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"Rejoice"

G. C. Willis

"A Few Hid Treasures Found in the
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When our Lord Jesus took the disciples with Him into the Garden of Gethsemane, just before the cross, He said to Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." (Matthew 26:38). The word used in the Greek New Testament for "exceeding sorrowful" is one word, *peri-lupos*. *Peri*, the first half of the word, means "around." We get our word "perimeter" from it. The last half of the word, *lupos*, means "sorrow". The whole word literally means, "surrounded with sorrow." Whichever way our Lord looked, there was sorrow; unutterable sorrow, on every side. Then HE, the Man of Sorrows, turned to His Father in prayer. Then, only, do we hear Him say, "Abba, Father." It was then, being in an agony, He prayed more earnestly; and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. (Luke 22:44).

It was at this time that Judas came to betray the Lord. He had given those with him a sign, "Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is HE; hold Him fast." (Matthew 26:48). The fact that the traitor came just at that time and with such a sign seems to add greatly to the sorrow and anguish of our Savior; and at the same time makes the awful hardness and cruelty of Judas' act more terrible than ever.

In our English Bible we read, "And forthwith came he to Jesus, and said, 'Hail, Master' and kissed Him." (Matthew 26:49). The word translated "Hail" is *chaire*, and literally means "rejoice", though it is true that it was also commonly used for a greeting or farewell. But the true, literal meaning of the word is "rejoice". "Rejoice, Master!" he said, "and kissed Him."

As we gaze with bowed heads and unshod feet on our Lord and Master in such agony of soul, at His sweat as great drops of blood, as we hear His word, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death", and then as we hear that heartless traitor saying, "Rejoice, Master!", how it makes our hearts recoil with horror at such cruel and awful conduct. And the word for "kissed Him" is changed from the

word that Judas used when he gave them this sign. Then he had used the word *phileo* (I love), or, "I kiss". But in his eagerness to make sure they seized the one whom once he had followed, he "covered Him with kisses," *kata-phileo*, a much stronger word. It is difficult for us to conceive of anything more horrible than Judas' method of betraying his Master; and we know from the Psalms how keenly our Lord felt it. See, for example, Psalm 41:9: "Yea, Mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against Me." And Psalm 55:12-14: "For it was not an enemy that reproached Me; then I could have borne it" neither was it he that hated Me that did magnify himself against Me; then I would have hid myself from him; but it was thou, a man Mine equal, my guide and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company."

The next time we find this word *chaire* "rejoice" in the Greek New Testament is when the Roman soldiers put the crown of thorns on His holy brow and smote Him on the head with the reed, driving those thorns into that beloved brow; they spat upon Him and abused Him until His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men; and then they said to Him, *chaire*! "Rejoice, King of the Jews." The cruelty, the heartlessness, the wickedness of such mockery is beyond words. "Rejoice!" at such a moment! (See Matthew 27:29).

But, wonder of wonders, we find the same word again in the very next chapter of Matthew, in chapter 28, the Resurrection Chapter. Perhaps the very first word that our Savior spoke after His resurrection was this very word, *chaire*, "Rejoice!". Twice over during that terrible time before He was put to death He had listened to that word in mockery; and now it is the first, or almost the first, word that He uses when He meets His own, alive from among the dead. In Matthew 28:9 we read, "As they (Mary Magdalene and the other Mary) went to tell His disciples, behold Jesus met them, saying, 'Rejoice!' - *Chairete* (the plural of *chaire*))."

The sorrow, the unutterable sorrow on every side, was all His own. The joy, the unspeakable joy, He immediately shares with those He loves. The Chief Priests and Captains rejoiced (the same word) at the prospect of His death (Luke 22:5). The disciples rejoiced (John 20:20) when they saw the Lord, their own beloved, living Lord. Listen again to His own sweet word, "Rejoice!" Yes, "Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say, Rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4).

It is worthy of note that the salutation "Rejoice" is really the Greek salutation. The Hebrew salutation is "Peace". "The clear, cheerful, world-enjoying temper of

the Greek embodies itself in the first; he could desire nothing better or higher for himself, nor wish it for his friend, than to have joy in his life. But the Hebrew had a deeper longing within him, and the one which finds utterance in his word, "Peace." It is not hard to perceive why this latter people should have been chosen as the first bearers of that truth which indeed enables men truly to rejoice, but only through first bringing peace; nor why from them the word of life should first go forth." ("On the Study of Words" by Archbishop Trench).

It is possible that the lightness with which Judas performed his dark deed of betrayal, and the thought of the thirty pieces of silver that he had gained caused him to use the lighter Greek salutation rather than his own native, and deeper, salutation, "Peace." But, our Lord, having made peace through the blood of His cross, and having won true joy for His own, can greet them first of all by saying, "Chairete" Rejoice! "But the same day at even, Jesus himself stood in the midst of His disciples,

and saith unto them, "'Peace be unto you'. And when He had so said, He showed unto them His hands and His side. Then were the disciples glad when they had seen the Lord. Then saith Jesus unto them again, "'Peace be unto you.'"

And so, beloved, through that mighty victory, our Lord has won both salutations for us, both Greek and Hebrew:

"Chairete.....Rejoice ye!"

"Eirene humin....Peace be unto you!"

Unbelief is the height of presumption: it plainly proves that we are seeking for some cause of God's love in the creature, which can never be.

R. C. Chapman

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Quick-Fix Conversion Blankets

James Brown

Because of the soul-damning consequences of generating multitudes of spiritual still-births, the drum will be banged yet one more time in this article as a wake-up call to keep to the Word of God and distance ourselves from Christendom's "highly-successful-since-bigger-numbers-generated" conversion techniques. I trust we all want to see genuine Spirit-wrought, clear, Scripture-based conversions to Christ, and not a continual rash of jump-the-gun kick starts. I could suggest good readings such as "Conversion: What is It?" by Chares Mackintosh, "Evangelical Dilemma" by William MacDonald, or even "There's Danger in the Formula" by a dear sister in the Lord from Michigan, Yvonne Hess, and forego writing further. These should provide enough material to put the subject to bed, well-blanketed. But this subject is just too disturbing to leave alone one more time.

Speaking of blankets...this article seeks to biblically remove method blankets, that is, those premises supporting an ongoing trend in modern-day evangelism whereby preparatory tenets of gospel preaching may be clearly presented, yet, upon generating some measure of interest in a hoped-for proselyte, a patterned "method" of generating the conversion is then introduced which immediately takes God's sovereignty out of His hand and places it solely into the hand of the person and their method(s) for hastening the new birth.

To begin with, we all need to be clear that the Bible nowhere instructs any type of repeatable tactic, strategy or method for bringing about true conversions. Notice in John 3 (Nicodemus), John 4 (the woman at the well) and John 5 (the man at the pool of Bethesda) how varied were our Lord's approaches to each person. We could list many more: Saul of Tarsus, Lydia of Thyatira, the

Philippian jailor, Blind Bartimaeus, Cornelius, the repentant malefactor on the cross...and so on. None of these were approached or pressed with current methods being used in Christendom today. There were no "altar calls", nobody was run through a series of questions after which the questioner assures the person they're saved upon having given all the correct answers, nor told to "ask the Lord into their hearts", nor "commit their life to Christ", nor "make a decision for Christ", nor to "pray the prayer" nor any other such thing. Faith placed in the Word of God (Romans 10:17) is the only scripturally proper connective bridge to full assurance of God's salvation.

It's natural for people to want to "do something" that, in turn, gives them assurance that God has saved them from the penalty and power of their sins. When the Philippian jailor asked, "What must I do to be saved?", the nature of his question would have been the perfect opportunity for Paul to take the man aside and counsel him to *do something* (maybe pray the prayer?). But he didn't do that, did he? He contrarily told him, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31). God wants to be trusted. Believing Him, according to His Word, about my sin, about the need for repentance and trusting the Lord Jesus as the Savior of sinners for salvation is all that is involved with every bible-based conversion.

So, here's a simple question. Given all the opportunities for those in the early days of the church heralding the good news of God's salvation to point sinners to Christ, why didn't they use today's tactics to bring about conversions? The answer is two-fold and quite simple: 1) They had no scriptural basis for doing so and 2) They had no unction of the Holy Spirit to do so. It was not then, nor is it today God's way of saving a soul. To continue to use these modern methods anyway, in spite of not having Scriptural support for doing so, is really an act of defiance, as if to say that the way God saved sinners in the early church does not work anymore so we have to invent new ways, even better ways to see souls saved...and we expect God to bless those new conversion strategies. Should God bless man's alternate ways after His ways have been set aside? Beware of the principle behind Mark 7:9, a rejection of God's Word in order to retain a cherished tradition. The thing about an established conversion tradition is that it can only survive through deliberate neglect of the bible.

Expediency seems to be at the heart of why biblical conversions (pointing sinners to Christ but letting the Spirit of God do the work of saving them) are regarded as being outdated. The thought is: Who has time to wait for God to deal with a sinner when we can take care of the problem with an altar call or a prayer right now? Phonetically, the word "speed" is heard when the word expediency is pronounced. Christendom's religious leaders, perhaps many themselves unconverted, as those seeking to build their numbers in their places of religious activity, are in a hurry today. Big numbers equate to more

revenue for the system to which they belong and are paid by. And rather than wait upon the Spirit of God to do a deep work of repentance in the soul to see the good seed of God's Word planted into "good ground" (Matthew 13:23), they seem content to push those "stony places" hearers (Matthew 13:20) through the system as genuine converts with no thought of vetting reality. For a short while, these boasted converts *seem* to show a joy after acquiescing to one of the modern prescribed conversion methods, but soon falter because there was no true repentance involved (Matthew 13:21) and their bowing to the Word of God on other matters designed only for true believers becomes offensive to them.

All of what has been written above is likely understood and agreed with (I hope). There is no one-size-fits-all blanket method of urging, leading, structuring, or guiding a sinner into everlasting life other than preaching like Paul did and leaving the results with God. If there were, we'd all be reading about it in our Bibles and using it. Each of us has heard many testimonies of salvation, and while they vary in circumstances leading up to the time of conversion, thankfully, none of us are looking back to something we did as a quick-fix solution set in front of us to act upon. However, there is a subtlety to how Satan works, even upon the right concepts each of us thought we'd nailed down for a lifetime and would never be moved from. We should not be ignorant of his devices.

There is, unfortunately, a natural (notice emphasis on natural, not spiritual) plausibility to the whole idea of rushing conversions by using certain strategies to get sinners through the John 10:9 door faster. Waiting upon the Lord can be trying. Seeing sinners saved is more of a rarity in the United States these days owing to the truth contained 2 Timothy 4:1-4 and Revelation 3:17. Man's natural enmity against God (Romans 8:7) has become more egregiously brazen/bold than ever. Commensurately, we could be in danger of an elasticity of discernment as to what we're liable to accept if not carefully guided by the Scriptures. We best remember that the one smooth stone in David's sling is still more effective to slay giants than Saul's armor will ever be since the former has already been proven for centuries, but the latter will never be. Child-like faith in the crucified, risen, ascended and soon-returning Christ is that One Smooth Stone, the One the builders rejected.

One-Sided Theology

(Calvinism and Arminianism)

C. H. Mackintosh

We have lately received a long letter, furnishing a very striking proof of the bewildering effect of one-sided theology. Our correspondent is evidently under the influence of what is styled the high school of doctrine. Hence, he cannot see the rightness of calling upon the

unconverted to "come," to "hear," to "repent," or to "believe." It seems to him like telling a crab-tree to bear some apples in order that it may become an apple-tree. Now, we thoroughly believe that faith is the gift of God, and that it is not according to man's will or by human power. And further, we believe that not a single soul would ever come to Christ if not drawn, yea, compelled by divine grace so to do; and therefore all who are saved have to thank the free and sovereign grace of God for it; their song is, and ever shall be, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake."

And this we believe not as part of a certain system of doctrine, but as the revealed truth of God. But, on the other hand, we believe, just as fully, in the solemn truth of man's moral responsibility, inasmuch as it is plainly taught in Scripture, though we do not find it amongst what are called "the five points of the faith of God's elect." We believe these five points, so far as they go; but they are very far indeed from containing the faith of God's elect. There are wide fields of divine revelation which this stunted and one-sided system does not touch upon, or even hint at, in the most remote manner. Where do we find the heavenly calling? Where, the glorious truth of the Church as the body and bride of Christ? Where, the precious sanctifying hope of the coming of Christ to receive His people to Himself? Where have we the grand scope of prophecy opened to the vision of our souls, in that which is so pompously styled "the faith of God's elect"? We look in vain for a single trace of them in the entire system to which our friend is attached.

Now, can we suppose for a moment that the blessed apostle Paul would accept as "the faith of God's elect" a system which leaves out that glorious mystery of the Church of which he was specially made the minister? Suppose any one had shewn Paul "the five points" of Calvinism, as a statement of the truth of God, what would he have said? What! "The whole truth of God;" "the faith of God's elect;" "all that is essential to be believed;" and yet not a syllable about the real position of the Church—its calling, its standing, its hopes, its privileges! And not a word about Israel's future! A complete ignoring, or at best a thorough alienation, of the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David! The whole body of prophetic teaching subjected to a system of spiritualizing, falsely so called, whereby Israel is robbed of its proper portion, and Christians dragged down to an earthly level—and this presented to us with the lofty pretension of "The faith of God's elect!"

Thank God it is not so. He, blessed be His name, has not confined Himself within the narrow limits of any school of doctrine, high, low, or moderate. He has revealed Himself. He has told out the deep and precious secrets of His heart. He has unfolded His eternal counsels, as to the Church, as to Israel, the Gentiles, and the wide creation. Men might as well attempt to confine the ocean in buckets of their own formation as to

confine the vast range of divine revelation within the feeble enclosures of human systems of doctrine. It cannot be done, and it ought not to be attempted. Better far to set aside the systems of theology and schools of divinity, and come like a little child to the eternal fountain of Holy Scripture, and there drink in the living teachings of God's Spirit.

Nothing is more damaging to the truth of God, more withering to the soul, or more subversive of all spiritual growth and progress than mere theology, high or low—Calvinistic or Arminian. It is impossible for the soul to make progress beyond the boundaries of the system to which it is attached. If I am taught to regard "the five points" as "the faith of God's elect," I shall not think of looking beyond them; and then a most glorious field of heavenly truth is shut out from the vision of my soul. I am stunted, narrowed, one-sided; and I am in danger of getting into that hard, dry state of soul which results from being occupied with mere points of doctrine instead of with Christ. A disciple of the high school of doctrine will not hear of a world-wide gospel—of God's love to the world—of glad tidings to every creature under Heaven. He has only gotten a gospel for the elect. On the other hand, a disciple of the low or Arminian school will not hear of the eternal security of God's people. Their salvation depends partly upon Christ, and partly upon themselves. According to this system, the song of the redeemed should be changed. Instead of "Worthy is the Lamb," we should have to add, "and worthy are we." We may be saved to-day, and lost to-morrow. All this dishonors God, and robs the Christian of all true peace.

We do not write to offend the reader. Nothing is further from our thoughts. We are dealing not with persons, but with schools of doctrine and systems of divinity which we would, most earnestly, entreat our beloved readers to abandon, at once, and for ever. Not one of them contains the full, entire truth of God. There are certain elements of truth in all of them; but the truth is often neutralized by the error; and even if we could find a system which contains, so far as it goes, nothing but the truth, yet if it does not contain the whole truth, its effect upon the soul is most pernicious, because it leads a person to plume himself on having the truth of God when, in reality, he has only laid hold of a one-sided system of man.

Then again we rarely find a mere disciple of any school of doctrine who can face scripture as a whole. Favorite texts will be quoted, and continually reiterated; but a large body of scripture is left almost wholly unappropriated. For example; take such passages as the following, "But now God commandeth all men everywhere to repent." (Acts 17:30.) And again, "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2) So also, in 2 Peter, "The Lord is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9.) And, in the very closing

section of the volume, we read, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Are these passages to be taken as they stand? or are we to introduce qualifying or modifying words to make them fit in with our system? The fact is, they set forth the largeness of the heart of God, the gracious activities of His nature, the wide aspect of His love, It is not according to the loving heart of God that any of His creatures should perish. There is no such thing set forth in scripture as any decree of God consigning a certain number of the human race to eternal damnation. Some may be judicially given over to blindness because of deliberate rejection of the light. (See Romans 9:17; Hebrews 6: 4-6; 10: 6, 27; 2 Thessalonians 2:11, 12; 1 Peter 2:8.) All who perish will have only themselves to blame. All who reach heaven will have to thank God.

If we are to be taught by scripture we must believe that every man is responsible according to his light. The Gentile is responsible to listen to the voice of creation. The Jew is responsible on the ground of the law. Christendom is responsible on the ground of the full-orbed revelation contained in the whole word of God. If God commands all men, everywhere to repent, does He mean what He says, or merely all the elect? What right have we to add to, or alter, to pare down, or to accommodate the word of God? None whatever. Let us face scripture as it stands, and reject everything which will not stand the test. We may well call in question the soundness of a system which cannot meet the full force of the word of God as a whole. If passages of scripture seem to clash, it is only because of our ignorance. Let us humbly own this, and wait on God for further light. This, we may depend upon it, is safe moral ground to occupy. instead of endeavoring to reconcile apparent discrepancies, let us bow at the Master's feet and justify Him in all His sayings Thus shall we reap a harvest of blessing and grow in the knowledge of God and His ord as a whole.

A few days since, a friend put into our hands a sermon recently preached by an eminent clergyman belonging to the high school of doctrine. We have found in this sermon, quite as much as in the letter of our American correspondent, the effects of one-sided theology. For instance, in referring to that magnificent statement of the Baptist in John 1:29, the preacher quotes it thus, "The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the whole World of God's chosen people."

Reader, think of this. "The World of God's chosen people!" There is not a word about people in the passage. It refers to the great propitiatory work of Christ, in virtue of which every trace of sin shall yet be obliterated from the wide creation of God. We shall only see the full application of that blessed scripture in the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. To confine it to the sin of God's elect can only be viewed as the fruit of theological bias. There is no such expression in scripture as "Taking away the sin of God's elect."

Whenever God's people are referred to we have the bearing of sins—the propitiation for our sins—the forgiveness of sins. Scripture never confounds these things; and nothing can be more important for our souls than to be exclusively taught by scripture itself, and not by the warping, stunting, withering dogmas of one-sided theology.

We sometimes hear John 1:29 quoted, or rather misquoted by disciples of the low school of doctrine in this way, "The Lamb of God which taketh away the **sins** of the world." If this were so, no one could ever be lost. Such a statement would furnish a basis for the terrible heresy of universal salvation. The same may be said of the rendering of 1 John 2:2, "The **sins** of the whole world." This is not scripture but fatally false doctrine, which we doubt not our translators would have repudiated as strongly as any. Whenever the word "sins" occurs, it refers to persons. Christ is a propitiation for the whole world. He was the substitute for His people.

NOTE—It is deeply interesting to mark the way in which scripture guards against the repulsive doctrine of reprobation. Look, for example, at Matthew 25:34. Here, the King, in addressing those on His right hand, says, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Contrast with this the address to those on his left hand: "Depart from me ye cursed [He does not say 'of my Father'] into everlasting fire, prepared [not for you, but] the devil and his angels." So also, in Romans 9. In speaking of the "vessels of wrath," He says "fitted to destruction"—fitted not by God surely, but by themselves. On the other hand, when He speaks of the "vessels of mercy," he says, "which He had afore prepared unto glory." The grand truth of election is fully established; the repulsive error of reprobation, sedulously avoided

Enoch...God took Him

(Hebrews 11:5)

Alan Davidson

The first man hid from God. The seventh man walked with God. "They heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden" (Genesis 3:8). Adam had every opportunity to walk with God in most pleasing circumstances. His surroundings were Paradise. He could explore the verdant pastures of the garden, valleys of herb yielding seed, waters abundant with life, the sky full of every winged fowl, trees yielding fruit to eat. He could hear the voice of God, he could walk with God by the rivers that flowed out of Eden. It was for Adam to dress and keep. He gave names to the animate creation. The gold of the land was good, there was bdellium and onyx stone. God said it was good. God created for Adam, a

helpmeet. The most beautiful woman that ever lived. God said it was very good. "The LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?" (Genesis 3:9). "Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God" (Genesis 3:8).

"Enoch walked with God" (Genesis 5:22)

Enoch habitually walked with God. In this simple short statement the consistency of his life is revealed. He lived in God's sight, he spoke into God's listening ear, he took no step without leaning upon God. God was his Guide for every step. Hence he took no deviating walk, he had no divided heart, he had no double motive, he was not double tongued. Enoch's companionship was close; his fellowship was sweet; his focus was clear, his walk was straight forward with God. Adam lived 308 years after Enoch was born. Adam may have told him about God's voice in the garden but Enoch lived in completely different circumstances. Mankind was now marked by great wickedness; there was open rebellion against God, and manifest sexual perversion. In those days of the antediluvians, there was a population explosion of vile people; tyrants and violence. "Enoch walked with God" (Repeated the second time for emphasis) (Genesis 5:24)

This was a great contrast to Cain who was a fugitive and a vagabond dwelling in the land of Nod ("wandering") on the east of Eden. The people sought migration, adventure and excitement. The development of society brought building, commerce, arts, loud music, pleasure and entertainment. They were filled with hatred, inventing weapons of destruction in defiance of God's punishment of sin. Enoch was like a green oasis in this wilderness of corruption. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful" (Psalm 1:1).

God said, "Walk before Me" (Genesis 17:1 – in sincerity); "Ye shall walk after the LORD your God" (Deuteronomy 13:4 – in obedience); "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him" (Colossians 2:6 – in fellowship). So in the New Testament we are to; "Walk by faith" (2 Corinthians 5:7); "Walk in the spirit" (Galatians 5:16); "Walk in love" (Ephesians 5:2); "Walk in wisdom" (Colossians 4:5); "Walk honestly" (1 Thessalonians 4:12); "Walk in the light" (1 John 1:7); "Walk in truth" (3 John 4).

In this expression concerning Enoch there is more than this outward conformity. There is the blessedness of heavenly companionship. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). In this there is the thought of intimacy, communion with God, abounding joy and perfect rest as at the Mercy Seat. This is the reality of true priesthood. "The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity" (Malachi 2:6). Enoch, in this wretched

world, before the flood was a priest, a worshipper, in communion with God. Dear fellow believer, do you lament your distance from God? Often our prayer life is infrequent, vague and pointless. Our worship is not centered on Christ. The heart is cold and the Spirit is grieved. Somehow, our feet have wandered, our thoughts stray far away, our focus becomes worldly. "Enoch walked with God".

Enoch was well pleasing to God (Hebrews 11:5-6)

"For before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God" (Hebrews. 11:5). His name appears second in the venerable listings of Old Testament worthies in Hebrews 11, because of his faith. "The just shall live by faith" (Hebrews 10:38). The emphasis in Hebrews is "Shall have life". Faith is the power that continues through all the obstacles and difficulties into the realm of preservation, survival, conquest in light of the certain enjoyment of eternal blessedness. Abel worshipped; his offering was accepted by God. Enoch walked; he himself was acceptable to God. By faith, Enoch knew God. "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit". "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:4,8). Paul prayed for the Colossians; "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Colossians 1:10). The practical exhortation to the Thessalonians was; "How ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more" (1 Thessalonians 4:1).

Enoch witnessed for God (Jude 14-15)

"Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, To execute judgement upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly" (Jude 14,15). In these two verses the word "Ungodly" occurs three times; warning about ungodly men, ungodly deeds and ungodly speeches. The outstanding feature of mankind before the flood as today, was lack of reverence or the fear of God. They were hurtful, harsh, offensive, and defiant in their speech against God. Enoch lived Godly in an ungodly age. He was the first recorded prophet who warned of the second stage of the Lord's coming in manifestation to judge the world. He exposed their irreverent defiance, their shameless deeds and their illicit desires. All who listened to his faithful warnings would know that the coming judgement was just, righteous and deserved.

"Enoch was not; for God took him" (Genesis 5:24)

It says in Hebrews 11:5 that he was translated, transformed, transported that he should not see death. He was not found implies that search was made. He broke the monotony of living and dying, mentioned eight times in Genesis chapter 5. He changed his location but not

his company. "God took him" (Genesis 5:24). This is the culmination of God's purposes for His own. This life of faith continued in a victorious entrance upon the life of perfect fellowship above. This companionship, began with the gift of birth at sixty five and lasted for 300 years. The naming of his son, Methuselah ("When he is dead it [the deluge] shall be sent") reveals that the inventions and commerce of a doomed world were of no interest to Enoch; the wickedness of this earth was no place for Enoch any longer. Enoch lived in light of coming judgement. The length of his life was greatly curtailed. A shortened life may be relief from the toil and trial which sin has brought upon this world.

"Behold, the Lord cometh" (Jude 14)

In pleasing God, Enoch was a type of the Lord Himself. "He that sent Me is with Me: the Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him" (John 8:29). In the Lord's walk we see God's ways. In His Words we hear God's wisdom. In His Work we have the manifestation of God's Will. In this hallowed and unbroken communion, God found all His rest, His joy and His pleasure. To His accusers before His death on the cross the Lord testified; "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matthew 26:64). "Enoch ... was not; for God took (received) him" (Gen. 5:24). The Lord said; "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself" (John 14:3). He has promised us a pre-tribulation Rapture, "I also will keep thee from (out of) the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world" (Revelation 3:10). To the faithful few at Sardis who had not defiled their garments, He promised; "They shall walk with Me in white" (Revelation 3:4).

"Break every barrier down
And reign triumphant Lord;
Make every breathing of my heart
With Thine be in accord:
Grant me to enter in
The secret place with Thee;
To walk with Thee, as Enoch walked
Into Eternity."

Bertha Mullan
(BHB № 371, Verse 4)

Restoration

Carlos Fariñas

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves,
and the truth is not in us." 1 John 1:8

Possibly one of the things most difficult is to admit to another person that we have been wrong. But what is harder is to recognize that at some time we commit mistakes that we are aware of. The result of this attitude in a believer only brings personal dissatisfaction and a

bad conscience before God. In the case of those who are not saved, the heart becomes harder every time until it become insensible to the God's voice.

Therefore, we shouldn't be surprised when we see a genuine brother suffering sadness because of his distance from God and His people; on the contrary, it should serve as a warning to us to examine our ways so that we do not reach the miserable condition of being insensible to the Word of God. The apostle John tells us, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousnessbut if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 1:9-2:1).

We should realize that confessing sin is not the same as asking for forgiveness. In no portion of the epistles are we told to ask for forgiveness, especially not in the verse cited above. Confession is not asking for forgiveness; it is wholehearted agreement with God in what He says about what we have done so that we are saying the same thing about that deed or thought as He is saying. When we confess, we are taking God's side and not arguing or defending ourselves. If this is the case and we have this attitude toward our sin, then the barrier between us and the Lord can be removed and fellowship can be restored. 1 John 1:9 is not telling us that it requires a fresh work of Christ as if He must suffer again but that the effective result of His work when He suffered for our sins is always the means by which our sins are forgiven.

Restoration has to do with our communion with God in our lives. We don't and can't lose our salvation when we sin, but that difference between what we have done or think and what God says is a barrier to our enjoyment of fellowship with God since we are thinking a different thing about it than He is. Fellowship always involves agreement, such as in Amos 3:3, and if we disagree with God about our deeds or lives, then there is a break in fellowship. Confession removes that barrier and we can enjoy Him again.

We should always remember that the Lord wants fellowship with those who He has saved. He is waiting for us to make the move to seek restoration since He is always ready to restore and bring one of His own back to enjoy that close relationship once again. Only when we are conscious of sin or sense a break in our fellowship with the Lord can we confess sin. General confession isn't real confession! The Word of God will have the effect as the Spirit of God directs it so as to bring sins to our mind and make us aware of what we might have done. The result of that conviction is real confession. Some believers are always racking their minds and searching their lives to the point of extreme frustration as they seek to find some sin to confess, and the result can be a lack of assurance and questioning one's salvation.

One function of the indwelling Holy Spirit is to convict us of sin and make us aware of any barrier that may have arisen between us and God.

Even though the possibility of sinning against the Lord is real, the pathway of restoration is also certain if we confess our sins to the Lord. Those sins of the past life have already been pardoned, we have been cleansed and redeemed; this old man was crucified with Christ so that the body of sin might be destroyed. The death of Christ satisfied completely the demands of God, but when we fail after we are saved, we need the Lord as our efficient defender before the Father. The word used by John in chapter 2 is translated "comforter" or "lawyer", it is *parakletos*; that tells us that He is at our side, one who shares and understands our weaknesses because He knows what temptation or testing means (Hebrews 4:15).

So that we have no reason to sin, but neither do we need to remain prostrate because of a bad conscience. The same Lord invites us to go to Him to find rest (Matthew 11:28-30) so that we will continue to go on with the joy of our first day of our salvation.

Are You a Member? And of What?

A Word to believers as to fellowship with Christians
George Cutting

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

As long as the solemn question of the soul's eternal salvation is left in dark uncertainty there will be little, if any, freedom of spirit to think of that which interests Christ or concerns His glory, apart from the bare matter of the sinner's peace and safety. On the other hand, when one who professes to have the knowledge of this great salvation gives evidence in walk and ways of cold indifference to those interests, it manifests either a very shallow work in the soul, or no real work at all. For be sure of this, that the work of the spirit in a soul is as great a reality as the work of Christ for that soul, and that in whomsoever He (the Spirit) dwells, His activity will always tend to the glory of Christ. "He shall glorify Me," said the blessed Lord; "for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you," John 16:14. In case this should fall into the hands of a troubled soul, it may well be to add here, for his comfort, that peace does not depend upon our being satisfied with the work of the spirit in us, but upon God's satisfaction in the work of Christ for us, and as this rests eternally the same, the ground of our peace is unchanging too. "Christ also hath once suffered for the sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." I Peter 3:18. But it is for those who have been recently brought to the knowledge of salvation that this little book is intended, though it is the earnest prayer of the writer that its pages may graciously be used to the exercise and blessing of every reader who loves our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

How should I like, before we proceed further, to fill your heart (if it is not already full) with the warm and heavenly rays which shine forth from that little sentence in John 13:1-"Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end!" "His own!" What a precious thought! His, not only by Creator-right and redemption- titles, but His by gift from the Father-"Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me," John 17:6. And so precious is this thought to His own heart, that seven times over in that remarkable out-breathing of His soul to the Father (John 17) He makes mention of it. Is this not enough to fill your heart, dear reader? 'Tis true you are left for a little while in this cold, dark world, but you are "loved" by Him, and loved through everything, right on "to the end." Never dream, I pray you, of asking Him to increase His love toward you. He never could love you more, and He never will love you less. Blessed be His name, His love is like Himself-infinite and eternal.

"Love that no tongue can teach,
Love that no thought can reach;
No love like His.
God is its blessed source,
Death ne'er can stop its course,
Nothing can stay its force;
Matchless it is."

Now I need not say that you are not the only one in this poor world loved by Christ and saved by His precious blood. There are other joint-heirs, "many sons," that have God's eternal glory as their bright destiny; and I am desirous of saying a few simple words to you about your path in connection with these, your fellow-Christians-"His own"-left with you in the world. But I would first say,

BE RIGHT WITH GOD IN SECRET,

And would earnestly press upon you the deep importance of personal piety, and the wholehearted devotedness to Christ, apart from the question of any other saint on earth. May the Holy Spirit of God make this plain to you. Depend upon it; to be right with God in your closet is of equal importance to being right with Him in public, among your fellow-Christians. Take a simple illustration. Will not a good servant see to the proper condition of the glasses, etc., before he puts them in their places on the master's table? And will not the soldier look well that his accouterments are in a bright and worthy state before he steps into rank with his comrades? Mark, I am not going to say a word against right order, but rather to urge its importance. Yet I do see the necessity of pressing upon you a prior thing. What would any master care for the most exact order of laying a table if the knives and forks, etc., were in a dirty and unsatisfactory state, and the servant himself in a disgraceful untidiness? Or what captain is satisfied with the punctuality and regularity of his men, if their rifles were foul and their bayonets rusty?

Of course, a servant who cared for the approval of his master would neglect none of these things.

Now pause here a moment, and let me ask myself and you a practical question: Is there anything in your heart which you are well aware would not have a place there for an instant if your blessed Lord and Master had it all His own way with you? Let us honestly face that question, and be very jealous lest there be a single selfish reserve in our hearts from Him. A Christian who cherishes such a reserve is virtually saying, "Lord, I can trust Thee with my safety, but cannot trust Thee with my happiness." Oh, let us consider Him more, dear reader! "He sold all that He had," and gave His precious lifeblood too, for the joy of making us "His own"; and having done and suffered all this for us, He now gives everything to us, and makes a feast for His own heart in doing it. What a Giver! What a Lover! Blessed, thrice blessed Savior! Help me praise Him, and let us exalt His name together. Well, the more you become at home with Him, to use a familiar expression, the more you will joyfully anticipate being with Him at home, and the greater heavenly glow and fervor will your testimony have until you get there. No amount of effort will bring about this state; but in keeping His company, and beholding Him in glory, where He now is, you will be "changed into the same image from glory to glory," and thus reflect His moral beauty here below. The more practically we become like Him, the louder our lives speak for Him. Whenever you find that your appetite for Him is diminishing, you may be pretty sure that one or more of the "little foxes that spoil the vines" are finding an undisturbed lodging-place in your heart. Therefore, search diligently, and spare them not, or else bid farewell to your joy and spiritual prosperity. But go at once to Him, and say, with full surrender of your own will, "search me O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me (margin, way of pain or grief), and lead me in the way everlasting." Psalm 139:23,24.

Ever may it be—"Our only grief to give Him pain, our joy to serve and follow Him." What a luxury it is to one that loves the Lord to have the consciousness in his soul that he is ministering pleasure to the heart of Christ! It is then that the brightest offer the world can make you but crumbles into dust and ashes at your feet.

STEPS RIGHTLY DIRECTED, A FALSE WAY DETECTED.

It is well at the commencement of your Christian career to be fully alive to the fact that it is the word of God, which must be the touchstone for everything in your path, whether personally or relatively. Look at Psalm 119:104, "Through Thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way"; and again, verse 128, "therefore I esteem all Thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way." Notice how the Holy Spirit speaks through the Psalmist. It is either a right way because according to the word, or it is a false way to be

hated. Man naturally loves to tone things down to keep his conscience quiet. God in creation "divided the light from the darkness," and morally He does so still. Man would blend them together in a kind of dim twilight; but beware of these subtle compromises, and like David, say, "The double-minded have I hated, but Thy law do I love." v.113.

Now do not let this apply only to the question of your salvation and personal state, but to that also which I now desire briefly to dwell upon; viz.,

YOUR GROUND OF FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS; OR, IN OTHER WORDS, YOUR CHURCH POSITION.

One of the first things, I believe, which the renewed heart craves for is fellowship with God's people. He finds himself no longer at home in the world, and naturally seeks "his own company." But amidst all the names and divisions of disordered Christendom, a newborn soul may well inquire, "Where shall I turn to be right?" My answer is, "To God, and to the word of His grace," Acts 20:32. Whoever is wrong, God and His word are right. Get that well grounded in your soul, and "cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils." A few years ago two Christians, hitherto strangers to each other, were traveling together in a railway carriage, when, after some conversation about the Lord and His interests, one of them leaned forward and said, "May I ask what denomination you belong to?" "Well, that is a common enough question," replied the other, "but will you first say what you think is to guide me in my path as a Christian?"

He agreed at once that it was the word of God alone that could with certainty direct him. "Then, if you will allow me," said his fellow-traveler, "I will answer your question by proposing another; viz., WHAT DENOMINATION DOES THE WORD OF GOD PUT ME INTO?" After some silent deliberation he said, "Why, none at all." "Then I can't belong to one at all," replied the other; "for if I did (upon your own showing), I should clearly be in a position where the word of God had not placed me." "But," replied the first speaker, "does not the word of God exhort us not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, 'and so much the more, as we see the day approaching'?" Hebrews 10: 25. "Yes, it does. But a Christian need not belong to a denomination to obey that word; for the Lord Jesus said, 'Where two or three are gathered in My name, there am I in the midst of them.'" Matthew 18: 20.

Now, dear reader, if you look at 2 John 6, you will find that he exhorts the elect lady, and those with her, thus: "And this is love, that we walk after His commandments. This is the commandment. That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it."

Now John had seen the Lord in His wondrous life; had seen Him die upon the cross; and was a witness of His resurrection; beheld Him taken up into Heaven; and was present when on the day of Pentecost the Holy

Spirit came down from an ascended Christ to baptize believers into one body, and thus form the Church. He had lived long enough to see evil come into the circle of the professing Church; but what is the remedy? Is it, "Begin afresh with a new and purer sect of a more improved constitution?" Listen to his reply by the Holy Spirit: "This is the commandment, that, as ye have heard from the beginning ye should walk in it." so that the Spirit of God makes it plain that He suffers no innovation of man's to trespass upon the sacred principles of God's word for the guidance of His people, whatever their exercises may be, or whatever the date of their history. Now apply this principle today, and you must find yourself in one of two positions-either on God's ground of gathering the disciples at the beginning, or on some ground that man, in his fancied wisdom or mistaken zeal, has set up since the beginning.

THE ONE BODY AND ITS MEMBERS.

In Acts 2:42, it is said of the early disciples "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." After the conversion of Saul of Tarsus an entirely new revelation was made to the Church through this once champion persecutor of the saints; namely, that every believer on earth was united to Christ by the Holy Spirit (see Acts 9:4; I Corinthians 6:17; I Corinthians 12:12-27); that "as the body is one, and hath many members and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is (the) Christ. For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit," I Corinthians 12:12,13. Then in fact plainly stated-"There is one body," but we are exhorted to "endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"; that is, we are to maintain practically what the Holy Spirit has formed spiritually.

There are two classes of Christians in the world. One practically says, "Man has formed many bodies, and I being a member of one of these (the best according to my opinion), desire to serve its interests in every possible way I can." The other says, "God has formed one body and made me a member of it, and now I desire by His grace to serve the interests of the Head of that body, according to the principles laid down in His Word who formed it."

Now, dear reader, to which of these classes do you belong? Alas! How many a precious saint of God is represented by the first! Do you not often hear a Christian talk about "joining" this or that body? Surely such as one forgets (if he ever knew) that the only body which God in His word recognizes is the "one body" of which Christ Himself is the Head, and of which every true believer is a living member. If saved, therefore (to use a common expression), you are already a "joined member." "He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit," I Corinthians 6:17. And in I Corinthians 12:18, using the figure of the human

body, the apostle says, "GOD HATH SET the members every one of them in the body AS IT HATH PLEASED HIM." What sad confusion then to talk of joining some other body. Why not be content with the place God has given you in the "body of Christ," and seek through grace to fulfill the responsibilities of such a place?

Now the Holy Spirit certainly never baptized believers into a 'sect' or denomination. Look at I Corinthians 1:12,13, and chapter 3:3, and you will see that He meets in the very threshold, so to speak, the incoming of sectarian spirit in Corinth with a most withering stroke of condemnation. "Are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I of Apollos; are ye not carnal?" But you may inquire, "If it is wrong to stand upon or uphold a sectarian position, is there any definite way laid down in God's word of expressing the truth of the one body?" To answer this we must look at what Scripture says of this. It says, "As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come," I Corinthians 11:26. And we find, in Acts 20:7, that the disciples, in loving response to this their Lord and Master's wish came together "on the first day of the week, to break bread." Yet in our day some consider the first Sunday in a month sufficiently frequent, others once a quarter, and many even allow a still longer time to elapse without granting Him this special desire of His heart. Now which of us would not freely acknowledge that it was deplorable ingratitude on the part of Pharaoh's butler, when, after Joseph had turned his sadness into joy, it was said, "Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him," Genesis 40:23. And this too, after Joseph's touching appeal, in which he said, "When it shall be well with thee, think on me."

But still Joseph only ministered joy to his fellow-prisoner for three days, and even this cost him no more than the mere utterance of a few short sentences. While for us the spotless Son of God has purchased eternal blessings, and joys that know no end, at such cost as only He who can fathom the depths of Calvary's bitterness and woe can rightly estimate. Now what shall be said of him (with whom it is well indeed), who, without a single merit or the slightest cost, receives these infinite and blood-bought blessings at His hand, and the words of eternal life from His lips, and yet can hear Him say, "This do in remembrance of Me," without the least apparent response of heart to it? What must the angels who look on (I Corinthians 11:10) think of such unexampled ingratitude? Nay, let us ask ourselves, what must the blessed One Himself think of it?

Not long ago we were told that a few Christians in a country village were often kept, for more than a year together, from eating the Lord's Supper, just because a certain preacher could not go over to "administer it to them." This was truly a grievous mistake; for there is no such thing even hinted at in Scripture as any man (not even an apostle) being set apart for such a thing. "The disciples came together to break bread." It might be well

to say here that, according to God's words, all true believers are now priests (Revelation 1:6; I Peter 2:5,9), and as such they have the privilege of entering the holiest with boldness, bringing their praises to the Father and to the Son with glad and worshipping hearts.

How sadly has human interference set aside the simplicity of divine order, robbing the Lord of His glory, His people of their blessing, and dragging the highest heavenly privileges of Christianity down to the earthly level of Judaism? May the Lord deliver His own from such a state of things so contrary to His mind. But, returning to our subject, let us never forget that the Lord's Supper must be received in the spirit of self-judgment. (See I Corinthians 11:28-31.) Having judged ourselves, and spared nothing about us that is unworthy of Him, we come together, with grateful and undistracted hearts, to think of all the worthiness that is in Him who went down into death for us. What a soul-absorbing privilege it would ever be if our practical state were no hindrance to the Holy Spirit leading us into the true enjoyment of such a heavenly feast! May the frequency of it never rob us of the freshness of it. But there is another feature of

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S PRESENCE ON EARTH

Which is important to be clear about. The Lord Jesus promised that the Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, when He came, should not only be in them (individually) but with them (corporately), John 14:16,17. And without going into the matter now, it is evident from such scriptures I Corinthians 14 that in the beginning of the Church's history His presence was owned and His guidance & operation looked for, both in public meetings and with individuals. Alas, how human arrangements have set aside the word of God in this matter, robbing His people, and quenching His Spirit! And so widespread in Christendom has this evil become, that, look where you will, from St. Peter's in Rome down to the smallest dissenting chapel, you can see it. Instead of believers, when assembled together for worship or edification, depending on the Lord alone for the guidance of His Spirit, why, even a prayer meeting can scarcely be held without the appointment of someone to "conduct" it. This one or that, whether led of the Spirit or not, is called upon to "engage in prayer," while the "prayer leader" is supposed to "open" the meeting and "close" it, whatever his state of soul may be. What is all this but man usurping the place of the Holy Spirit, the sad fruit of unbelief as to His personal presence? Some believers even go so far as to pray for Him to be sent, or to Him to come, and this notwithstanding the plain word of the Lord—"He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you FOR EVER," John 14:16. It should, however, be borne in mind that there is a wide difference between a meeting for preaching the gospel to the unsaved (when the individual servant, according to his measure of gift, is solely responsible to deliver His Master's message), and

a company of God's redeemed people, coming together for worship or edification.

YOUR POSITION TESTED

Now, with these simple facts before us, suppose that Peter, James, and John, with a few others of the early disciples, should have lives until the present day, say in one of our English towns, and that they were still meeting in the simplicity of divine order as at the beginning; i.e. gathered together in the name of the Lord Jesus (compare Matthew 18:20 with John 20:19), remembering Him in the breaking of bread in the first day of the week, and waiting for His coming again (examine Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 11:23-26); maintaining scriptural discipline (see I Corinthians 5:9-13; I Timothy 5:20; 2 Thessalonians 3:6,14, 15; I Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Timothy 4:2; Titus 2:15; Gal. 6:1); endeavoring to maintain the truth in practice that "there is one body" (Ephesians 4:3,4); and recognizing the presence and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ in the midst to guide by the Holy Spirit, whom He will, whether in worship or ministry, thereby ignoring, of course, all human rules and every vestige of what is merely man's usurped authority. Now calmly pause for a moment and ask yourself the question just referred to: "To what denomination would THEY belong?" It will surely not take much spiritual discernment to answer that question with a very decided negative; and, "Of course," you will say, "none at all."

But, to bring the question somewhat nearer home, if you were living in that very town yourself, would not you like to have the apostles' fellowship? I am sure you would. Well, then, in order to get it, you must first leave every kind of sectarian ground set up by man since the beginning of the Church's history upon earth and accept, with its consequences, the "apostles' doctrine." Then, having got upon their ground of "fellowship", you would have the privilege of expressing it with them in the "breaking of bread." "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the fellowship of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the fellowship of the body of Christ?" I Cor. 10:16. But you may say, perhaps, that the apostles are not living on earth now. Well, but, thank God, their doctrine is—"the word which liveth and abideth forever"; and that puts me in this day on the same ground of fellowship that they were upon in that day; i.e., if I submit to be guided and governed by it.

(Continued)

"Consecration simply means that you and all you have belongs to God. Every beat of your pulse, every throb of your heart, every penny in your purse is His."

Donald Ross