didn't.

"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Heb. 11:7

(1) Noah saved his house, unbroken, because he MOVED WITH FEAR! Noah's moves were made carefully and according to God's direction. Lot moved carelessly without getting God's direction! He left the influence of godly Abraham and moved (pitched his tent) toward Sodom, finally moving into the city itself, far away from godly influences. No wonder his house was

broken! Yet, some good holiness folk today fail to move with fear, being sure they have God's direction before they step. How many of these, like Lot, shall barely escape themselves and suffer a broken family circle at the rapture? We had all better pray much and think twice about our moves lest they prove to be the wedge that Satan may use to break up our house.

(2) Noah's house was unbroken because he **PREPARED AN ARK**. Several truths appear here. The ark reveals that Noah received and followed instructions from God. God's plan was to construct a means of deliverance which called for restriction of Noah's family within its confines. Many today inwardly, if not outwardly as well, rebel against any means of salvation which calls for obeying instructions and restriction within defined boundaries. Such may find themselves and/or their children left in a flood of fire when Jesus raptures the church.

(3) Noah's house was unbroken because he **CONDEMNED THE WORLD**. As Noah beheld the terrible decay of his day he stood against it. 2 Peter 2:5 says he was a "preacher of righteousness." Noah preached against sin and the world. I can hear him condemning the world in his own family circle saying, "Wife and boys, the world is not in harmony with God, and as for me and my house we will serve the Lord." Noah stood bravely against worldliness everywhere, and especially in his own house. Lot, on the other hand, moved carelessly and foolishly toward the world. When his daughters began courting and finally married Sodomites it is doubtful that Lot raised much objection. Instead of **CONDEMNING** the world, it would appear that he **CONDONED** it in his house. What a tragedy! Yet, even today, some professed holiness people cater to the worldliness of their own children. The only objection they raise is when the preacher cries out against it from the pulpit. Such sympathy for worldliness opens the door wide for a Satanic flood of sin to enter the home and next [to enter] the church. When poor Lot finally came to his spiritual senses he found his daughters so Sodomized that they became fuel for the fire of God's righteous judgment. "As it was in the days of Lot . . . so shall it also be" at the rapture.

(4) Noah's house was unbroken because he **BECAME HEIR OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH IS BY FAITH**. "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Gen. 6:8 His whole house were taken into the ark after he found grace. A just and perfect man, Noah is typical of the saved and sanctified church. When God outpoured grace on the house of Cornelius and on the house of the Philippian jailor the whole house was saved in both instances. Acts 11:14 and 16:31, 34.

(5) Noah's house was unbroken because "**BY FAITH NOAH, BEING WARNED OF GOD OF THINGS NOT SEEN AS YET**." God directly warned Noah through the channel of his living faith. Lot was not warned by faith far in advance like Noah. He had very short notice and that not by faith, but by a merciful angelic awakening in answer to Uncle Abraham's prayer. When "Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan" and chose the material, he was not looking by faith at 'things not seen as yet.' Materialism dimmed his faith and he became "dull of hearing." Noah typifies that part of the church which for some time before the sudden event has been receiving warning signals from heaven that the time is near. Lot typifies that part of the church which is awakened only in time to save themselves, leaving part of the family behind.

Will your family circle be unbroken in the sky at the rapture? How happy the fathers and mothers who have this kind of welcome from Jesus at the rapture: "Come thou and **ALL THY**

HOUSE into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." -- By Duane Maxey, Pastor, Portland, Oregon Bible Missionary Church.

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Article 4 AN UNWELCOME VISITOR

From the May, 1974 Missionary Revivalist

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During the winter of 1969 "an unknown disease burst from hiding in Nigeria." This strange, new plague, later named Lassa Fever, was both contagious and deadly. It was necessary for the doctors and nurses who were battling this lethal virus to use extreme caution lest they, too, become infected and perish.

One morning a patient suffering with Lassa Fever, who later died, was brought to a certain hospital. That same morning a nurse who worked at that hospital was cutting a bouquet of roses in her flower garden, and while reaching for a particularly striking blossom she punctured her finger on a thorn. She returned to her house, washed the wound off, dabbed it with antiseptic, and promptly forgot about it.

That night, at the hospital, she treated the patient suffering with Lassa Fever. In response to the patient's complaint of discomfort in the throat, she took a gauze swab, wrapped it around her finger, and cleansed the patient's ulcerated throat. As a result of this treatment, fluid soaked the gauze and there was a slight stinging sensation in her finger. Suddenly she remembered the puncture wound from the thorn! Too late! Through that tiny wound in her finger the deadly virus entered, and a short while after the patient died the nurse herself perished!

Think of this scripture: "And after the sop Satan entered into him." John 13:27

Let us beware of sopping up carelessly with our minds from the polluted ponds of this world! Like the killer virus mentioned above, Satan steals into the heart through tiny doorways to bring death to the soul. Our minds can sop up pollution through our sight. Unless we are very cautious Satan can enter through those tiny pupils of our eyes and infect our hearts with a fatal plague. One careless gaze may open these tiny doorways to the Enemy and prove to be eternally disastrous.

"Be careful little eyes what you see" is good advice for adults as well as for children. David said, "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes." Ps. 101:3

Some things we can't help seeing, but we don't need to sop with our eyes of sinful sights. We don't need to set them before our view. We can remove some things from our sight, especially in our own homes. Satan may say, "look at this for a while so you can help others by telling them

how bad it is." However, it would be well to remember that Eve fell after looking at something desired to "make one wise," and that nurse was fatally infected while trying to help someone else.

Also, those two little passageways leading from the ears can be the openings through which Satan enters to destroy spiritual life. A highly contagious epidemic of soul-sickening sounds can be sopped up through the ears! Radio stations are flooding the air-waves with sounds that are fatal to faith and godliness when they are not shut out. After sopping the radio sound waves from even some so-called Christian stations the soul can become sick unto death. "Be careful little ears what you hear" is good advice for all who would avoid "Listening Fever" which has perhaps already proved fatal to some.

So, like the Lassa Fever virus, Satan should be an Unwelcome Visitor. We should use great caution lest we leave the smallest door open for his entrance into our heart. He will force his way through the smallest opening if we let him.

On the other hand, there is a Visitor who should be welcomed into every heart. His name is Jesus. Unlike Satan, He is a gentleman, and He will not force His way into the heart. He does stand at the door and knock. He does seek admittance into human hearts, but He never enters one heart where He is not invited or welcome. He says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and OPEN THE DOOR, I will come in." Rev. 3:20

Yes, the heart door must be open completely before He will come in. It is to be lamented that often when He stands at the door of someone's heart and knocks He is turned away as an Unwelcome Visitor, but "as many as receive Him to them He gives power to become the sons of God." Jn. 1:12

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Article 5 A PEOPLE LADEN WITH INIQUITY

Published in the July, 1986 Missionary Revivalist

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"Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity....they are gone away backward." Isaiah 1:4

What a joy it is to have the burden of sin lifted and be able to sing from ones heart: "The burden that once I carried is gone, is gone. Of all of my sins there remaineth not one, not one." How sad it is when that spontaneous rapture subsides and is finally replaced with an empty lack and eventual load of condemnation once again. Is there not a note of sadness from the heart of God as He beholds His people, once brought out from under the burdens of the Egyptians" again carrying an awful load. Ex. 6:6-7 That load was His lament: "Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity...they are gone away backward," back under a load of sin and condemnation. Let us notice four ways a people are laden with iniquity:

PROGRESSIVELY

Little by little. a person or a people can begin to drift backward away from the light and under the load of condemnation. Sometimes the drift is so subtle that a people are actually convinced that they are making progress while in fact they are going away backward!: "When Captain Perry and his party were in search of the North Pole, after traveling several days with sledges over a vast field of ice, on taking careful observation of the Polestar, the painful discovery was made, that while they were apparently advancing towards the Pole, the ice field on which they were traveling was drifting to the south, and bringing them nearer to the verge, not of the Pole, but of destruction." (Denton, Dict. ILL. Pg. 463)

By measuring one's progress by that which is beneath, or around, a person, or an entire movement, can be persuaded that much forward progress has been made, until by careful observation of our Blessed Pole Star, He Who is above, our true spiritual position is discovered. In a recent publication by a modern "Holiness Church," the author pictured as progress the transition and movement away from the style of his church's early leaders to the more modern and businesslike style of the present leadership. This progress was presented as having brought his church from infancy to maturity.

However, it is not our position in relationship to the PAST, nor in relationship to the PRESENT, by which we can accurately measure our spiritual progress, but rather our position in relationship to the POLESTAR, JESUS CHRIST. Any man, or any movement, that drifts away backward in relationship to HIM will eventually lose the light of that Star and Progressively become "laden with iniquity." While going away backward, no matter how progressive the movement may seem, the soul gradually becomes emptied of the blessings of the Lord, "Who daily loadeth us with benefits" that save, sanctify, and satisfy the heart. Ps. 68:19 When these are gone, the "progressive" backslider begins to load himself with things in their place: Hab. 2:6 "Woe, to him...that ladeth himself with thick clay." Having lost the load of Holy Ghost salvation and become laden thick with earthly things of clay, that which is spiritual is increasingly replaced by that which is carnal, and that which is carnal soon calls for that which is openly sinful.

Finally, having backed clear up to the devil's loading dock, that man, or that movement now becomes "laden with iniquity." "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." Their Progress has not been toward maturity, but toward impurity! "For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts." 2 Tim. 3:5-6 As I passed by on the street today I saw a late model vehicle parked in a yard. A sign advertising it for sale included the statement "Loaded." Every late model spiritual vehicle is "Loaded." The question is, with what? Worldliness? Carnality? Iniquity? Or, Old-Fashioned Second-Blessing Holiness? Thank God, I have received the latter, and its a lot better load than what I used to have on board!

HEAVILY

Jesus invited those who were "HEAVY laden." Once the load of sin starts coming on board, the weight of that freight starts getting mighty hard to bear, but satan just keeps loading it on! Pharaoh cried: "Let there MORE work be LAID UPON the men!" Ex. 5:9 Rehoboam said: "My

father lade you with a heavy yoke, I will ADD to your yoke!" 1 Kings 12:11 That's the way satan loads a man or a movement: "Give them more of the world, more sin, more carnality, more guilt and condemnation, more bondage and misery, ADD to that yoke," he cries! There is no stopping place with satan! He cares not about the increasing misery that the weight of his freight brings, for his desire and design is to sink a man or a movement into hell! Jeremiah 51:34--"the king of Babylon hath DEVoured ME, he hath CRUSHED ME, he hath made me an empty vessel, he hath swallowed me up like a dragon, he hath filled his belly with my delicates, he hath CAST ME OUT!" Satan doesn't repair his vehicles. Once "laden with iniquity" beyond their capacity to carry, and "crushed" beneath that tremendously HEAVY load, he casts them out, abandoned to their fate.

WEARILY

Isaiah 46:12--"Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle: your carriages were heavy loaden; they are a burden to the weary beast. They stoop, they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden..!" Yes, there comes a time when many are exhausted from carrying the load of sin! They feel that they just can't take that burden one step farther down the road. They are totally tired of things the way they are, and know not where to turn. To such we can say: "Heaviness in the heart of a man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad!" Prov. 12:25 The "Good Word" is this: People are laden with iniquity

NEEDLESSLY!

Praise God! There is deliverance from the load of sin! Jesus says: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are HEAVY LADEN. and I WILL GIVE YOU REST!" To some, Jesus said: "Ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers!" Luke 11:46 When satan laughs at your load, and no one will lift a finger to ease your burden if they could, there is One who WILL, "the Lord hath laid on HIM the iniquity of us all..Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows..and..the chastisement of our peace was upon HIM..!" Isaiah 53:4-6

Reader, what about you? Have you "gone away backward" and become "laden with iniquity"? Are you tired of carrying that load? Come back to Jesus just now, just as you are, and He will remove your load. I have found it wonderfully so, and you can too: "Come, O Come to Me said Jesus, Come, and I will give you rest. I will take away the burden from your heavy laden breast. So no matter who the wanderer, nor how far he's gone astray, Whosoever will may come, and I will comfort him today!"

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Article 6 THE CALL OF TWO MASTERS

Published in the October, 1986 Missionary Revivalist

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field." 1 Samuel 17:44

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Mt. 11:28

"..The Master is come, and calleth for thee." John 11:28

A Great CONTEST is brought to mind as we compare and consider the verses above. Two great masters have come into our world. Both of them are invisible, yet very real. Both of them are inviting, and with keen interest awaiting our individual response to their separate calls. Satan, the master of sin, is come, and calleth for thee: "Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field!" "I will destroy your body and damn your soul!" Christ, the Master of salvation, is come, and calleth for thee: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Ye shall find rest unto your souls." Yes, a mighty, invisible contest, a great spiritual "tug-of-war" is taking place in the world at this very moment! At stake is the soul of each individual, but perhaps this contest is especially focused upon the youth of each generation.

Both masters know that when children and youth are turned into and trained up in a certain way it is unlikely for them to "depart from it" when they are old. The invitation of Goliath was to one who "was but a youth." 1 Sam. 17:42 When David faced this giant, he faced one who well typified satan, the master of sin, calling for the youth of this and every generation! Standing 6 cubits and a span tall, using 6 different types of armour, whose spear's head weighed 6 hundred shekels, 666, Goliath displayed with striking similarity "that spirit of antiChrist, whereof ye have heard that is should come; and even now already is it in the world." 1 Sam. 17:4-7; 1 John 4:4:3

A Great CONTRAST is readily seen also when we compare the call of one master with the call of the other. This contrast involves both the reason for, and the results of, each call. The reason one master calls you is because of his cruel hatred for you and all that will bring about your spiritual and eternal well-being! The reason the other Master calls you is because of His tender love for you and all that will bring about your present holiness and eternal happiness! The results of answering one call are the desecration and destruction of the body and mind and the damnation of the soul, while the results of answering the other are physical, mental, spiritual, and eternal rest and well-being! "As far as the east is from the west, so far" apart are these calls in their character and consequences. One master would destroy you in his service and damn you forever, while the other would employ you in His service and rest you forever! The Contest is immense, and the Contrasts are immeasurable and eternal regarding these two calls! The focus of this Contest falls upon everyone, even the youth of the church, and none can afford to be blind to the eternal contrasts and consequences involved!

A Great CONTRADICTION is eventually discovered by those who answer the call of the master of sin. When satan first calls to a soul, he falsifies the results: "Come to me," he says, "and I will give you fun, fame, fortune and filling with all that life can offer. You will have "much goods laid up for many years," and then you will take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry, and live happily ever after!" See Luke 12:19. Then, after one has answered his call, "played the fool" and "erred exceedingly" beyond the human power to escape his enslaving grasp, the master of sin,

seeking whom he may devour, calls to his deceived, demoralized victim: "COME TO ME, YOU FOOL, and I will give thy flesh to the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field, and thy soul to the imps of hell forever!" The master of sin is a liar, and the father of falsehood and deception. Sadly however, this contradiction in his call is discovered by too many, too late! Happily, on the other hand, numbers of individuals who have answered the call of Christ throughout the centuries have discovered that HE always "makes good" His promises! Praise God! I too have found it so! In Jeremiah 33:14 He declares: "I will perform that good thing which I have promised," and He proves it over and over again to those who answer His call and trust His Word!

A Great CONTEMPLATION is in order then, as we consider which of these two calls to answer. We cannot be neutral, and "No man can serve two masters." Mt. 6:24 I must hate the one and love the other. I must hold to the one and despise the other. We should not be thoughtless in our response, for our eternal salvation or damnation hangs in the balance! Think about it! Which one should I love and hold to? Which one should I hate and despise? The counsel of countless love-slaves of Christ is this: "Love the One Who first loved you. Come to the One Who keeps His Promise! Serve the One Whose yoke is easy! Hold to the One Who "sticketh closer than a brother!" Repose in the One Who will give you rest! Hate the one who first hated you! Flee from the one who falsifies his promise! Abandon the one whose yoke is galling! Despise the one who will devour your soul!" "The Master is come and calleth for thee. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto Him." John 11:28,29 Weigh it over wisely, but don't wait too long! Arise quickly, while you may and COME TO JESUS!!

A Great CONTINGENCY will determine which master gets you and keeps you forever! One master may not determine that. The other Master will not determine that. The matter of which master you will serve and with whom you will spend eternity is contingent upon one thing alone: YOUR CHOICE! "Should it be according to thy mind?" Job 34:33 Yes, satan may not decide for you, and Jesus will not. It is your individual privilege, and eternal responsibility, to make that choice for yourself. You MAY! You MUST! "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." Joshua 24:15

During the days of slavery in this country, a certain slave escaped north to Vermont. His master pursued him there and captured him. In the effort to obtain legal permission to return south with his recaptured slave, the master asked the court at Middlebury for possession of his slave property.

Judge Harrington listened carefully to the proofs of ownership that the man presented to the court, but replied that he was not convinced that the title was perfect. Then the counsel asked what more was required. Judge Harrington answered: "Until you bring me a bill of sale from God Almighty...you cannot have this man!"

Hallelujah! Jesus stands ready with open arms to receive every runaway slave of satan who chooses to be, and remain, in the domain and under the dominion of God! The choice is yours alone! After you have escaped satan's grasp and fled from his domain, he may pursue you and try to prove in a spiritual court that you are his. He may present as evidence of that claim, certain scars that remain from your slavery to him in the past. But, praise God, his demanding claims do not

convince the Judge of all the earth! Satan does not have the title deed to your soul, nor a bill of sale from the Master Who made you!

That Master, Jesus, if you choose to be His servant, will stand up as your Advocate and declare to Satan in his fiendish efforts to pull you down and drag you back: "You cannot have this man! He is Mine because I created him with My Own hand; I redeemed him with My Own blood, and I retain him by his own choice!" "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" to serve Him throughout time and eternity, "For sin shall not have dominion over you..!" Job 8:36; Romans 6:14 Praise God Forever!

Reader, what about you? Have you personally, positively responded to the call of Christ Jesus, the Master of your salvation? If you haven't, do so just now, today, while He calls for you!

Jesus is tenderly calling thee home,
Calling today, calling today,
Why from the sunshine of love wilt thou roam,
Farther and farther away?

Jesus is calling the weary to rest,
Calling today, calling today.
Bring Him thy burden and thou shalt be blest;
He will not turn thee away.

Jesus is waiting; oh, come to Him now
Waiting today, waiting today.
Come with thy sins; at His feet lowly bow.
Come, and no longer delay.

Jesus is pleading; oh, list to His voice
Hear Him today, hear Him today.
They who believe on His name shall rejoice.
Quickly arise and away!

-- Fanny J. Crosby --

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Article 7 THE REVIVAL OF SIN

Published in the November, 1986 Missionary Revivalist

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"For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Romans 7:9

"Pali, este toro me ha matado!" "Pali, this bull has killed me!" So saying to a friend, twenty-one year old Jose Cubero collapsed and died! Well known as "Yiyo" to Spanish bullfighting fans, just three months earlier, in May 1985, "he cut a splendid figure in his suit of lights in Madrid's plaza de las ventas," and seemed destined for greatness as a matador. Suddenly, unexpectedly, a tragic error ended his spectacular career!

At what proved to be his last bullfight, "after his final sword thrust he turned to the crowd, thinking the bull slain." "But the animal rallied and lunged, piercing Yiyo through the heart." (Nat. Geo. Feb. '86) The animal revived, and he died!

Paul said, "I was alive...once, but...sin revived, and I died." The above victim of a revived, enraged brute lost his life, but when sin revives men often lose their souls! Let us consider three occasions when sin revives and souls die.

SIN REVIVES WHEN IT IS ONLY WOUNDED, NOT SLAIN.

Often the Life of sin is only wounded. The sinner is touched as he hears the gospel sung and preached under the softening, persuasive influence of the Holy Spirit. He responds by beginning to take certain steps toward God and away from a life of sin. The saints rejoice in this and prayerfully hope that he will not stop short of a total, thorough, sin-killing repentance. Alas, however, all too often his, or her, life of sin, thought by some to have been slain, soon revives and the sinner dies to the influences of the Spirit.

Mark 6:20 says that "Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him he did many things, and heard him gladly." When the life of sin is wounded men will do many things to get right with God. When the life of sin is slain men do everything required to get right with God! Every act of sin ceases, and every intent to sin in the future is dead! Sin dies, and through the grace of God the sinner is revived spiritually! Praise God! I'm glad I have experienced this revival in my soul!

The Nature of sin also is frequently just wounded, not really dead! Jose Cubero thought he had slain the beast. He thought the moment for celebrating that victory had come, but something "raised up" and slew him!

"He should have made sure that bull was dead," we may think, "before he turned his back on him and began to celebrate his victory!" Yes, and we too must make sure the carnal nature is dead, thrust through by the flaming sword of the Spirit, before we turn our backs on the business of getting sanctified! None dare presume the work is done! The Holy Ghost Himself must bear witness with our spirit that the work is done! To leave off seeking before we know that "our old man is crucified with Him" and "the body of sin is destroyed" is to invite spiritual death, sometimes quite suddenly and unexpectedly when carnality, thought to be slain, revives, wounded, but enraged and deadly!

The woeful testimony of some who prematurely professed to be sanctified might be: "sin revived, and I died," and "I don't know why!" Jose Cubero knew why!...and we should too! If the

experience doesn't work, the work is not experienced! The beast is not really dead! Dead bulls don't rise up and slay matadors, and Holy Ghost slain carnality doesn't rise up and destroy the spiritual life of the truly sanctified.

SIN REVIVES WHEN ONE BECOMES ACCOUNTABLE FOR A WRONG ACT AND KNOWINGLY, WILFULLY DOES SO.

Paul said: "For I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." He might have put it this way: "There was a time, before I knew right from wrong, that, provisionally, I was alive through the atonement of Christ, but when knowledge came, and my accountability came, I knowingly, willingly sinned, and died spiritually as a result."

Aren't you glad that the Lord is so patient with our ignorance? "For where no law is, there is no transgression." Rom. 4:15 However, when knowledge or light comes concerning a thing, one's accountability also comes, and the revival of sin will come too if the wrong choice is made at that point. When God brings light there is always a revival...either of salvation, or of sin. The choice is ours.

SIN REVIVES WHEN THE SOUL BECOMES CARELESS AND OVERCONFIDENT.

Heb. 12:15 states: "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you..." Perhaps Jose Cubero lost his life as a result of losing the fear of failing and the caution that fear gave him in his dangerous combat. He did not look diligently, but neglected momentarily to make sure of his victory, and his failure was fatal. Perhaps during his first encounters as a matador he was less sure of himself and more fearful of the potential consequences of a mis-move in his combat, but gradually fear gave way to cautious confidence. Finally, however, cautious confidence may have given way to careless overconfidence. Of course this is speculation in regard to Jose Cubero, but one thing we do know from the scripture: "any man," no matter how victorious he has been, can "fail of the grace of God" if he becomes careless and overconfident in this dangerous combat against the world, the flesh and the devil. "For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe; his craft and power are great, and, armed with cruel hate, on earth is not his equal." (Martin Luther)

The Lord would not have us cast away our confidence, just our overconfidence. Satan can and will replant the roots of bitterness in the heart of one who has been sanctified if an overconfident carelessness replaces a healthy fear of failure in that soul. Once those roots have reentered the heart they are sure to "spring up" and "revive sin" in the soul and bring spiritual, and possibly eternal, death to that individual.

However, while it is possible for "any man" to "fail of the grace of God," I'm glad that it is also possible for "any man," no matter how weak he may be within himself, to be "kept by the power of God through faith.." 1 Peter 1:5 Peter, the one who wrote the above words, once had more faith in himself than he should have had. Sin suddenly revived, and he died spiritually, but the merciful Saviour restored and revived him, cleansed him, and then kept him "by the power of God through faith..." That faith, however, was not now overconfidently placed in himself, but confidently anchored in God: "that your faith and hope might be in God." 1 Peter 1:21

Though Peter had shamefully failed and fallen, victory, not defeat, was his final testimony! Whatever failure there may have been in the past, our parting testimony need not be: "This sin has revived and killed me!" Instead, our final testimony can be: "This Blessed Saviour has revived me, cleansed me, and kept me!" Praise His Wonderful Name!

"Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy: to deliver their soul from death, and to KEEP THEM ALIVE.." Ps. 33:18,19

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Article 8 WHY THE SAVIOUR SIGHS ABOUT OUR SIZE

Published in the December, 1986 Missionary Revivalist

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"..too little for the lamb.." Ex. 12:4

"..the brazen altar...was too little to receive the burnt offerings.." 1 Kings 8:64

"But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"
Luke 12:50

Years ago an excursion steamer collided with a merchant ship on the Thames and went down. Over 700 found a watery grave that day! Among the brave efforts that were made on that occasion to save the drowning people, one of the noblest was made by a man who was in charge of a small boat at some distance from the scene of the collision. Rowing with all his might into the midst of the struggling passengers, he pulled several of them one after another into his little boat, which was now full and in danger of sinking, and prepared to row away. But when he saw the white, upturned faces of many others, and heard their piteous cries; "Oh save me, sir! Don't leave me, sir!" it is said that in agony he threw up his arms and cried; "Oh, God, that I had a bigger boat! Oh, God! that I had a bigger boat!" His heart was large enough to save all who were perishing, but his boat was too small. (adapted from 1000 Ill.)

Before His "baptism into death," the Saviour's heart was large enough to save every sinking soul from the drowning floods of sin, but He could not! His Divinely measured capacity to do so was "straitened" until first He Himself was baptized into all the billows and waves of God's judgment for sin, which should have drowned us all in the lake of fire forever! One greater than Jonah was "cast forth into the sea" of God's wrath as our Sacrificial Saviour!: "For Thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about; all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again to thy holy temple." Jonah 1:15; 2:34

Praise God! That sacrificial baptism of Christ on our behalf has been accomplished! After He was cast into that judgmental sea and cast out of His Father's sight as "sin for us," He was "raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father" and looked again to the heavenly temple! Romans 6:4 Today, "therefore being by the right hand of God exalted," "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him..!" Acts 2:33; Heb. 7:25 Hallelujah! His Divinely granted capacity to save has become as big as His heart! He is no longer "straitened" in the exercise of His mighty, redemptive power! "His Divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.." 2 Peter 1:3 Every sinking soul can be rescued to life, and every saved soul can be purified to godliness!

Sadly, however, while the Saviour is no longer "straitened" concerning the full and immediate availability of His limitless power to save, He still sighs, with groanings that cannot be uttered, about the size of the vessels He has sent to fulfill His incomplete work on earth! Let us notice the following reasons why the Saviour sighs about our size:

Because of the urgent need for ENLARGEMENT

"Be ye also enlarged. 2 Cor. 6:13 Too many of us are "too little for the Lamb." The would-be saviour of those who were sinking in the Thames that day was sadly "straitened" because of the size of his boat. It was too small! Today, as the Saviour is frequently limited because of the size of the vessel He is using, does He not groan in intercessory prayer to the Father, "Oh! that I had a bigger boat, with an enlarged capacity to bear the burden of these sinking souls which I would even now rescue!"

It is bigger vessels, enlarged by the Holy Ghost, that the Saviour desperately needs in this hour! Not bigger intellects--Our Great Head has intellect enough to direct His work if we but listen. The urgent need for His vessels is not bigger reputations; not bigger talents or ambitions; not bigger organizations; bigger numbers, or bigger plans; not bigger institutions, bigger buildings, nor even bigger bank accounts; but rather it is bigger INDIVIDUALS which the Saviour desires--vessels the altar of whose heart is not "too little to receive the burnt offerings" of genuine death to self and humble devotion to service!

It is easy to lay the blame for failure to reach the lost at the doorstep of others, particularly at the doorstep of leadership. It is generally more honest to locate it with ourselves: "O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged," said their leader, Paul. "Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels..be ye also enlarged..!" 2 Cor. 6:11-13 Not my General leader, not my District leader, not my Pastor, but it's Me, Oh Lord, standing in the need of prayer..that I might be enlarged! My church will become bigger, only when I, the individual, am enlarged in my heart.

Because of the urgent need for ENLIGHTENMENT

"Hell is naked before Him, and destruction hath no covering." Job 26:6 There is a Hell! There is an everlasting lake of fire into which sinking souls are plunging in their darkness! God sees it! Satan covers it--from the view of men, if he is allowed to do so!: "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not" that there is such a place, or who choose to

forget its existence! 2 Cor. 4:4 Our urgent commission is "to make all men see," "To open their eyes" (tear the covering off of hell) "and to turn them from darkness to light..that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them that are sanctified.." Eph. 3:9; Acts 26:18 "But if our gospel be hid" by our failure to be enlarged enough to enlighten their darkness, the Saviour sighs, while the world around us dies, and sinks into dark damnation. While the size of our burden and capacity to rescue the lost remains unexpanded, "Hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure" to swallow up the sinking souls that we were too little to enlighten and help lift to safety! Isa. 5:14

Because of the urgent need for ENLISTMENT

At a providential time, Esther was placed by the Lord in a position of great honour and influence. Then, when her influence was greatly needed, the Lord, through Mordecai, sought to enlist her in His service for the salvation of multitudes of her condemned countrymen. She saw that she dare not, could not, allow herself to be "too little" in her heart for God to use in that crisis hour, and she enlisted for His service, at the risk of her life.

We too have come to the kingdom for such a time as this, and we as well are expendable, if not expandable, for service! If we do not expand from within our hearts with the new wine of the Holy Spirits vision and passion to rescue the perishing, then we will expire as the Spirit bursts forth from out inflexible, ruptured vessels! See Luke 5:37. Then, "shall there enlargement and deliverance arise..from another place," but we, with our emptied, dried, and brittle, old wineskin of profession, shall be destroyed. Esther 1:14

It is a matter of being employed or destroyed by the expansion of the Spirit. The Divine challenge for those who would be channels, and not chokes, is still: "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them (The Saviour's groans for our growth) stretch forth the curtains of thine habitation: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited." Isa. 54:23

May the Lord help us each not to be "too little for the Lamb" to use upon the altar, or behind the plow.

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Article 9

REACHING TERMINOLOGY, SHORT OF THE TERMINAL

Published in the March, 1987 Missionary Revivalist

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I once heard a statement similar to this, in regard to the terminology used to denote what we receive from the Lord: "I don't want an (it). I want to receive (Him)." Shortly after hearing this

thought expressed, I thought of Hebrews 4:1, and my attention particularly focused on that last word:

"Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of (it)."

When we receive the Lord, we do receive a Person. We do receive (Him). However, there is an (it) involved in both crisis receptions of (Him). For, when He comes, He does not simply come as a Person, but also as the Performer of a particular work. Since only He can do that work, we must receive (Him) to do (it) for us. "Thus saith the Lord God; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do (it) for them.." Ezek. 36:37

When we feel our desperate need of being lifted to safety from the miry clay of sin, lest we sink forever into a devil's hell, we can, by His mercy, inquire of the Lord, receive (Him) as our Saviour, and He will do (it) for us! Praise His Wonderful Name! "Hallelujah! What a Saviour, Who can take a poor, lost sinner, lift Him from the miry clay, and set him free!"

Later, when we feel the urgent need of being cleansed from the carnal mind, lest we "fail of the grace of God," we can again inquire of the Lord, receive (Him) as our Sanctifier, and He will do (it) for us! "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly..Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do (it)."

Hallelujah! I'm glad I received (Him) to be saved from the miry clay and be lifted to safety, and He did (it)! Later, I received (Him) to be cleansed from the carnal mind, and He did (it)! He came as a Wonderful Person, but He also came as the Powerful Performer of a work which I could not do for myself! (He) is the One we receive both times, and (it) is the particular work He does for us on each, separate occasion, and will continue to do for us if we obey Him.

However, the primary, urgent concern of the Holy Ghost is not that we reach the proper Terminology which clearly explains both works of grace, but rather, that we reach the Terminal which clearly experiences both works of grace! There is a grave danger, as one generation succeeds another, in a "holiness" denomination, that increasing numbers of its members will arrive at, and enter into, the Terminology of second-blessing holiness, while coming far short of the actual Terminal of death to self and definite witness of the Spirit that they are sanctified wholly: "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of (it)."

While it is good to reach Bible Terminology for the second work of grace, it is gravely dangerous to rest in it! We must reach the Terminal and receive the witness of the Spirit that we have genuinely arrived in Canaan. Anything less comes short of (it)! Let us note three reasons why many come short of that Terminal:

A FALSE STARTING PLACE

The journey to the terminal of second-blessing holiness must, of necessity, begin by getting into a real experience of salvation at the Terminal of the New-Birth. How some have A False Starting Place is illustrated by the following:

Two travelers, who fancied they were abundantly able to take care of themselves, entered a railway passenger car when the train was being made up and found comfortable seats. They had dropped into conversation when the porter looked in and told them to go forward. "What is the matter with this coach?" they asked. "Nothing," he grinned, "only 'tain't coupled on to anything that'll take you anywhere." (from 1000 Ill.)

It is no wonder that many professing individuals never arrive at the second terminal, when they never really got into the "coach" of the experience of salvation at the first terminal! The "coach" of their profession is not "hooked-on" to the "power of God unto salvation." They may feel smug, and comfortable, in the "unhooked" coach of their own choosing, and be quite offended when asked to "go forward," but one thing is certain: they will never reach the Terminal of Holiness nor the Grand Central Station of Heaven until, or unless, they humble themselves, go forward, and get into an experience of salvation that is "hooked-on" to "the power of God!" The coach of real salvation is connected with that power, and those in it will feel themselves tugged strongly by the Spirit toward the Terminal of Second Blessing Holiness, and God can get them there quite quickly too.

A FALSE STATION

The reason some others never arrive at the Terminal of Holiness is because of A False Station. Satan gets them sidetracked, switched off of the main line, and "turned aside unto vain jangling" tongues and teachings which deny that "the end (the Terminal) of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart." 1 Tim. 1:5-6 Multitudes have "swerved" off the main line and have stopped at such false terminals, but, Brother, it doesn't matter how loud their "vain jangling" whistles may blow, nor how many may crowd their terminals, "charity out a pure heart" is still the true, second stop down the line, and we'd better get there, and know when we've arrived, if we plan to see God! The Bible does not say: "Blessed are..those who deny a second work of grace, nor "Blessed are..those who have the gift of tongues." The Scriptures still and always will say: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Mt. 5:8 Only the Judgment will reveal how many have eternally missed the mark by turning aside to such False Stations short of the True Terminal, but we may be astounded at the number! See Mt. 7:15-23.

A FALSE STATEMENT

Some, who are quite sincere, come short of the Terminal of Second Blessing Holiness because of A False Statement:

In an English exchange we find the following incident, a true occurrence: I was going west one time during the winter. The train had two engines ploughing along. There was a woman with a little baby in her arms who wanted to leave the train at a certain small station where they stop the train if you come from a distance. The brakeman came in and called the name of the station when we were getting near it. The woman said: "Don't forget me," and he replied: "Sure."

There was a man there who said, "Lady, I will see that the brakeman doesn't forget you. Don't you worry." A little later, he said: "Here's your station." She hopped out of the train into the storm. The train had gone on about three quarters of a mile when the brakeman came in and said: "Where's that woman?" The traveler said: "She got out." The brakeman said: "Then she has gone to her death; we only stopped the train yonder because there was something the matter with the engine."

Later, they found that woman on the prairies, covered with a shroud of snow and ice, with the babe folded to her breast. She followed the man's directions, but they were wrong. (from "Sincere But Mistaken, 1000 Ill.)

We may detect it, and the seeker may feel it, when they are near the Terminal of Rest from inbred sin, but only the Holy Ghost is authorized to announce the seeker's arrival! And, He surely will, when that moment arrives! "Let us therefore fear lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you," by accepting human assurance, "come short of it." If you are seeking the second rest, go all the way through to the Terminal and you'll know, by the unerring witness of the Spirit, when you arrive!

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Article 10 CONVINCED BY COWS

Published in the May, 1987 Missionary Revivalist

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"And the kine took the straight way to the way of Bethshemesh.." 1 Samuel 6:12

God uses various, and sometimes very interesting, ways to convince men "that He is, and that He is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him," and a Judge of those who deny and disobey Him. Heb. 11:6 At sundry times, and in divers manners He has employed every part of His creation to thus convince men. The spiritual, material, and animal creations have all been used as God's instruments to reveal Himself and man's privilege and responsibility to serve Him.

Animals have been used by God for this purpose in some interesting, and unusual ways: A donkey "speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet" Balaam. 2 Peter 2:16 A whale conveyed a convinced Jonah back to dry land and duty. Jonah 2:10 Ravens fed the prophet Elijah by the brook Cherith with bread in the morning and flesh in the evening at God's command. 1 Kings 17:4-6 Hungry lions did not make Daniel their dinner. Dan. 6:22 A fish provided tax money for Peter and Jesus. Mt. 17:27 A rooster crowed at just the right moment to remind Peter of Jesus' words and immediately convicted him for his cursing denial. Mt. 26:74-75

These are just a few instances in which animals, controlled by their Creator, convinced men of Deity and our duty to worship and serve Him. For, if He sees and controls these creatures,

then "neither is there any creature (angel, animal, or man) that is not manifest in His sight," and obligated to both acknowledge and obey Him. Even a bird, under Divine control, can be God's Bible "for the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that (we) are without excuse" for denying or disobeying Him, though we may never have read one verse of scripture. Rom. 1:20

In 1 Samuel, chapters 4-6, we have the story of Israel's defeat at the hands of the Philistines when the ark of God was taken and remained in the land of the Philistines for seven months before it was returned. Both Israel and their enemies had thought that when the presence of God came to the scene of the battle with the ark of the covenant, His mighty power would be manifested in Israel's behalf. 1 Sam. 4:4-8 However, strangely, this had not occurred. Instead, Israel was defeated; Hophni and Phinehas were slain; and the invisible seat and symbol of the invisible God was taken by the Philistines.

In the minds of these enemies of Israel, no doubt this called into question both the reality and sovereignty of Jehovah. If He was real, why had He not manifested Himself? If He was all-powerful, why had the worshippers of Dagan defeated His people? If there was a god at all dwelling between the cherubims of Israel's ark, they may have reasoned, he must be inferior to Dagan, our deity! So, they placed the ark beside Dagan, perhaps signifying Dagan's superiority and power over the God of Israel.

Then, triumph turned into trouble! Twice their deity fell upon his face before the ark, and Dagan was rendered a headless, handless stump! They too must have been "stumped"! Who, or what, had caused this? Was this a manifestation of the power of Israel's invisible God? They wondered, but not everyone was convinced.

More trouble came! A plague of "emerods" struck the people of Ashdod, and this was accompanied by an infestation of mice. Subsequently, the cities of Gath and Ekron were smitten with the same sore plague when the ark was located at each place. By then, most of the Philistines were already convinced that this indeed must be a manifestation of the deity and displeasure of Jehovah-God! However, there was still a lingering trace of doubt in some of their minds. They thought that perhaps "it is not His hand that smote us; it was a chance that happened to us." 1 Sam. 6:9 So, when it was decided to "send away the ark of the God of Israel," 1 Sam. 6:3, they decided to test the origin of their plagues in an Interesting way. They would use two cows that had calves.

These cows convinced them that it was God, not chance, that had visited them! Here's how it happened: Two cows that had calves were to pull the new cart carrying the ark. Their calves were to be taken from them and shut up at home. If those cows did the natural thing, by remaining in the land of the Philistines, their home pasture, or by returning home at some point, perhaps in search of nursing calves, then they would know that nothing supernatural had befallen them...it was all by chance. On the other hand, if those two cows did an unusual thing, by leaving their home pasture and deserting their calves, and pulled the ark all the way back to the border of Israel at Bethshemesh, then they would know that Israel's God, not chance, had smitten them! They were going to carefully watch what those cows did and draw conclusions from their conduct: "And see, If it goeth up by the way of his own coast to Bethshemesh, then He hath done this great evil; but if

not, (If those cows stay home, or come back) then we shall know that it is not His hand that smote us; it was a chance that happened to us." 1 Sam. 6:9

"And the men did so; and took two milch kine, and tied them to the cart and shut up, their calves at home; and they laid the ark of the Lord upon the cart, and the coffer with the mice of gold and the images of their emerods."

Quite a test! What did those cows do? "And the kine took the straight way to the way of Bethshemesh!" Praise God! They made a "beeline" as obedient bovine and headed straight for Israel. And, "if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned," Heb. 11:15, but instead they "went along the highway, lowing as they went, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left; and the lords of the Philistines went after them (watching them all the way) unto the border of Bethshemesh." 1 Sam. 6:10-12 Hallelujah! They took the straight way all the way and convinced those who were watching them of the sovereignty and power of Jehovah. "And when the five lords of the Philistines had seen it, they returned to Ekron the same day," but they knew that God had been in their midst..convinced by cows! 1 Sam. 6:16

There is no question about whether God can use an animal to convince a gainsaying, unbelieving world. The question is, can He use you, and me? Yes, He can, and He will, if we too will be guided and controlled by His Spirit. Men are watching us carefully, like the philistines watched those cows! They are anxious to know whether our God is real and all-powerful, or, just another headless, handless stump. If we behave naturally, like all other men by pasturing on worldly things and nursing natural desires, then they will be convinced that our god is just another Dagan. If we succumb to the temptation to return to the weak and beggarly elements of the world once we started for "a better country, that is, an heavenly," Heb. 11:16, then men will be convinced that there is no better way, no better world, and will return to their "Ekron" and spread the news!

However, if, like those convincing cows, we abandon the natural and take the straight way to Heaven's border without turning aside to the right or to the left, and complete the journey pulling our load, then, we too shall be convincing witnesses to all who are anxiously watching us and looking for Deity and reality in our lives. And, when they have "seen it" they will return to their "Ekron" and spread the news that God has been in our midst!

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Article 11
"HE WILL FINISH THE WORK"

Published in the July, 1987 Missionary Revivalist

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The above quotation in the title is from Romans 9:28. It expresses what is always so when Christ begins a work: "He will finish the work" which He began. Concerning the impending

judgment upon the house of Eli, He told young Samuel: "When I begin, I will also make an end." 1 Sam. 3:12 This fact has been repeatedly proven.

HE BEGAN AND FINISHED THE WORK OF CREATION

"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." Gen. 2:1

Not one massive star, not one tiny molecule is lacking. Ps. 147:4; Mt. 10:30 The universe functions as a finished product. The earth was not left without its sun and everything necessary to sustain life, and man was not left without his mate and everything required for his total well-being. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handywork." "Nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." Ps. 19:1; Ecc. 3:14 "And the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested.." Gen. 2:2 It was said of Boaz: "the man will not be in rest until he have finished the thing this day. Ruth 3:18 Even so, the Lord did not rest from His work of creation until it was finished. The Cosmos is complete!

HE BEGAN AND FINISHED THE WORK OF LEGISLATION

Mankind needed to know the bounds of their habitation morally and spiritually within the will of the Creator. Acts 17:26 We "had not known sin but by the Law..for by the Law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. 7:7; 3:20 "So Moses finished the work" of revealing Gods Law by which we may guard and guide our behavior. Ex. 40:33 It is true that the Mosaic sacrificial system "was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices" and works of the ceremonial law which are now done away in Christ. Heb. 9:9

However, it is just as true that the Moral Law of God given through Moses is not done away in Christ! Jesus warned us all: "Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." Mt. 5:17 His grace does not erase the boundary lines of our moral habitation, but rather gives us the desire and power to live within them! Not one jot has passed away from God's Moral Law. The Law of the Lord is perfect. Nothing can be put to it, nor taken from it! Sin is still "the transgression of the Law," and "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin!" The revelation of God's Law, completed so long ago is compulsory today. "Remove not the ancient landmark" as your guard and guideline! Ps. 19:7; 1 John 3:4,9; Prov. 22:28 "Blessed are they which do His commandments that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev. 22:14; Isa. 26:2

HE BEGAN AND FINISHED THE WORK OF REVELATION

God's written Word, The Bible, did not come to us "by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Thus, "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God." 2 Pet. 1:21; 2 Tim. 3:16 Moses wrote the words of the law "in a book until they were finished," and then commanded: "Take this book.." Deut. 31:24 For some 19 centuries the Bible has been a finished revelation, and God's command has been: "Take this Book!" "The will of man" has often been to refuse it, doubt it, neglect it, add to it, take from it, pervert it, and sometimes, to destroy it, but the Book still stands, present and perfect "as it is in Truth, The Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe!" 1 Thess. 2:13 Praise God! I've found it so!

HE BEGAN AND FINISHED THE WORK OF MANIFESTATION

"God was manifest in the flesh" in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, the virgin-born Son of God! This incarnation of Deity into humanity "was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you" and me and all." 1 Peter 1:20 Jesus perfectly manifested the character and nature of God to humanity, for He is God, and "in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Col. 2:9 Christ said to Philip: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." John 14:9 He began and finished the work of the manifestation of Deity in humanity in this present world: "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. I have manifested Thy Name." John 17:4,6

HE BEGAN AND FINISHED THE WORK OF REDEMPTION

The story is told, in a poem by Rose Thorpe entitled "Curfew Must Not Ring To-Night," of a young woman who did what she could to prevent the execution of the young man she was soon to marry. Law demanded the execution of the one that she loved at the tolling of the Curfew bell. Love desperately desired to keep the bell from sounding his doom! However, in spite of her pleas, no official of justice would stay the execution, and she could not convince the old, deaf Sexton not to ring the bell.

Therefore, when her love had found no other way to prevent what law demanded, as the moment for the ringing of the Curfew fast approached, the young woman climbed to the top of the tower where the great bell hung. She clasped her hands around the clapper of the bell and hung on, suspended "Twixt heaven and earth as the bell swung to and fro." Dutifully, the deaf Sexton pulled the rope repeatedly, and thought that he had sounded the death-knell. Determinedly, painfully, the young woman held on, and muffled with her hands every clap of the bell! Then, she descended from the tower to the place of the execution and saw Cromwell:

...And her brow,
Lately white with fear and anguish,
Has no anxious traces now.

At his feet she tells her story,
Shows her hands all bruised and torn;

And her face so sweet and pleading,
yet with sorrow, pale and worn,

Touched his heart with sudden pity,
Lit his eyes with misty light:

"Go! your lover lives," said Cromwell,
"Curfew shall not ring tonight!"

Like Justice, the old Sexton had done what Law demanded. Like Jesus, the young woman had done what Love designed! Like you and me, the condemned one was redeemed! Hallelujah! Because of "His great love wherewith He loved us,..in due time Christ died for the ungodly." He took the blows of God's righteous judgment upon sin, which should have fallen upon us, and silenced the death-knell of man's doom! Just before Christ bowed His head in sacrificial death for us all, He said: "It is finished"! Then, on the third day He rose from the grave, ascended to the Father, and "by His own blood He entered in once into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption for us!" Eph. 2:4; Rom. 5:6; John 19:30; Heb. 9:12 Praise be to His wonderful Name Forever! No condemned son of Adam, who will forsake sin while he may and plead the merits of Jesus blood, need die in his sin. The Penalty has been paid in full by Christ.

Five bleeding wounds appear, Received on Calvary.
They pour effectual prayers; They strongly plead for Me.
Forgive him, Oh Forgive, they cry!
Forgive him, Oh Forgive, they cry!
Nor let that ransomed sinner die.

Sinner friend, "We then as workers together with Him beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. For He saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation!" 2 Cor. 6:1-2 Full and free forgiveness of sins can be yours today, if you will respond to Jesus call while you may and receive not the great sacrifice of His Love for you in vain.

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Article 12
"ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE FINISHED"

Published in the August, 1987 Missionary Revivalist

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"And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that...all these things shall be finished." Dan 12:7

When Christ begins a work, "He will finish the work" which He began. He began and finished the works of: Creation--Gen. 2:1; Legislation--Ex. 40:33; Deut. 31:24; Revelation--2 Tim. 3:16; Manifestation--John 17:46; and Redemption--John 19:30. The fact that He has always finished what He began proves to us that what remains to be finished of Christ's work shall be finished.

Among the art treasures of Rome, there is a mysterious statue. It represents a king. The peculiarity of this statue is that it has never been finished. The work is wrought with great care and skill up to a certain point, then it suddenly stops short. Why did the sculptor stop, after having done so much? Who can tell? The secret lies buried in the forgotten past. (from 1000 Ill.)

In contrast, God is not dead and buried in the forgotten past. He is very much alive, and He will finish the work which He has yet to complete. All these things shall be finished:

HE WILL FINISH THE WORK OF SALVATION

"Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform (margin, finish) it. Philip. 1:6

On our part salvation begins when, and continues as, we believe and obey God, for Christ cannot save, or continue to save, any individual who is disbelieving and disobeying God. However, while we can fail to do our part, we can be assured that He will never fail, on His part, to finish the good work of salvation which He has begun in us as we make it possible through our continued faith and obedience.

He saves us with the purpose in mind that it shall be forever: "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever. Ecc. 3:14 Like a sculptor or painter, who envisions his finished product before he begins, and begins with the full intent to bring his work to finished perfection, even so, Christ begins to save us. As to His purpose, "whom He justified, them He also glorified. Rom. 8:30 As to the perfection of the work of salvation which Christ has begun in us, we may be "confident of this very thing" as long as we continue to be obedient to the faith. Acts 6:7

HE WILL FINISH THE WORK OF SANCTIFICATION

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." 1 Thess. 4:3

To sanctify means both to set apart as sacred, and to make holy. In a very real sense, every part of the work of salvation (from Justification through Glorification) includes the work of Sanctification from sin. First, when we are born again, we are sanctified from the practice of sin: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." There is no such thing as being born again without being set apart, sanctified, from the practice of sin, for "he that committeth sin is of the devil." John 3:8-9

Then, by a second, definite work of grace, when we are baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire, Christ sanctifies us from the principle of sin, the inherited Adamic nature. Further, since the only way to be set apart from depravity in the heart is to have it purged out of the heart, that is exactly what the Lord does for us when He sanctifies us wholly! "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly" 1 Thess. 5:23 This sanctification is what the disciples received at Pentecost cf. John 7:17, Acts 2:14, 15:89 They were already sanctified from the practice of sin. John 17:6 At Pentecost they were sanctified from the principle of sin! This sanctification is required to see God, and received in this life: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Mt. 5:8 "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." 1 Thess. 5:24 Praise God! He did it for the disciples at Pentecost; He's done it for many, many Christians since then; He did it for me, and He will do it for you if you will answer His call to holiness and obediently walk the light.

Finally, Christ will resurrect, glorify, and rapture to Himself in heaven the pure in heart and sanctify them from the presence of sin forever! "I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem..and there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth.! Rev. 21:2,27 He will finish the work of sanctification.

HE WILL FINISH THE WORK OF CONSTRUCTION

Over 1900 years go Jesus asserted: "Upon this rock I will build My Church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!" Mt. 16:18 He came to "destroy the works of the devil and to build His Church. He will finish both of these things--the eternal destruction of satan's works, and the spiritual construction of His Church. Satan has done his utmost to prevent and hinder the building of Christ's Church, but in eternity none will be able to mock Jesus of Nazareth saying: "This Man began to build, and was no able to finish!" Lu. 14:30 This Man, is the God-Man! His hands have "laid the foundation of this House," and "His hands shall also finish it!" Zech. 4:9 All of the rubble that does not fit into His Building will be "set at naught" by this Great Builder, removed from His sight, and buried in the damnation of the eternal "Valley of Hinnom"!

HE WILL FINISH THE WORK OF RESURRECTION

Woe unto those who think that this life is all there is, who live in sin and die in that deception and condition! "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust!" Acts 24:15 Death does not end it all, for all of the dead will be raised from the grave. He is risen as the firstfruits of those who shall be resurrected. Then, when He returns, both the righteous and wicked dead will be raised by Christ: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28-29

To their everlasting joy, not one of the dead in Christ will remain in the grave. To their everlasting shame and eternal punishment, not one of the wicked dead will be allowed to hide from Christ in the grave: "There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves!" Job 34:22 Before His death, Christ vowed that he would resurrect the "temple" of His own body in three days. He fulfilled that promise. The work of resurrection which He began then, He will finish at His second coming. None should doubt it.

HE WILL FINISH THE WORK OF JUDGMENT

"A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened...the judgment shall sit...unto the end." Dan 7:10,26

Many have doubted or denied that there will be a Judgment: "Yet ye say...Where is the God of judgment?" Mal. 2:17 Nonetheless, there is a God, and there is a Judgment!: "Be ye afraid...for...there is a judgment." Job 19:29 "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Heb 9:27 Once the judgment is set, that judgment will sit unto the end. The Lord admonished Israel: .."thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour.." Jer. 7:5 We

should, therefore, be aware that when Christ executes His Judgment on the Day of the Lord, He will execute that Judgment thoroughly, from beginning to end.

Everyone will be judged:

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Cor 5:10

"...for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." Rom 14:10

"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works." Rev 20:13

"And thinkest thou this, O man, that..thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" Rom. 2:3

Every work will be judged:

"For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Ecc. 12:14

Every word will be judged:

"But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." Mat 12:36

Everything will be judged:

"..but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." Ecc. 11:9

We might do well to bear in mind that time will be past at the Judgment, and in that eternal environment Christ will not be rushed. There will be nothing there to prevent to most detailed scrutiny of all that shall be judged. Perhaps one by one, Christ will "bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts.." 1 Cor 4:5 All evil things about all individuals, which are not erased by the blood of Christ, will be made manifest on that Day. So thorough will be Christ's Judgment that none will be able to say: "My way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is passed over from my God." Isa 40:27

Included with the work of revelation at the Judgment shall also come the work of rewarding all individuals: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Mat 16:27 "Every transgression and disobedience (shall receive) a just recompense of reward." Heb 2:2 All of the wicked "shall receive the reward of unrighteousness," and be cast into the lake of fire. 2 Pet 2:13 All of the righteous "shall receive the reward of the inheritance" in the eternal blessedness of the New Jerusalem with Christ and His glorified saints. Col. 3:24 He will thoroughly and eternally finish the work of Judgment.

HE WILL FINISH THE WORK OF INVITATION

"The Lord is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" and salvation. 2 Peter 3:9 Moses was instructed: "Make thee two trumpets that thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly." Nu. 10:2 Christ came to call sinners to repentance, and since His ascension He has made trumpets out of many, many preachers of His gospel. Across the centuries, He has used them to continue sounding out His call from sin to salvation and "To the general assembly and church of the firstborn which are written in heaven." Heb. 12:23

During the Spanish-American War, some transports with supplies for General Shafter's army found it impossible to secure anchorage off the coast of Cuba, and were compelled to steam slowly back and forth along the coast. This made it difficult to land the horses and mules, and it was finally decided upon to push them overboard and allow them to swim ashore. So, they were pushed into the water and soon the sea was black with animals. Some instinctively swam toward the shore; others completed circles in the water; but others, more frightened than the rest, started out to sea. It was a distressing situation, and the ship's officers showed much concern. Finally, the men who were aboard the transports espied a soldier on shore hastily making his way toward a rocky promontory. The stripes upon his uniform denoted the bugler. The jutting rocks reached, he raised the bugle to his lips and emitted one after another of the bugle-calls which the army horses and mules had learned to know so well. The sound traveled far out to sea, and was heard by every bewildered, struggling creature. Instinctively, they turned and swam toward the call. The bugler stood there and sounded those calls until his lips were blue, but when he finally did cease, every confused and trembling animal was safe! (from 1000 Illus., #779)

Hallelujah! Christ is still sounding out the call to salvation, to holiness, and to heaven! His work of Invitation continues, for "now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation!" 2 Cor 6:2 Christ is not willing that any should perish. "There shall not an hoof be left behind" among those who turn from the sea of sin, while they may, get a pure heart, and then head for the Heavenly shore, following the sound of Christ's trumpet all the way in!

"But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished!" Rev. 10:7 Christ will finish the work of sounding the trumpet calls of invitation to salvation. Then, the "last trump" will sound, calling all men out of death and mortality into Judgment and Eternity. All of Christ's probationary and judgmental work with mankind will be finished on the Day of the Lord. The wicked will be eternally cursed and forced to depart from Christ's presence: "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!" Mat 25:41 One final part of Christ's work of invitation will bring everlasting joy both to Himself, and to His faithful followers: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!" Mat 25:34 He will finish the work, and what a glorious finish that will be!

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"IN THE SPIRIT, AND NOT IN THE LETTER"

Published in the January, 1988 Missionary Revivalist

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"But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Rom. 2:29

At an earlier time the apostle John was moved by a zealous spirit akin to those living "in the letter," and not "in the Spirit." His zeal was "not according to knowledge," for he knew not what spirit he was of. He was quick to forbid a man who was not working for the Lord "with" his group, and anxious to call down fire upon the Samaritans who did not receive Christ. Years later, he was again shut out with Christ in banishment to the isle of Patmos. But now, sweetened by the Holy Ghost with perfect love, John was "in the Spirit on the Lord's day," and not "in the letter!" Thus, he saw the glorified Christ, and began to receive the prophecies of the book of Revelation for his brothers "in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ." What a magnificent transformation in the man, and what a marvelous revelation of the truth, and both so necessary for the good of the church! John had been Divinely transported out of "the letter" and into "the Spirit," and this dramatic change in his spiritual environment had also dramatically changed his involvement in the kingdom of Christ! And, so also it must be with us if we are to be a "blessing" and not a "blight" to our brothers "in the kingdom" and to a lost world. Our revelation of Christ, and our relationship with Him, must be "in the Spirit, and not in the letter."

Our CONVERSION must be "in the Spirit, and not in the letter."

"For he is not a Jew (a true child of God), which is one outwardly...but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly...in the spirit, and not in the letter." Rom. 2:29 Proselytes, converts to Judaism, were converted "outwardly" "in the flesh" and "in the letter." Their "praise" was "of men" who approved and applauded their appearance of outward conformity to the law. With a zealous outreach, the scribes and Pharisees would "compass sea and land to make one proselyte." Sadly, however, their convert was man-made outwardly and actually worse than he was before! Jesus said "when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves!" Mt. 23:15 What a tragic conversion! But such is always the case when a man is outwardly converted by men, even by men who are themselves children of God.

Indeed "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness," but that righteousness must begin in, and spring from, "the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter." Isa. 1:27, Rom. 2:29 Try to convert a man from the outside in, by getting him to line up to old-fashioned, holiness standards, and he will still be "a child hell," garbed in holiness attire, and worse off, no matter how good he looks to us!

On the other hand, when a man is converted "in the Spirit," from the inside out, he will be a genuine child of God, no matter how much he lacks in outward conformity to those old-fashioned, holiness standards. Sure, he'll change in time, but not from the outside in. His change will take

place from the inside out because God has converted him "inwardly," and not men "outwardly". Praise God! I was converted from the inside out. How about you?

Our CONFIDENCE must be "in the Spirit, and not in the letter."

Addressing Israel in the flesh, Paul said: "Behold, thou art called a Jew, and resteth in the law...and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind.." Rom. 2:17, 19 There is grave danger in resting in our adherence to certain outward standards of conduct! For many who are "not as other men are," and who "fast regularly and "give tithes of all (they) possess," are "confident," but not justified, even separated, but not sanctified wholly! How dangerous it is to rest in conformity to our standards without ever having received the clear witness of the Spirit that you are truly born again and sanctified wholly!

Biblically based as our standards are, God did not say "Blessed are those who outwardly look like old-fashioned holiness people, for they shall see God Instead, He said: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God!" Those who enter the eternal city will be those who really "worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Philip. 3:3 They do maintain Bible standards, but their confidence and assurance comes through the abiding witness and work of the Spirit in their heart, not in their outward appearance and conformity.

Our CONDUCT must be "in the Spirit, and not in the letter."

It is only after we have been made "partakers of the Divine nature" that we can "do by nature the things contained in the law." 2 Peter 1:4, Rom. 2:14 Paul reasoned with the Jews, that if Gentiles "by nature..fulfil the law," shall they not judge thee, who by the letter...dost transgress the law?" Rom. 2:27 When we are "in the Spirit" and have God's nature, then "by nature" we can, and do, keep God's moral law. But when an individual tries to go "by the letter" without being born again, often he'll look for a loophole so that he can do what his fallen nature wants to do without "technically," plainly violating the law.

For instance, the Pharisees and scribes wanted to selfishly keep for themselves those things which they should have given in assistance to their aging parents, a violation of the requirement to "honour" them. Since they were going "by the letter," they devised a way to escape their responsibility that in their notion nullified their duty and left themselves in possession of those things! They declared those things to be "Corban," a gift to God, unavailable for their parent's assistance, but still left in their possession and control! Jesus saw right through this going "by the letter," looking for the loophole lifestyle, and strongly condemned it in plain language!

The trouble with some even today who are trying to go "by the letter" is that they want to look good and still leave room to indulge the desires of their fallen nature. The only cure for their conduct is Holy Ghost conviction, conversion and cleansing! Then they will "do by nature the things contained in the law" and stop looking for an "out"!

Our CONFINEMENT must be "in the Spirit, and not in the letter."

Romans 7:6 speaks of how those under the law were "held" therein, but that now "we are delivered from the law" and should "serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." The only way any holiness church can be "held" in line within the narrow way is "in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." Once the "newness" and ever refreshing presence of the Holy Ghost is gone, and people begin to serve the Lord in the "oldness" of routine, you couldn't write enough rules and regulations in a book as thick as a Sears & Roebuck Catalog to "hold" some folks in line. When, the joy is gone, and serving the Lord is nothing but a job, people will not, cannot be held in line. For in their "oldness," the lines are no longer fallen unto them "in pleasant places," but in places of being backslidden in heart where delight is gone and drudgery has set in. On the other hand, when an individual is serving the Lord "in newness of spirit," he is being "held" by the checks of the Spirit and led by the promptings of the Spirit. Even if there were no manual, his lifestyle would be the same, for he delights in taking "the way of holiness!"

Our CONVEYANCE OF THE GOSPEL must be "in the Spirit."

Legalistic preaching never begets "newness of life," because "the letter killeth," and only "the Spirit giveth life." 2 Cor. 3:6 We will be "known and read of all men" as true and "able ministers of the new testament," not by laying down our law, but rather by laying down our lives in consecration to Christ and love for lost men.

A man was to be executed by a firing squad, but a pardon was granted him. However, it was decided to keep that information from him until the moment before his execution. The pardon was given to the man who accompanied the condemned to the spot where he was to stand or sit awaiting the fatal shot. The man carrying the pardon intended to reach into his pocket as the final moment neared, withdraw the pardon and give it to the condemned man, thus staying his execution. Instead, he mistakenly withdrew his handkerchief, the planned signal for the death squad to fire. The firing squad responded. The fatal shot struck its mark, and the condemned man was killed as a result of the tragic blunder! The man who was supposed to convey the message of pardon had instead conveyed the message of death!

When the apostle John was ministering "in the letter," it was necessary that Jesus tell him: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of, for the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Lu. 9:55, 56 When John later ministered "in the Spirit" he wrote: "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. For God sent not His son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." John 3:16, 17

Should not many would-be conveyors of the gospel undergo a similar transformation, one which would make their preaching and teaching of the gospel that which is "in the Spirit, and not in the letter"? The savour of the message of some is, tragically, of "death unto death," rather than of "life unto life." Like the man who blunderingly conveyed the wrong signal and thereby needlessly brought about the death of one whose pardon was signed, even so legalistic preaching can drive men into eternal death when Christ has paid the price for their pardon and longs to lovingly draw them into life eternal. Only preaching which is "in the Spirit," can convey Christ's blood-bought message of pardon to lost souls before it is too late.

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Article 14

YA CAN'T GET TO HELLVEN FROM HERE!

Published in the April, 1988 Missionary Revivalist

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No sir, ya just can't go to hellven from anywhere on earth that I know of. You may recall the story of the drunk who gave up trying to give the directions which had been asked of him, saying: "Ya can't get to the Post Office from here!" Of course his befuddled statement was mistaken, for there was indeed a way to get there and had his thinking been clear he could have recited the directions to his inquirers. But mister, as clearly as I know how to tell ya, you cannot get to hellven from here for two reasons: (1) There is no such place; and (2) There is no way to get there if it did exist.

There is a number called eleven which comes just after 10, as in the 10 commandments, and just before 12, as in the 12 gates of the New Jerusalem. But, there is no place called hellven which is located just above hell and just below heaven. Many folks might like to think that there is a third choice as to where they will spend eternity, but there is not.

"Where is hell?" was the question once asked by a scoffer. Brief but telling was the reply, "Anywhere outside of heaven." Yes, there are only two choices concerning where we will dwell forever, heaven or hell, and there will be no abode somewhere between the two for those who seemingly don't qualify for either place.

I read another story something like this: A man who was not a Christian was dying, but refused to believe that hell must be his lot and said to the one who was endeavoring to help him get saved: "There must be some better place for a man of my respectability." Perhaps he realized that he did not qualify for heaven, but apparently he felt that he was too good to go to hell. It sounds like he was hoping for some place like hellven...above the torments of the lake of fire while somewhat beneath the bliss of the blood-washed in the New Jerusalem.

Actually, the Bible does teach that there is a place between heaven and hell, but it is not called Hellven, Purgatory, or any such fictitious name. It is called "A Great Gulf." It is forever "fixed" between the saved and the damned, and no one can go there. It is the eternal "No Man's Land," and "they that would pass from hence (in heaven) to you (in hell) cannot," said Abraham to the rich man. "Neither can they (in hell) pass to us, (in heaven) that would come from thence." Thus we see that the place located halfway between heaven and hell is not a dwellingplace but a deep gulf separating forever those who are Christ's from those who are of their father, the devil.

Located near the 45th parallel, halfway between the Equator and the North Pole, is a little town in Oregon called Halfway. I dwelt there part one summer when I was a lad. Halfway, Oregon is also located just above Hell's Canyon, through which runs the Snake River. Those who dwell there no doubt enjoy the beautiful Pine Valley where it is situated, but none of us who ever lived

there will inhabit a place halfway between the Saviour in Heaven's Mountain and the Snake of Hell's Bottomless Pit. We will all be either all the way into Heaven or all the way into Hell, and there will be no "Halfway House" for those wishing to be rehabilitated from the confines of eternal punishment.

A man asked, "Can you go to Heaven and chew?" The reply was, "Yes, but you'll have to go to hell to spit!" This may have seemed like a clever answer. However, the solemn truth is that there will be no transition between the eternal abodes, no "Halfway House," and no admission into the New Jerusalem of anything that defileth" or "worketh abomination." Those who chew the filthy cud of sin without repentance in this life will be themselves spewed into the cuspidor of condemnation forever along with all of their uncleanness.

Even the morally upright and socially respectable who have refused to admit their need of the Saviour and spurned His cleansing blood must descend entirely and eternally into hell. There will be no pleasant, little town just outside of the gates of the New Jerusalem called Halfway, Heaven for those who were too good to go to Hell but not quite qualified for Heaven. Conversely, the chiefest of sinners Jesus will save when they obey and believe, and He will escort them all the way into the heights of holiness and Heaven. Ya just can't get to hellven from here!

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Article 15 DEAD, BUT STILL STANDING

Published in the July, 1988 Missionary Revivalist

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"And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith He that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die.." Rev. 3:1

Sadly, the church in Sardis was not the last church to lose its real spiritual life and be left standing as a lifeless body from which the Spirit of God had departed. More than one church today is still standing as an organization with a name that suggests that it has spiritual life, but, in point of fact, it is a spiritually dead body! Unlike a physical body which immediately ceases to stand when its life has departed, often, long after a church body has lost its true, spiritual life, it continues to stand, and even to expand as an organization. Deceptively so, it gives the appearance that it has life because of the very fact that it continues to stand, and even more so, by the fact that it is expanding. In reality, such a body only stands like a dead tree, supported by the lumber of its lifeless form and roots which grasp the rock, but no longer draw moisture. In truth, such a body only expands like that of a dead beast, bloating with the gases of its own inward putrefaction.

"The dead bodies" of professedly, living servants of Christ are increasingly numerous in the forest of Christianity, "And the rest of the trees of His forest (that still have real life) shall be few, that even a child may write them." Ps. 79:2; Isa. 10:19 In some large holiness congregations,

one could count on the fingers of his hands those who yet retain real spiritual life, and perhaps most of them are so weakened that they are "ready to die" unless revival reaches them quickly. Why some large holiness bodies are dead, but still standing, can be seen from the following illustration:

Whilst visiting the beautiful island of Tasmania my attention was often called, nay, arrested, to huge trees which appear as bleached ghosts of the forest. They stand out in the brilliant moonlight with a weirdness alike surprising and magnificent. The reason of their condition is as follows: On account of their great size and the heavy cost of what is called 'grubbing up,' the settler leaves them in the ground and proceeds to hew round the trunk at the height of about four feet from the ground. The axe cuts through the bark, and about an inch into the tree. The effect is, that when next spring comes the sap from the 'gashed wound' exudes, and the giant of the forest dies.

The branches wither, the leaves fall off, the bark strips, and a single year suffices for these trees to join the army of the upright dead. The farmer can now plough the ground between, sow his corn, and reap the harvest in the huge mausoleum of the forest. No sheltering foliage hinders the sun's rays, and the wheat plant thrives and ripens amidst hundreds of towering trees whose only voice is the silence of the dead. (Dict. of Ill. #1459)

The picture is this: satan, like the Tasmanian farmer, has come into the midst of more than one towering forest of holiness people who were both holy and stately as they flourished with Divine life. His plan was not to "grub them up," but to drain them of the vital sap of God's Spirit and then leave them standing on the earth with a name that they live, but, in reality dead and powerless to hinder the crop of evil and worldly lusts springing up in their very midst! Thus, "while men slept," satan came into the midst of the congregation and began to hew "about four feet above the ground" at the heart of each unguarded Christian. Since most were sleeping, one by one, satan encircled and pierced the spiritual heart of each heedless "tree of righteousness," and "sapped" them of their vital possession of the Spirit! Little by little, "as leaking vessels," they were drained of every drop of spiritual life. (margin Heb. 2:1)

Once these towering "trees" of a holiness denomination are sapped of their true spiritual life, satan does not worry about their dead forms, nor their ancestral "roots," no matter how much they make of either. Their once living "roots" are buried in the past and draw no spiritual moisture for them in the present. Lacking the living foliage of a genuine experience of salvation and entire sanctification, the lifeless limbs of their dead profession do nothing to hinder the growth of wickedness and worldliness which "thrives and ripens amidst hundreds of towering (but dead) professors of holiness, whose only voice of protest is the silence of the dead!

A strange mixture occupies the ground of such a holiness denomination--the dead trees which the Lord once planted there when they had life, and the devil's tares which satan planted there when the Holy Ghost was lost out of their midst. One after another of those things which were once held as precious and vital are dropped like dead leaves, and carried away with the winds of change. Remembering the former days, when these convictions were firmly attached to them by the Holy Ghost, some of the dead trees let them go with a measure of reluctance, but the delighted tares only rejoice as one by one those things which overshadow the growth of their

worldliness are removed from above them. The standards of holiness fall to the ground, and the majority "love to have it so!" Jere. 5:31

As one truthfully compares this, the present condition in various holiness churches, with what they once were, it must be sadly concluded that "An enemy hath done this!" Their present condition is not the result of a growing grace. Rather, it is the result of the departure of grace, and a backslidden growth in disgrace!

After relating the "horrible" state of things in Judah, and that "My people love to have it so," the Lord asked this question: "What will ye do in the end thereof?" The end of many "trees whose fruit withereth," and who are now "without fruit" and spiritually "twice dead," is that they shall be "plucked up by the roots" and cast into the eternal "furnace of fire"! Jude 12, Mt. 13:42

After Jesus partly restored sight to the blind man of Bethsaida, the man said: "I see men as trees, walking," and then when his sight was fully restored he "saw every man clearly." Happily, men are not like trees literally. They have legs, and need not "remain in the congregation of the dead. Rev. 21:16 They can respond to God's call: "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Rev. 18:4 They can be Divinely transplanted into a congregation where "The trees of the Lord are full of sap!" Ps. 104:16

Even in Sardis, there were still "a few" who had "not defiled their garments." They were, perhaps, those who were weakened by the prevailing death all around them, and "ready to die" unless Divinely revived. Rev. 3:2,4 Sometimes the route to revival for those "which remain" among the standing dead is to "come out from among them, and be ye separate" before they "receive of their plagues." "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful...And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Ps. 1:1,3

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Article 16 BROTHERLY LOVE

Published in the August, 1988 Missionary Revivalist

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Heb 13:1 Let brotherly love continue.

Amos 1:9 ..they...remembered not the brotherly covenant...

THE CONTENTMENT OF BROTHERLY LOVE

The contentment of brotherly love is mutual:

Psa 133:1-3 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! 2 It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; 3 As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion..

There is such sweet, mutual contentment in brotherly love! It unifies. It satisfies the soul like a sweet- smelling savour pleasantly saturates the atmosphere of a room and mutually delights every occupant. It anoints us with the heavenly, holy fragrance of the Spirit, and descends upon the entire Body of Christ from Head to foot with an alluring spiritual aroma which attracts others to become a part of the Bride of Christ.

This sweet contentment of brotherly love is not only mutual, but it is also visible: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is..!" It sparkles in the sunlight of God's truth "as the dew of Hermon..upon the mountains of Zion," and when unsaved men see it manifested, they "know we are Christians by our love:" "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John 13:35 Furthermore, we ourselves "know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." We realize how important it is, therefore, that we not forget "the brotherly covenant" since "he that loveth not his brother abideth in death." 1 John 3:14 The contentions of carnal hatred bring not only division, but death, while the contentment of brotherly love brings life and peace: "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" Romans 8:6

THE CONTINGENCY OF BROTHERLY LOVE

The contingency of brotherly love is vital! We must have it, for our relationship with God is contingent upon it: "in this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." 1 John 3:10 Here again we see clearly that loving the brethren is equally imperative with righteousness. In fact, loving the brethren is a part of doing righteousness, and we are commanded to do so: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." John 13:34 When we were born of the Spirit, this commandment was written on the fleshly tables of our hearts: "But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." 1 Th 4:9

"The brotherly covenant" is more than a fact that can be forgotten; it is a force which can be forfeited! It is more than that which holds us together; it is that which holds us to God, and our Father-son relationship with Him is hinged upon it. When that all important hinge begins to rust, loosen, and squeak, we should remove the rust, tighten our grip on God and our brethren, and be lubricated afresh with the oil of the Holy Ghost! For, if I "come unglued" in my attitude toward my brother, I will discover that I have "come un-hinged" in my relationship with my Father in Heaven!

THE CONTINUANCE OF BROTHERLY LOVE

The continuance of brotherly love is optional: "Let brotherly love continue." By our individual, or mutual, choice we either continue or kill it! God created it, but we can destroy this lovely "living creature:"

The story is told of how some pupils of an old sage took to him a live bird, hidden in the hand of one of them. They planned to ask him if that hidden bird was alive, or dead. If he said that it was alive, then the one holding the bird in his hand would crush the bird and open his hand, revealing that the bird was dead. Or, if he said that the bird was dead, then the pupil holding the bird would simply open his hand and let the bird fly away revealing that it was alive. When the question was put to the old sage, he pondered it for a little, then wisely replied: "The bird is...whatever you want it to be!"

Brethren, this is the case concerning our love for one another. The "living bird" of our brotherly love was created by the death and resurrection of our loving Saviour. Its wings are dipped in the precious blood of Christ. The Lord says: "Let the living bird loose into the open field!" Lev 14:7 We should let the living bird of brotherly love live and continue to fly over the field of our fellowship, alighting upon each of us as the Dove of peace! We should not crush and kill it, for "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.." Rom 5:5 God's Spirit is pleased when we let brotherly love continue, but He is grieved when that love is slain, and He is often quenched within the hearts of those who are responsible for doing so.

Let contention cease, but let love continue, for if the Dove of peace is allowed to live He can "arise" out of the hand of every human misunderstanding "with healing in His wings!" Mal 4:2 Those wings are dipped in Jesus' blood. He suffered, "the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God," and He can bring us together as well, for there is Heavenly "closeness" and "cleansing" through the blood! "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder," but what man has mistakenly put asunder, let God join together! He can do it, and He will, if we "Let brotherly love continue."

THE CONTACT OF BROTHERLY LOVE

The contact of brotherly love is essential: "He saluted him, and said to him, Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered, It is." Then Jehu said: "If it be, give me thine hand. And he gave him his hand.." 2 Ki 10:15 "Give me thine hand," says the brother whom I profess to love. "Show me, by this contact, the continuance of your Christian affection for me." It is a fair test of our fellowship. Paul said: "And when James, Cephas (Peter) , and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship.." Gal 2:9

The apostle Peter was indeed a Pillar, but not a stony, cold, and heartless one. He perceived the dramatic change that the grace of Christ had wrought in Saul of Tarsus, transforming him who had persecuted the church into "our beloved brother Paul." 2 Pet 3:15 Peter did not always quickly grasp "some things hard to be understood" of Paul, but he did not base his fellowship on figuring out Paul. He loved him just as Christ had made him, a beloved brother, and like the loving warmhearted Pillar that he was, Peter bridged the differences between himself and Paul with his right hand of fellowship. He made contact, and even let his love for Paul continue after Paul took him to task publicly at Antioch! Gal 2:11-14 This would have been more difficult for Peter than walking on water before he was sanctified. It was Peter, you remember, who "smote

the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear" before Pentecost when the pressure was on. John 18:10

Now, however, when Paul who might have seemed like a "Johnny come lately" to some rebuked him, Peter didn't even cut off Paul's fellowship, not to mention his right ear! What a marvelous transformation in Peter, and what a magnanimous, magnificent display of both the contact and continuance of brotherly love! Peter, what is your message for us today as we are tempted and tried by so many things which tend to divide us? Listen to his reply: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently!" 1 Pet 1:22 May the contact, continuance, and contentment of brotherly love ever remain in our midst, for our relationship with God Himself and our eternal destiny is contingent upon it.

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Article 17 GAINING A LOSS

Published in the January, 1989 Missionary Revivalist

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"Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss." Acts 27:21

Gaining a loss is PARADOXICAL

"Nine-year-old Henry struck upon the idea of hiring his little brother as his servant. "I'll give you ten cents a week," he said. Little Tom agreed. Henry then felt he'd offered too much money. "I can only pay you five cents a week, after all," he said. Little Tom agreed, just as cheerfully. Thinking he could get the child for even less, Henry said, "All I can pay is a penny a week." Hesitantly, his little brother agreed, but protested: "Don't raise it any lower." (from Humorous Stories)

Yes, as contradictory as it may seem, there are "raises" which actually "lower" one's profit and "gains" which bring us "loss". It is a paradox, but true, not only in the financial realm but also in the spiritual realm as well. More than one forlorn wage earner has discovered that the "raise" which his crafty employer gave him in reality "lowered" his pay when increased hours work was laid upon him or some fringe benefit was therewith taken away. Laborers in today's fields of employment whose just wages are thus "kept back by fraud" might well protest such practices in the words of the little boy: "Don't raise it any lower!" Likewise, in the spiritual realm, one should not only protest, also shun, the gains which the crafty old devil offers which are actually great losses.

Gaining a loss is often CONSEQUENTIAL

Frequently it is the consequence of sin, as when Adam and Eve gained the knowledge of evil resulting in the loss of good, God's smile and fellowship, and eternal life. Many times it is the consequence of placing a higher value on the material and temporal than one places on the spiritual and eternal:

"The Swedish Nightingale, Jenny Lind, made a great success as an operatic singer, and money poured into her purse. Yet she left the stage when singing her best and never went back to it. Once an English friend found her sitting on the steps of a bathing machine on the sea sands, with a Lutheran Bible on her knee, looking out into the glory of a sunset, and asked her: 'How is it that you ever came to abandon the stage at the very height of your success?' Jenny Lind's quiet answer was: 'When, every day, it made me think less and less of this (laying a finger on the Bible) and nothing at all of that (pointing to the sunset), what else could I do?'" (adapted, author unknown)

The sunset of life for us all is approaching faster than we may realize. How vital it is that we value the spiritual and eternal above the material and temporal. Sad indeed are the consequential losses that come from some earthly gains. Sometimes, as in the case of the incident recorded in Acts 27:21, the gaining of a loss is the result of human impatience and a determination to "sail on" in spite of a timely, Divine admonition spoken through a faithful messenger.

Gaining of a loss can be PROVIDENTIAL and very BENEFICIAL

One morning a Christian farmer in Rhode Island put two bushels of rye in his wagon and started to the mill to get it ground. On his way to the mill he had to drive over a bridge that had no railings to the side of it. When he reached the middle of this bridge his horse, a quiet, gentle creature, began all at once to back. In spite of all the farmer could do, the horse kept backing till the hinder wheels of the wagon went over the side of the bridge, and the bag of grain was dumped out and fell into the stream. Then the horse stood still.

Some men came to help the farmer. The wagon was lifted back up to a safe position on the bridge, and the bag of grain was fished up from the water. Of course, the grain could not be taken to the mill in that state. So, the farmer had to take it home and to dry it. He had prayed that morning that God would protect and help him through the day, and he wondered why this accident had happened.

He found out, however, before long. Upon spreading out the grain to dry, he noticed a great many small pieces of glass mixed up with it. If this had been ground up with the grain into the flour, it might have caused the death of himself and his family. Jehovah-Jireh was on that bridge. He made the horse back and throw the grain into the water in order to save the farmer and his family from the danger that threatened them. (adapted from Dictionary of Illus.) Romans 8:28--Selah

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Article 18
SEEING OUR COVENANT CHARACTERISTICS

Published in the April, 1989 Missionary Revivalist

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"And He spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon and old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better." Luke 5:36-39

From Jesus' parable above we can see at least 4 characteristics of our present covenant which must be recognized and incorporated individually and collectively into any organization of believers if it is to be preserved from confusion and destruction:

(1) CONTRADISTINCTION from the Mosaic Covenant

"The new agreeth not with the old." Jesus said so. That does not mean that the Mosaic Covenant and our New Covenant under Christ contradict one another, but they do contrast with one another and stand in contradistinction as completely separate covenants. They two meet but do not marry and become one. They mesh, but do not mingle; they harmonize, but do not homogenize. Their cloth comes from the same Manufacturer, but is woven from different material. Therefore, the spiritual, invisible cloth of the new garment, Christ's Covenant, cannot be patched onto the ritual, visible cloth of the Mosaic Covenant. The Mosaic garment was faded and temporal; the garment of Christ's Covenant is bright and eternal. The former clothed the outward man, but the latter clothes the hidden man of the heart. They just don't match and can't be patched together.

Further, while the two covenants form one Bible, they cannot be contained in the same "bottle"; and while they are administered according to one rule by the same Ruler, they are controlled by different restraints. The "power of an endless life" within us, the wine of Christ's Covenant, cannot be contained in the precepts of an endless list, like the old bottle of the Mosaic Covenant. God knew, as our Great Ruler, that a different kind of restraint and regulation, the power of His endless life within us in the Person of the Holy Ghost, would control our multitudinous, momentary decisions far better than an endless list of "thou shalts" and "thou shalt nots." This regulation, written on the fleshly tables of the heart, instead of on tables of stone or tablets of paper, controls every individual who enters and remains in Christ's Covenant every moment in every day of their lives. Obviously, the whole world could not contain the books that would need to be written to cover all of that. Only, the flexible, spiritual bottle of each person's heart can stretch to retain the content and control of the Holy Ghost in Christ's Covenant.

The two covenants have the same Author, but have a different age also. In the first part of Jesus' parable He likens His Covenant to new cloth and new wine but at the close He likens His covenant to old wine, better than the new wine of the Mosaic Covenant. In reality, the new Covenant is really the old, original covenant through the blood of the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world and is far better than any covenant on stone or paper.

We must see these contradistinctions, and be governed only under Christ's Covenant, the better of the two, if we are to avoid confusion and insure our preservation spiritually.

(2) CONTRACTION from the perimeter of the Mosaic Covenant

"The new maketh a rent" The spiritual cloth of Christ's Covenant, in some instances, shrinks us back into a narrower walk, a smaller perimeter, than that permitted by the letter of the Mosaic Covenant: The Law of Moses said: "Thou shalt not kill," but Jesus said, "I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment.." The Law of Moses said: "Thou shalt not commit adultery," but Jesus said, "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery.." Shrinking back from evil under Christ's Covenant tears us far away from the outward perimeter or act of sin. We must shrink from it clear into the very epicenter of our being, our heart. The very thought and intent of our heart must abhor and draw away from evil if we remain within the perimeter of Jesus' Covenant. Such a contraction and control within certainly doesn't allow looking for a loophole in the outward letter of the Law through which to sin.

Yes, "where there is no law there is no transgression, but where there is law written on the very core of your being there will be an even greater consciousness of good and evil and less latitude in our walk in many things. "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way" in Christ's Covenant, straiter and narrower than many who profess to share in that covenant will allow. They betray, however, that the Law is not really written in their hearts when they stretch to grasp the things of the world, the flesh, and the devil instead of shrinking from them in horror.

(3) EXPANSION by the Holy Ghost

"No man putteth new wine into old bottles"--Jesus taught here that the new, expanding wine of His Spirit could not be contained in the brittle, old inflexible wineskin of the Mosaic Covenant, and that any attempt to put the Holy Ghost in such a bottle would result in a rupture through which He would depart, leaving that bottle empty and soon to perish. Here we can see that under Christ's Covenant every man and every movement must be expandable or become expendable, for when humanity hinders the Holy Ghost too much too long He blasts forth from that vessel which has become spiritually old and inflexible. That man, or that movement, then emptied of the Spirit, collapses, dries, withers, and perishes. "There's a wideness in God's mercy like the wideness of the sea...But we make His love too narrow by false limits of our own, and we magnify His strictness with a zeal He will not own." F. W. Faber Thus, the Holy Ghost burst forth out of the old bottle of Judaism, leaving it to destruction, and expanded into all the world through those who stretched forth with His vision and passion to reach the lost. Our preservation by the Spirit is inseparably connected to our expansion in the Spirit. It is either expand or expire, be employed, or be destroyed, by the expansion and passion of the Holy Ghost.

(4) SATISFACTION with the wine of God's Spirit

"No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith the old is better." Those who are ever and anon craving a drink from the cup of this world's pleasures betray the fact that they are not truly tasting the aged wine of full salvation, the vintage of which predates

creation and the taste of which cannot be equaled by anything the devil can distill. Those who do taste of it know immediately that it is better than anything this world can offer, and it is this deep, inward satisfaction which keeps them drinking from the cup of Christ's Covenant and shunning the wine of the world. What legislation could never keep, satisfaction preserves. "The old is better." I've found it so. Have you?

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Article 19 CHAMPIONS OF THE NIGHT

Published in the August, 1989 Missionary Revivalist

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"Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all night." Joshua 10:9

It was midnight on the St. Lawrence River. In the darkness, barge after barge loaded with British soldiers floated silently down the broad river. As they were nearing their destination, the commander of the army, Wolfe, recited to the officers of his staff these lines of Thomas Gray:

The curfew tolls the bell of parting day;
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea;
The plowman homeward plods his weary way;
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

When he had finished the stanzas, he told his officers he would rather be the author of that poem than win the battle with the French on the morrow. By a mountain path the army made its ascent in the darkness from the river to the Plains of Abraham. When the sun began to shine the morning of September 13, 1759, its rays were reflected upon the bayonets and cannon of the English army. The French army fought well and courageously all that day; but their courage and heroism, and that of their gallant commander, Montcalm, were all in vain. The battle had been irrevocably lost by night. An empire, a kingdom, the dominion of North America, had been lost by night. (MaCartney)

General Wolfe became a "champion of the night" and changed the course of history on the North American continent by seeing and seizing the opportunity which the hours of darkness gave him: "The plowman homeward plods his weary way, and leaves the world darkness and to me." Wolfe was not the only "champion of the night" to change the course of American history. One might, among others, add to that list the name of General George Washington, who crossed the Delaware river with his troops during the night and defeated the surprised Hessians, who were fighting for the British during the Revolutionary War. But, taking leave of secular history, let us consider some of the spiritual "champions of the night":

Our arch enemy, satan, has certainly seen, and many times seized, the opportunities and advantages which darkness have given him while the church was asleep. After the disciples had been "sleeping for sorrow" in the darkness of Gethsemane, they were scattered as satan's cohorts arrested Jesus. Christ told those who represented the forces of hell: "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." Luke 22:53

On the positive side, Joshua, who typifies Jesus Christ, became a "champion of the night" with his great victory at Gibeon. From Gilgal below in the Jordan river valley it was an uphill march to Gibeon in the hill country north of Jerusalem. Nonetheless, assured by the Lord of certain victory, "Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him," marching "all night," and coming "suddenly" upon their foes, Israel "slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon.." Joshua 10:7-10 Under Divine guidance, Joshua had seized the advantage that the hours of darkness gave him and thereby routed the enemy.

The Greater Joshua, Jesus "the Captain of the Lord's host," became a Champion of the night" in Gethsemane. Seizing the advantage which the hours darkness before His arrest gave Him, He spiritually marched forward through agonizing prayer toward the supreme victory over satan the next day at Calvary. So strenuous was Jesus' spiritual march that night, so steep was the climb while others slept, that He "sweat as it were great drops of blood." But, it was His assent to the will of the Father that night, and that ascending in His heart to the cross, that gave Him the final edge over our ancient foe and gained eternal victory for those who obey His command. Hallelujah! Aren't you glad He marched onward and upward through the darkness of Gethsemane and routed the enemy at Calvary!

Among those leaders of Israel who became "champions of the night," we might also add the name of king Saul. During the earlier and commendable part of his reign, he told the besieged men of Jabesh-gilead: "To morrow, by the time the sun be hot, ye shall have help." And, it was perhaps after a nighttime march with his troops that Saul and his army "came into the midst of the host in the morning watch, and slew the Ammonites until the heat of the day.."

Even so, Jesus, our Great Champion, says: "Hold the fort, for I am coming!" The powers of darkness that besiege the souls of the righteous shall not prevail! Jesus will marshal His heavenly troops, march through the night of our deepest darkness, and bring us victory "in the morning watch". "Watchman, what of the night? The morning cometh!" Praise His wonderful name! "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" for the steadfast saints of God who will not abandon the fortress of their faith in Christ.

During the days of Daniel, king Cyrus became a "champion of the night," as had been prophesied by Isaiah: "Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him..I will give thee the treasures of darkness.." Isa. 45:1,3 Thus, it came to pass that the treasures of Babylon became his during the darkness in which Belshazzar reveled in unholy desecration of the sacred vessels: "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. " (see Adam Clarke on Dan. 5:30-31)

Again, like Cyrus, Christ shall suddenly pass through the defenses and darkness of this world to dethrone and destroy the wicked and reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. In that

hour, woe be unto those, who like Belshazzar, are walking contrary to the light and using the fleeting hours of darkness for a fling of fleshly indulgences. They will see the handwriting on the wall too late, be slain in Divine judgment and then cast into the lake of fire. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." Rom. 13:12

"The treasures of darkness" will be inherited by God's brave and faithful "champions of the night," who marched forward and upward for Christ, even through the valley of the shadow of death," to gain the victory over the forces of hell. But, the tragedy of darkness will be inherited by those like Belshazzar who wasted the night in wanton revelry instead of using it for their salvation and eternal advantage. The night that we should use to gain the vital advantage over Satan may be a literal night, or a time of spiritual darkness. But, whatever the case, the "champions of the night" are those who see and seize that time as their opportunity to "steal a march" on the enemy and gain the decisive victory.

The heights, that some men gained and kept,
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward through the night.

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Article 20 WHY REPENTANCE IS IMPERATIVE

Published in the September, 1989 Missionary Revivalist

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Luke 15:7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

Luke 5:32 I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Jesus said that "just persons...need no repentance," but that He came to call "sinners to repentance." He made it very clear that it was absolutely imperative for sinners to repent of all sin in order to be saved. This requirement includes all sinners, from the greatest to the least.

Luke 13:2-5 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things? 3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. 4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? 5 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

Jesus declared here that to suppose or to think that it is the degree or amount of one's sinning which determines his salvation or damnation is false and eternally fatal. Repentance from all sin in order to be saved is God's unchanging requirement:

Ezek 18:30 Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.

Why is total repentance imperative before one can be saved?

BECAUSE REPENTANCE MAKES SAVING FAITH POSSIBLE

"With the heart (not with the head) man believeth unto righteousness.." Rom 10:10 It is utterly impossible for an "impenitent heart" to really believe unto salvation. Rom. 2:5 Impenitence paralyzes true saving faith. As with multitudes of pseudo-believers, one can mentally believe on the Lord Jesus Christ while continuing to sin, but it is a false faith that does not bring real salvation. Total repentance from sin allows faith to be exercised from its true source, the heart, so that one can receive the end of that faith, even the genuine salvation of his soul. 1 Pet 1:9

Jesus Himself said of some: "ye..repented not..that ye might believe.." Mat 21:32 His message is first "repent ye," and then "believe the gospel." Mark 1:15 "Repentance toward God" always precedes genuine "faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Acts 20:21 The hardness of impenitence imprisons faith in the heart like the hardness of ice in a glacier imprisons moisture. It is impossible for such moisture to be released until heat brings that ice to the melting point.

Even so, it is not possible for saving faith to be released and exercised until the heat of Holy Ghost conviction melts the heart from a hard, impenitent state into the submissive softness of genuine repentance. When godly sorrow has worked a repentance not to be repented of forever, and one's "heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water," willing to completely obey and be turned "withersoever He will," then saving faith can be exercised. Prov 21:1 Hallelujah! No wonder God wills that all should come to the melting point of repentance. Let Him shine upon the frozen darkness of your heart with the warming sunlight of His truth long enough and He will bring you there so that you can then truly believe unto the saving of your soul. 2 Pet 3:9; Heb 10:39

BECAUSE SACRIFICE WITH A WICKED MIND IS AN ABOMINATION

Prov 21:27 The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?

Under the Old Covenant, if a man who was actively wicked (with no "mind" to repent) would have brought a sacrifice to atone for his sins, then that sacrifice would not have been acceptable in his behalf. No matter how perfect his sacrifice may have been, insofar as that sacrifice was offered for him while he remained impenitent, God considered it an abomination. It could not atone for his guilt.

Even so, while "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us," God demands that through repentance we "purge out the old leaven" of sin from our lives before that perfect offering is acceptable in our behalf. 1 Cor 5:7 Indeed, it is an abomination in God's sight for one with a wicked, impenitent mind to present Christ as his atoning sacrifice! The death of Christ does not avail for those who continue sinning: "For if we sin wilfully...there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." Heb 10:26 Many impenitent professors of salvation who suppose that Jesus' sacrifice is the atonement for all of their past, present, and future sins, will discover at the Judgment what an horrible abomination their satanic, pseudo-sacrifice is in His eyes! Jesus Himself, their supposed sacrifice, will say to them: "I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity!" Mat 7:23

BECAUSE REPENTANCE TURNS US FROM ETERNAL RUIN

Ezek 18:30 Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.

Ezek 33:11 Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

One cannot be saved from physical death who persists in marching toward and over the precipice of a 2000 foot deep canyon with nothing to prevent his fall. Neither can one be saved while still persisting to take the wrong direction spiritually so as to drop him over the precipice of time into the eternal lake of fire. "Such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses" is not saved, for he is headed in the wrong direction, religious though he may be. Psa 68:21 Heaven is 180 degrees in the opposite direction from the way that the world, the flesh, and the devil are headed, and it will take a repentance that turns one totally toward God to "save a soul from death."

BECAUSE REPENTANCE TURNS US UNTO LIFE

John 11:25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me

Acts 11:18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

Eph 4:18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

Jesus is "the Life" of God. Repentance is the trip we must take "unto life". Many have the testimony who have never taken the trip. They think they have eternal life, but they have never turned from sin and taken the route of repentance which leads to life.

John 5:39-40 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. 40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

One can only come to Christ, the Author and Giver of Life, over the rugged road of radical repentance. This includes honest confession, restitution, and rectifying all wrongs as much as possible with those we have sinned against. No wonder then that most people "will not come" to Christ, God's Life, and be quickened from their spiritual death in trespasses and sins. But, Hallelujah!, the route of repentance is "granted" unto us. We can take it if we will. No thing, nobody, no devil can keep us from it. Sinner friend, like the straying Prodigal son who was dead in sin, come to yourself, then come "unto Life" over the total, humble route of repentance. At the end of that journey you'll feel the Father's warm embrace and the echo of Heaven's announcement will vibrate with all of His quickening power throughout your soul: "This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found!" Luke 15:24

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Article 21 SEVEN THINGS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE

Published in the December, 1989 Missionary Revivalist

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Acts 20:35 I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Yes, we ought to remember that it is more blessed to give than to receive, but too often we forget that spiritual fact. Also, we can fail to apply this truth in other areas of our lives, besides the giving of money

IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE LOVE

Mat 5:44-46 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; 45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

How are we to bless those that curse us? By loving them, for in the giving of our love to those who do not first love us, there is an even greater blessing for ourselves_the warm smile in our heart of God's pleasure and approval!

"He drew a circle that left me out,
A rebel, an heretic, a flout.

But Love and I had a wit to win.
We drew a circle that took him in!"

From whose circle are you left out? Give him, or her, the encircling of your warm Christian affection. Draw that one into your fold of friendship by your attitude and expression of love for him. You will quickly receive God's blessing by what you have unselfishly given, and, sooner than you may think possible, you could be sweetly included in the circle of that one who has now left you out.

IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE UNDERSTANDING

Who does not want to receive the benefit of the doubt from another in regard to his motives and intent in the doing or saying of a thing? Surely none of us wants to be misunderstood and misjudged when our motive was right and our purpose was pure. We want to receive understanding from the brethren when our words and actions are being weighed. What a blessing it is to us when some brother or sister reads the purity of our intention and defends us before those who are misjudging our words or actions. Yes, what a blessing it is to us when we receive understanding! But Jesus said that it is more blessed to give, and that includes the giving of understanding. What? Go to all of the trouble to really fathom that fellow? It is so much easier to make a snap judgment, a quick criticism, because after all, he is wrong! Therefore, his motive must be wrong! But, is it? Have I unselfishly given him "the benefit of the doubt"? Has he received from me first the understanding which I would desire that he give me?

According to Jesus' statement, It is even more blessed for me to give understanding to others than it is for me to receive that hoped for understanding from them. How often we feel cheated when others do not bless us with the gift of their understanding, but perhaps even more often we rob ourselves of God's greater blessing by failing to give that same, kind understanding to others.

IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE MERCY

You remember how wonderful it was when you received mercy from the Lord: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity..." "O Happy Day, O, Happy Day, When Jesus washed my sins away!" Hallelujah! What a blessing that day was to my soul, and to all of those whose sins are forgiven. Thank God for His Mercy and Forgiveness! Is it possible that it could be more blessed to give mercy to others than to receive it from God?

Jesus said: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." Then, His next utterance was: "Blessed are the pure in heart." Those who are pure in heart are givers of mercy and forgiveness. Like their God, they are "ready to forgive" the moment their forgiveness is sincerely requested. They are not known for their quickness to give or to pass judgment, but rather, they are known for their readiness to extend mercy. Often they do not receive mercy, but always they give it. No wonder they are blessed!

IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE APPRECIATION

Who does not welcome an occasional word of thanks from some appreciative person for a job well done? No one particularly enjoys being "un-thought-of" or "unthanked" by those for whom, and with whom he lives and labors. There are times, when one is tempted to discouragement, that a little word of appreciation comes as a great blessing. It lifts the heart and helps lighten the load! You know what I'm talking about.

You know how good it felt to receive those encouraging words that day when satan had been telling you that nobody noticed, or even cared, what you were trying to do. Perhaps many had voiced their criticism and silence had sealed the lips of others. Then, that someone warmly expressed appreciation of you, for being what you are and for doing what you are doing. A tear coursed down your cheek. Your soul was lifted and encouraged. Someone warmly blessed you with their thoughtful, thankful expression of appreciation.

Perhaps you recall another time when you were even more blessed -- the time when you saw that brother or sister passing through the valley of Baca and you made it a well for that heavy-hearted one with your cheering words of appreciation. He, or she, was greatly encouraged by your kind remarks, and you were Oh, so blessed in your soul for having given them!

IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE SUPPORT

Paul wrote: "I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." You remember how David ordered that Uriah be put up at the front of the battle and then that his "support" be withdrawn. How unlike the Lord David's heartless order was at that time. Jesus would never treat His soldiers thus. He always supports those he sends to the battle. He always upholds His own. He undergirds the weak. What a blessing it is in times of human weakness to know that underneath are "The Everlasting Arms" of Christ!

Yet, it is even more blessed to give support than to receive it, to boost God's cause, than to be boosted by those who are furthering it. It is more blessed to lend support to a weak, struggling soul, than to borrow strength from one stronger than ourselves. "Two are better than one; because one will lift up his fellow," and the fellow who does the lifting up is more blessed than the one who receives his loving support. We should be strong in the Lord so that we can be the fellow who unselfishly boosts. Then, though we do not help others with an eye toward what we can get in return, still, we thereby receive the greater blessing.

IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE LOYALTY

"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" Prov 20:6 Those who are faithful and loyal are scarce these days, and there never has been overabundance of such. Unlike David's disloyalty toward his loyal servant Uriah, God is always faithful and just. He is loyal to us: "...He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Heb 13:5 We can count on that promise. What a blessing it is to receive that loyalty from our Savior.

However, the question is: Can He count on me? Can he count on you? Will we be loyal to Him and to the people and place He wants us to serve? "Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint." Prov 25:19 "In time of trouble," the Lord can't depend on a man to carry his appointed load if he is "a foot out of joint"! Eventually, those who get "out of joint" in their proper place of loyal attachment in the body of Christ also become spiritually swollen, sore, and crippled in the performance of their God-given tasks. In contrast, a loyal, faithful "doer of the work" that God has given him, where God has set him, "this man shall be blessed in his deed!" James 4:25

IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE LIFE

One cannot receive the fullness of the Spirit without being a giver of life, for "The Spirit" always "giveth life." "Christ, Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God," gave His life that we might receive life! When we are saved we receive spiritual life: "the gift of God eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." In contrast, we are sanctified only through the total giving of our life to Christ as a living sacrifice. They are indeed blessed who receive life when they are saved, but they are even more blessed who then give their lives in full consecration to the Lord, for theirs is the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

IN CONCLUSION

When Jesus said that it is more blessed to give than to receive, He stated a truth which God Himself knows by experience. In 1 Tim 1:11, God is referred to as "the blessed God." Is it not so that God is "the blessed God" because He is the greatest of all Givers? The Father is blessed; the Son is blessed; and the Holy Spirit is blessed, because giving is inherent in the nature of the Triune God. No doubt Jesus knew, even while He was here on earth, the surpassing blessedness which comes by being a Giver. When the principle which He put forth and exemplified becomes the practice of our hearts and lives, then we too share in His joyous knowledge that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

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THE END