

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH - VOL. 1 - NO.

10

(Inside front cover)

Our Position

These verses of Scripture are ALL-INCLUSIVE; they cover ALL the ground; they offer NO MEANS OF EVASION whatsoever.

I. THE FIRST BASIC TEXT—2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

1. "ALL SCRIPTURE." This informs us as to the Scope. The translation as found in the Revised Version reads: "Every Scripture inspired of God," etc. This reading is unnecessary and misleading for the very good reason that the Greek word *GRAPHE* translated Scripture is used in no other sense in the New Testament save the written word of God. We believe the Bible from cover to cover. And, as the old lady said, "If necessary, we would believe the cover." We accept the Bible from Genesis to Revelation as the written Word of God. We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be verbally and literally inspired.

2. "IS GIVEN BY INSPIRATION." This informs us as to the source. The Scriptures are God-breathed. Matt. 4:4 answers our question as to the meaning of inspiration. Note: "But He answered and said, It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

3. "AND IS PROFITABLE." This informs us as to the benefit. Note the ground covered: "doctrine" or teaching; "reproof" or conviction; "correction" or setting right; "instruction in righteousness" or chastisement. In our ignorance we need teaching; in our wrong thinking we need conviction; in our wrong doing we need correction; in our self-willfulness we need chastisement. This profitableness of Scripture makes the Word of God supreme in benefit.

4. "THAT THE MAN OF GOD MAY BE PERFECT [complete], THOROUGHLY FURNISHED UNTO ALL GOOD WORKS." This informs us as to the purpose. Cp. Titus 3:8. To any honest, earnest, unbiased, unprejudiced student of the Word of God, its value cannot prove other than inestimable. But we need all Scripture in order to truly and fully realize all the profit. Some one said to an old farmer: "I understand you have an oil well on your farm." The farmer replied: "That is partly true; I have the well."

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THE INQUIRER

It is good indication of earnest thinking when people ask questions.

Note: WE ARE DEVOTING AT LEAST ONE COLUMN IN THE INTEREST OF THE INQUIRER. Kindly send in your questions. They must be confined, however, to Scripture problems. We shall do our utmost to give a consistent scriptural answer.

QUESTION: Kindly explain how it was that Abraham and Rahab were, according to James 2:21-39, justified by works.

ANSWER: In answering this inquiry we will, first of all, set forth a few important facts relative to the Epistle of James.

1. —This Epistle was written "To the twelve tribes which are in the dispersion."
2. —This Epistle was written during the early part of the Acts period. It belongs, therefore, to the Pentecostal Dispensation; and to that time in the Dispensation when the whole church was Jewish.
3. —The church at that time was the Ecclesia which worshipped in the Synagogue. Cp. James 2:2 (The word translated "assembly" in this passage is "Synagogue.")

There have been many attempts to reconcile James and Paul, but all such attempts are futile. They each wrote, under God, in a different connection and for a different purpose.

James is one of the Circumcision Epistles. The reference (2:21-24) is taken from Gen. 22. In this Abraham was commanded to DO something, which he did, and was justified in doing it.

At that time God was dealing with his earth people by a covenant relationship in which faith and works were both exactly

emphasized and required. When the faith was genuine it led to works which justified from the human point of view.

As God is NOW dealing with mankind on the basis of pure Sovereign Grace, no one is justified in any sense by works. There is NOW nothing to do; yea, nothing one can do to merit favor, for works are not required as then. NOW it is faith without works which justifies from the Divine point of view.

James is dealing with Abraham on the ground of Circumcision as touching the Physical Seed .However one may view these two cases, Abraham and Rahab, this much remains: that they were dealt with in an entirely different Dispensation than that of God's present dealing with The Church of which Christ is Head. In Paul's Pre-Prison Epistles he mentions Abraham 19 times; in the Prison Epistles Abraham is not mentioned once. H. N. B.

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SOME FACTS TO CONSIDER (Not often seen, less often believed)
by Arthur C. Lambourne

(The Gospels)

Christ's Personal Ministry

After the temptation in the wilderness and the selection of some disciples, Jesus entered upon His public ministry.

- "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of diseases among the people."

The King had come and was spreading His gifts among His brethren, the Kingdom People -- Israel.

- "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promise made unto the Fathers."

After selecting His cabinet of disciples, He sent them forth with the same Kingdom Gospel, to perform the same Kingdom miracles, and ONLY among the same Kingdom People, --Israel. In view of the subsequent enlargement of their mission in Acts, it is difficult for us to perceive at first the restriction placed upon the disciples in their work during this ministry.

These twelve Jesus sent forth and commanded them saying, Go not in the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. And as ye go preach, saying,

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The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons; freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, neither scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

He had given them freely of His power which was the best equipment they could possess. Since it was so freely provided to them, He requested that they should use it freely, but only in Israel, and not by any means among the Gentiles. So definite was His command that only two Gentiles benefited by this power of Jesus while He was here upon earth -- the Syrophenician woman and the Roman Centurion, and both under difficulties.

At the close of His ministry, just before He entered Gethsemane and was betrayed by Judas, He recounted to His disciples the incident which occurred at the early part of His ministry when He sent them forth.

And He said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, "nothing." Then said

He unto them, But now, he that hath a purse let him take it, and likewise his scrip; and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one. For I say unto you, that this that is written must needs be accomplished in me, and He was reckoned among the transgressors; for the things concerning me have an end.

The fact that the end of the things concerning His earthly ministry was very near was quite evident to Him. The period of His ministry He defines as that time "When I sent you" up to the then present time which He calls "But now." He wanted them to realize that a great cleavage in their leadership was...

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...very near. He would soon be leaving them.

Several chapters in John relate the intimate character of His final meetings with them. His mission was to the Kingdom People, and He preached the Gospel of the Kingdom. An analysis of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, 6 and 7 discloses the fact that it is about the Kingdom. The church is not mentioned or implied.

In the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, He deals with the Mysteries (secrets) of the Kingdom. These mysteries have no relation whatever to the church, and to endeavor to make them into church truth is evidently incorrect.

Daniel prophesied about the setting up of the Kingdom, but nothing about the church. "And in the days of these things shall the God of Heaven setup a Kingdom ..." (Daniel 2:44). It is to be SET UP, not BUILT UP. There is no Scripture for our loose expressions of "getting into the Kingdom," "working for the Kingdom," etc.

The Olivet sermon (Matthew 24, 25) practically closes our Lord's personal ministry. He is still discoursing on the Kingdom.

When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations and He shall separate them from one another Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand...

The Gospel opens with "Where is He that is born of the Jews?" (2:2) and near its close we are privileged in this prophetic discourse to see Him sitting on the throne, with all the nations gathered before Him to be judged regarding

their treatment of the Kingdom People, His brethren,

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(Matthew 25:40), the Jews. The reward for kindness to His people is "life eternal" (46). This reward is, of course, not for today, but for the day when He sets up His government in Jerusalem.

Let us study to "rightly divide" the Word.

The Pentecostal Church (The Acts Period)

This was a church of miracles, signs and wonders. Miracles performed by men endued with power from on high (Acts 1:8), signs following them that believed (Mark 16:17), and wonders, such as cloven tongues, like as of fire, appearing upon each of the spirit-filled group (Acts 2:3, 4). Such a church had never existed before, and none like it has existed since. Its history is ably and concisely written in the book of Acts, and covers the period (about forty years) extending from the great Jewish Pentecostal feast of Acts 2:1-13, held in the city of Jerusalem, to the important Jewish conference of Acts 28:17-29, held in the city of Rome. In the former city, God's wonderful power was demonstrated before devout JEWS out of every nation under heaven, and in the latter city the salvation of God was taken from the Jewish nation, and sent unto the Gentiles. These two outstanding events mark the beginning and the end of the Pentecostal church.

The constitution of this Pentecostal Church is found in Mark 16:16-18.

1. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.
2. In my name they shall cast out demons.
3. They shall speak with new tongues.
4. They shall take up serpents.
5. If they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them.
6. They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.

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7. This church had besides the above many special gifts enumerated in 1 Corinthians 12.

Let us look into the book of Acts and see if these promised conditions actually existed.

1. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved (Acts 2:38, 8:12, 16:33, 34). Water baptism was a necessary condition to salvation in this miraculous church.
2. And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my Name shall they cast out demons (Acts 8:5-7, 16:18, 19:12).
3. They shall speak with new tongues (Acts 2:4, 10:44-48, 19:6).
4. They shall take up serpents (Acts 28:3-6, 28: 8, 9).
5. And if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them.
NOTE: "if they." No instances are recorded.
6. They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover (Acts 28:8).

Although Acts 28:8 is the only reference to the laying on of hands for the healing of the sick, yet there are many references to healing throughout the book of Acts. A few examples can be found in Acts 3:7, 8:5-8, 9:33-35, 9:36-42, 14:8-10 and 28:9.

It was during this period that James 5:14 was in operation. James was a minister of and to the Circumcision (Galatians 27:9), and wrote to "the twelve tribes scattered abroad" ...

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...(the dispersion) (James 1:1).

There is no baptism of the spirit today that confers upon any man the "Power from on high" which enables him to perform miracles such as those enumerated above.

It is true that Paul discusses the speaking with tongues, and regulates its use in his first letter to the Corinthian church, along with the list of other gifts of the Spirit that were in evidence during this period of the Acts. See: 1 Corinthians 12:10, 14:18, 19; 13:8.

It is often overlooked that the nation of Israel was "brought up" on signs, and, for that reason, instinctively looked for and expected them. A few illustrations should suffice.

1. The covenant of circumcision made with Abraham (the father of the race) was a sign. Romans 4:11, Genesis 17:11.
2. The Passover was a sign to the children of Israel. Exodus 12:13, 14.

Notice how ingrained was this belief in the minds of the Lord's enemies as recorded in the Gospels (Matthew 12:38, 39; 16:1). Notice how the disciples also looked for signs in Matthew 24:3. See the Lord's answer particularly in verse 30. The Apostle Paul draws attention also to this fact in 1 Corinthians 1:22 where he says, "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom."

In the epistle to the Hebrews, which was written particularly for those members of the Hebrew nation who had embraced Christ as their Savior and MESSIAH, and which was written during the Acts period, makes reference to the...

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...signs and wonders which were in operation at that time (Hebrews 2:3, 4). Thus we understand that these miraculous gifts were given to Israel as signs confirming the MESSIAHSHIP of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that after His resurrection the same message, namely, "The Kingdom of Heaven," was being given to the nation, and upon their repentance "God would send Jesus Christ (Messiah)." See Acts 3:19-23.

This message throughout the Acts was taken to the "JEW FIRST" (Acts 3:26; 13:46; 17:1, 10; 17:17; 19:8).

When Paul eventually arrived at Rome, he did not call for the elders of the local church, although he had for some time longed to see them (Romans 1:13) 14:28, 29, 32), but called for the elders of the Synagogue, and appointed a day when they might confer together. The result of that meeting was that Paul quoted Isaiah 6:9,10, after which he made the startling announcement in

Acts 28:28, "Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it." Finally, under this subject of the Pentecostal Church, attention is drawn to one other reference (Romans 1:16) where Paul says: "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, ... to the JEW FIRST and also to the Greek."

The Dispensation Of The Mystery (The Post Acts Church)

It is interesting to note WHAT HE SAID TO THE ELDERS OF THE EPHESIAN CHURCH in his farewell message, before leaving them for Jerusalem. Paul states definitely that he had told them all that had been revealed to him up to that time (Acts 20:20, 27, 35).

No doubt he had presented to them the complete Pentecostal message. They had watched a repetition of the Pentecostal...

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...phenomena, even to the speaking with tongues and prophesying. Paul himself performed miracles among them just as Peter and Philip and others who had been filled with the Holy Spirit and power on high had done (Acts 19:11, 12). He was, during this period, a true Pentecostalist.

Now, let us look forward a few years, during which Paul was arrested and taken to Rome. The "all day conference" with the Jews in Rome (Acts 28:17-29) has taken place, and we find him a prisoner. A great change in his teaching has occurred. Note what he writes to these same Ephesians.

Paul, the prisoner, writes that he has had a revelation of a mystery (secret) that had never before been revealed but had been "hid in God" and is now revealed by him to the Gentiles. The prison epistles contain the revelation of the mystery. This was new truth for the churches. In these epistles we find no miracles, sign or wonders. No healing power is possessed by Paul now. He is no longer a Pentecostalist (Philippians 2:26, 27, 2 Timothy 4:20). This would not have occurred when he was a Pentecostalist. He would have healed them (1 Timothy 5:23). All he can give Timothy for his many ailments is advice. His power to

heal is gone. As he said, a new dispensation had been opened up. Paul now sends them new truth regarding the plan of salvation in this new dispensation of the mystery (Ephesians 2:8, 9). "Not of works," that is, not of baptism or any other good works. In fact, he brings further light on baptism when, in presenting God's revelation of the seven unities, he writes in Ephesians 4:5, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." In the prison epistles one other mention is made of baptism (Colossians 2:9-13). We are complete, circumcised, buried in baptism, risen and quickened in Christ. He has done all for us. His burial in the baptism of death is the one baptism of this period (Romans 6:3, 4).

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In the special revelation God made to Paul, He told him that the church is the Body of Christ. This had never been revealed before. This is the great organism which is still incomplete. There was a local body of Christ in the Pentecostal Corinthian Church, but Christ was not the head of that body as He is of this church of the mystery. Members of that church were its head (1 Corinthians 12 12-22). Note the difference in the church which is His Body (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22, 23).

The Pentecostal church is spoken of as a feminine church, a bride (2 Corinthians 11:2), whereas the church which is His body is spoken of in very different terms--a man (Ephesians 4:13; 4:24). There is nothing in the prison epistles to signify that this church is the bride.

The dispensation of the mystery in which we live today will continue until the church is complete and removed from the earth (Colossians 3:4), and translated into the heavenlies (Ephesians 2:6).

Bible Conference Message

UNLESS YOU RIGHTLY DIVIDE

How will you reconcile Peter's plan of salvation in Acts 2:21 with Peter's plan of salvation in Acts 2:38? And how will you reconcile these plans of salvation with Paul's plan of salvation in Eph. 2:8-9 ? Think it over.

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THE ULTIMATE DESIGN OF THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD OF GOD By Clarence Cree

The Apostle Paul, in writing to the Romans on his contemplated visit, said he longed to see them. He did not know them personally, but that precious faith dwelling in the hearts of believers created a family affection which throws the light of home wherever he may be if the saints dwell there.

Just a few words of introduction about our topic: Ministry plays an important part and place in the New Testament Scriptures. It has been stamped with essential significance --an unending dignity by this inspiring fact, that our Lord came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. Various forms of ministry are designated by the same language in the Scriptures. Allow me to transliterate a little: "To be a Deacon of the Commonwealth," "to be a Deacon at a wedding," "to be a Deacon of the Gospel," "to be a Deacon unto an Apostle." This is how it runs in the primitive church scrolls. There can be no greater honor than to be a Deacon to others. Christ came from heaven for us, and for our salvation became a Deacon to us all. Philippians 2 makes Him the model and motive for Christian service. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." His total self-abnegation and absolute concern for others is why He came, and this is for us also to have this mind, this spirit.

Now the particular ministry with which we are to concern ourselves is "THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD." This is a borrowed phrase which the apostles of Jerusalem coined when they desired to be free from the tables to give themselves wholly to the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:4). We have grasped this phrase, and, while we do not say that the message of the ministry is identical to our message, we do say the spirit is the same.

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Also in our theme we have used the expression, "The Ultimate Design," to which we might refer. I've always enjoyed Rotherham's summarization of Christian ministry. He said it is threefold:

1. To publish the faith, proclaiming and attesting its great acts concerning Him Who is its Center and its Sum.
2. To apply the faith to the life and character of each convert with a view to presenting him perfect unto Christ as the fruit of His redeeming love.
3. To perpetuate the faith by qualifying and charging others to enter into this ministerial work so as to preserve and maintain the saving truth throughout the world.

But when we speak of the ultimate design, we are asking, "What is the issue of all of this?" To this, various questions arise: "Is it the establishment of the Kingdom?" "Is it the conversion of the world?" "Is it the completion of the church?" Perhaps, by and large, we would agree with the last, as it approximates at least the true answer. To define it more clearly we ask, "What, in this dispensation, is the designed end of the Body of Christ?" In Ephesians, the fourth chapter, we find a passage which is the crown of all Pauline teaching on the subject of ministry.

Any method of reading the Scriptures is helpful to us. We can read it by eye, or we can read verbally by mouth. The forming of the Word of God by lips and hearing by our ears method of reading the Scriptures impresses us all the more, so...

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...I suggest reading aloud Ephesians 4: 1-16.

Passing from the third to the fourth chapter of Ephesians, generally speaking, we are passing from revelation of doctrine to the development of practice. I trust it is not startling to say to you, as my first point, that this passage is exhortation, in form and in substance, from beginning to end. The first word in the original is "EXHORT"; the last word is "LOVE" the drift of the entire passage is "DUTY." Of course it is an exhortation sustained by teaching, and this is characteristic of Scriptural exhortation as compared to the morality enjoined by many ethnic faiths. Joseph Cook calls

this "winnowed truth" in comparing the Scriptural exhortation to that of other religions because it is based upon doctrinal teaching and on truth which has its source in God. Therefore, we may, with perfect freedom, give ourselves wholly to all the Scripture since nothing there will be to our harm, but all is for our good. This cannot be said of the maxims of any ethnic faith.

This type of exhortation must be distinguished from the fashionable type of exhortation heard today which has a minimum of doctrine and nil of revealed truth associated with it. It is called religious sentiment and thought to be something that can remain warm and strong without the firm position of Scripture teaching. If not based on Scripture it has no ultimate last to it, and such a sentiment can be easily moved aside by some modern fashion, or by some strong personality, moved away from the only ground on which we may live well pleasing unto Him. I think that Bishop Moule has called this the "untheological devotion" and exhorts us to beware of such a thing. Christian truth is simply the ascertainment, the attestation of divine facts that we might live by them, and, if we have the facts, we have the doctrine wherein lies the mighty lever that is to move our affections. So this exhortation stands on teaching and is sustained by a teaching of the loftiest sort.

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The hortatory purpose of the passage is maintained throughout. Now, why I emphasize this and wittingly make this point, we shall see later on. But it will restrain us from hardening any part of it into a dogma. For example: there is warning here against spiritual infancy, that we be "no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine." Our first impulse is to dutifully apply this to ourselves individually. This is well, but it is not well that we infer that the manhood mentioned in the previous verse is individual manhood, for if we carefully read the text, it says, "Till we ALL come in the unity of the faith." And so the manhood of the entire body is the subject of the passage. The apostle here is speaking of a corporate maturity, not the maturity of the individual. Paul speaks of church growth unto church completion. That is the thought that governs the passage. If we grasp the larger conception, it will be easy for us to realize that the corporate body has this certain moulding spirit involved in it. It also is the moulding spirit of the individuals of which it is

composed, so what the ultimate body will be-should be the aim of each local body. The aim of each local body should be the aspiration of each individual that comprises it. The point is, it is not by isolation that an individual becomes mature. He is involved in a larger concept of being a member of the Body of Christ, and it is the maturity of the whole Body of which the Apostle speaks. The argument returns time and again to the Body, ALL THE BODY, whose Head is Christ.

The burden of the exhortation is "UNITY." Close examination of the text makes this quite clear. We are exhorted to keep the "UNITY" already possessed, then to strive after the yet higher ideal. The unity already displayed...

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...in verses 3 through 6 progresses on to a yet higher ideal summarized in verse 13: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God." Some stumble at the outset by resolving the unity of the Spirit into a mere unity of sentiment. This unity is "Oneness of the Spirit," not a unity of sentiment. This Oneness of the Spirit immediately branches out into the seven ones; the unity radiates these seven ones, none of which can be withdrawn without irreparable loss. When these are preserved, then the unity of the Spirit is preserved. When one of these is lost, the unity of the Spirit is broken. For many centuries, as we all may clearly see, the One Body is not found; the One Spirit is torn and enfeebled; the One Hope is dimmed and rendered uncertain. As for the one baptism, it is practically unknown. But suppose for a moment the broken unity were restored. What then would be the next duty? Plainly, to keep the unity.

Verses 3 to 6 of Ephesians four require the operation of all the tender graces which are listed in verse 2. It is certainly for our spiritual good to think upon the words of Scripture, "with all LOWLINESS." That is an unreservedly humble estimate of ourselves. This is a true Scriptural grace. "MEEKNESS" is that humble, unreserved submission of obedience under any trial. "LONGSUFFERING" is that patient and unwearied spirit that knows how to outlast pain and provocation. It is the opposite of the short temper which reaches its end and suddenly bursts out.

Then there is the strong grace of "FORE BEARING" which allows for the frailties and the idiosyncrasies or oddities or mistakes of others. All these graces must be employed and, when they are employed, they cannot help but create an advancement in...

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...the unity that is appealed for here. This also brings an advancement for the ideal unity of verse thirteen. Observance of these graces here enjoined intensifies our "oneness" and we come to know Christ more perfectly as we grow in numbers and in knowledge and grace. So the whole body of Christ grows in stature and is better fitted for its ultimate purpose, and we are more able to receive and communicate HIS FULLNESS.

This glance at the two-fold aspect of UNITY reveals at once the pains and the perils of the present situation. The original apostolic unity is broken, and ought it not, at any cost, be restored? Yet, who will not have his ears closed the moment we mention the "one baptism" as we endeavor to restore the unity? Then the higher ideal of unity also urges us to press forward and it utters the trumpet sound -- a clear call to advance. But the louder the note, the more we are embarrassed. For the term, "Until we all advance," provokes the question, "Who are THE ALL?" And so we have a problem as saints to bring about the fruition of the exhortation, and we need to enquire perhaps, as to what is the spirit of this exhortation for our guidance in these matters? What is the attitude of the Lord, for example, toward His divided people? What is the principle involved in this passage? Manifestly, I would say, it is this -- to keep the unity we have and to reach for the higher. So we must tenderly, scrupulously, preserve the unity which remains, however broken it is, and seek to advance, starting from where we are.

As to the attitude of our Savior, surely He reproves us for our division. Yet do you not think He pities us? Does He not understand the confusion and the bewilderment we have received from past generations? He has not denied us His presence in the out-working of providence or the in-working of...

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...His Spirit, and we ought to conclude in this regard that it is His will that we act as brethren toward those who have, in our eyes, departed from His will, as we understand it -- if we can believe in their sincerity and in the presence of the Lord in their midst.

We must not forget that we were once involved in many traditions from which we have been delivered, and we know not yet what other traditions still entangle our thinking. We must remember from what we have been delivered and consider our brethren with whom we are at variance, and, in tenderness and humbleness of spirit, endeavor to help them. For some of you this will probably bring reproach whenever you speak the thing that is needed and at the right time, but the Lord will give grace for this too. Don't forget to keep your eye upon the ideal of the passage: Be ONE, advance, KEEP that which you already have, seek more. That is the spirit of the exhortation, I believe.

The means of this unity is ministry. I hope to impress you with the value of ministry, for this is deeply inbred in the entire exhortation. Christ, the Head, ministers to His members to make them One with Himself and with each other. Ministry is the gift of Christ to the Church. It is His gift, His work, it is of His Sovereign mercy and will. There are special, official members which are given to serve their brethren and there are the unofficial members, so to speak, who minister one to another, and, so ultimately, the whole body secures its own united growth unto the up building of itself in love. So there is a function here of ministry of all grades to provoke unity throughout the whole body and this is a very soul-searching thought and also a suggestive one.

To speak the truth in love is stated to be the true method of...

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...progress. Speaking the truth in love! How often we say and delight to hear others say, "I love the truth." Here we are to truth it in love, and the problem is how to keep love aflame when the needed truth is being spoken, for it is not easy to utter unwelcome truth with perfect freedom from asperity or uncharitableness, and how much more difficult to hear patiently when it smites ourselves. So let us keep in view the ideals of united ministries.

The aim of evangelists, of course, should be "the bringing of light to those in darkness that they might be delivered from the darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son." Nothing more, nor less than that. They are not to make partisans out of converts, nor to make men true to OUR principles, for we should have only truly Christian principles. When we do have principles which we feel we must distinctly call OURS, then we must be careful, for sectarian influences may be at work.

Teachers ought to nurse and equip men simply to be Christians, not sectarians nor party men. We have to beware in our institutions and our training that we do not endeavor to erect party walls. The design of the special ministries is to secure UNIVERSAL ministrations. This point is obscure in the Authorized Version, but it is clear in other versions. He gave some APOSTLES, and some PROPHETS, EVANGELISTS, and some TEACHERS. Here the official ministries are listed from the highest dignity to lesser, and from the least enduring to the most enduring. Their ministry is to secure UNIVERSAL ministry as indicated in the original text by the use of rhetoric.

Why were these gifts given to the church? It says, "for the perfecting of the saints." There is a preposition *pros* used here meaning "WITH A VIEW TO" the perfecting of the saints. Then the preposition changes from *pros* to *eis* for...

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...the ministry of the Word, for the edifying of the body of Christ. The special ministries are given with a view to the fitting of the saints for ministering work and ministering service for the up building of the body of Christ.

Then there is the special word, "PERFECTING" the saints. This is not a word indicating absolute perfection, but a fitting for an end, as a fisherman who MENDS his nets, not that it may be flawless, but that it may be suitable for the purpose of catching fish.

And so, the thought runs on....Special ministries have been given by Christ with a view to the adapting of the saints. Well, adapting of the saints for what? The word "adapting" raises expectations of something else to follow. The design for which the saints are

being adapted, for ministering work, that the saints themselves, as an entire class, are called on to do ministering work, and Christ would fit them to do it by means of the official ministry given to the church. Then, thirdly, there is no definite article before the word "the work of the ministry." It is simply MINISTRY or WORK OF MINISTRY. Simply, any work of ministry, any useful activity whereby one Christian can minister to help another -- a ministry of love, patience or of enterprise; a ministry which strengthens the brethren. Now the guides of a group (the shepherd-teachers) are to guide their brethren into the innumerable paths which may be discovered, the good works which God hath purposed that the saints should walk in, and so the pastors and leaders of a congregation are to equip the saints for serving the Lord. They are to animate their zeal and welcome their activities, for it is not without them we will all grow to the full stature God intends for the Church.

Paul (again referring to the first chapter of Romans in writing to the saints there) said that he desired to commit unto them or impart some spiritual gift of grace. He looked forward...

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...to his visit in order to communicate unto them this charisma, that is, grace. Perhaps to expound to them the way more perfectly, to open to them deeper and fuller insights into the oracles of Christ -- that they may more boldly stand upon the glorious certainties which they held. But the interesting thing is, his longed-for visit was also to be his gain as well as theirs. Turn to Romans 1:11 and see it with your own eyes, "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end you may be established; that is, that I may be comforted together with you by MUTUAL faith BOTH of you and me." So he is to find his own soul made glad and strong by the witness to the LORD. So we ought to help with thanksgiving the encouragement we have from the lips of those perhaps who believed long after we did and/or those who have been more outwardly advantaged than we have been; by little believing children, by young men in expression of their first faith; or by older people ignorant in this world but illumined in the Lord. MUTUAL faith Paul calls it. In Ephesians we call it mutual ministry. It is a mighty power for Christian ministry and comfort today.

I am trying to impress you with the importance of ministry and that we are all to participate in it and be helpful one to the other, not leaving it all to the special pastors, i.e., shepherds of the flock, but participate with them in the work of the Lord and help them too. Let us all be obedient to the exhortation as set forth in this study. All ministry is dignified by the destiny of the body ministered to. The destiny of the church, the body of Christ, is to serve as the means by which its Head will fill all things. I make this as a statement, and I call your attention to what the text says. This is a very large conception and we may lose sight of it by the lack of knowing its dispensational framework. For, if that is lacking, then we will lose the definite meaning of the significance of these words.

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Given an insight into the Biblical development of the ages, and of the consequence and foresight of the dispensation to succeed this one in which restored Israel will come into her promissory rights, and of the coming Kingdom of her Messiah, we may then contrast this calling with that of the church as the corporate body of the Messiah (concerning which the Ancient Prophets have nothing to tell), the sacred Secret in which the formation of such a body is made, having been concealed from those foregoing ages. Given this dispensational framework, the place which the glorified church is intended to fill becomes apparent and has a luster all its own. The church is to be used of our Lord by-and-by to fill all things; this with a literalism we would not dare dream of but for our faith, the destiny of the Lord Himself who intends to bestow upon us the honor of SHARING IT WITH HIM. This discovery fastens itself upon us if we are prepared to see it in the text of our wonderful exhortation, for it interprets to us the intent of our Lord's ascension: "He that descended is the same also that ascended up above all heavens, that He might fill all things" -- in order that He might have a corporate body AS A MEANS TO FILL ALL THINGS. In order to do this, He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists and some prophets and teachers, etc. So that "AND" carries the sense on and conveys to us the meaning and significance of why these gifts were given -- that the Lord may in time develop and have a corporate body in which He may ultimately fill all things. An elect assembly, a glorified

assembly...to form that body is the work of all special ministries and all saintly missions. This ought to be enough. Every believer may become part of the fullness where with the Son of God shall fill all things and to show oncoming ages what He meant by the surpassing riches thrust upon us. Yes, that is enough. It shuts out compassion for no man; for the lost; it turns back no missionary in pagan fields; it tells no preacher that he is working too hard or too long for a single convert to Christ. It is...

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...too long for a single convert to Christ. It is rich compensation for his labor, and it ought to comfort all pastors and teachers because, under their tutelage, these may be made to realize that there is such a destiny as for every one of their flock.

Let us pray for one another and still exhibit outwardly the inward transformation that is ours by the like precious faith He has given us.

Bible Conference Message

THE WONDERFUL WORD

There once lived an idiot lad, who took a great dislike to the moon. He could not bear the sight of it, but went about continually muttering, "I hate that moon! I'll kill that moon! I'll shoot that moon! See if I don't!" To carry out his threat he got hold of a blunderbuss—a clumsy, old-fashioned gun—which, when it goes off, makes plenty of noise and smoke, but does little else. He loaded this blunderbuss, and waited for the first fine night when the full moon shone out in a cloudless sky. He took aim. and fired. Hearing a noise the neighbors rushed out, to find the idiot dancing with delight, and shouting at the pitch of his voice, "I've killed the moon! I've killed the moon!" And sure enough, at that instant, no moon was to be seen, for the dense smoke of the blunderbuss had completely hidden it. But only for a minute or two. When the smoke had passed away the moon was seen shining as calmly and clearly as before in God's blue sky, far beyond the reach of any idiot's blunderbuss. Is not this a picture of what men are doing who try to destroy the Bible? When they have sent a loud report against it, and made smoke sufficient to hide it for a minute, they

say, "We have killed the Bible! We have killed the Bible!" But they too, like the idiot, soon find that they are mistaken, and that the old Lamp is still shining as brightly as ever. "To send light to them that sit in darkness," and. "to guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke 1: 79). Cowper said what may forever be repeated:

- A glory gilds the sacred page.
- Majestic, like the sun;
- It gives a light to every age;
- It gives, but borrows none.

QUESTION: I am a college student and worried somewhat by what I hear. A minister temporarily filling the chair of the Bible states that the incarnation of Christ is not really as essential doctrine in order to have a relationship with God. He also states that he regards the Virgin Birth a physical impossibility, unnecessary and unbelievable. Does the teaching of the Bible place a value upon or stress the Importance of these facts?

ANSWER: Your instructor may fill a chair and he may fill some students with unbelief or disbelief; but he is certainly not a BIBLE teacher. There are many of his type filling pulpits and college chairs today who use place, privilege and power to set aside all that is written in the Divine Book, substitute their own notions for the Word and wreck the old- fashioned faith of our fathers. Several of these just now are engaged in giving us "modern Bibles," substituting the figment of their own imagination for Divine revelation and their own imperfect Inventions for the Divine proclamation. One of the favorite stunts of this class, is first, to say something eulogistic about "Jesus" and proceed from thence to malign His Word. They say, "now it is not necessary to believe that Jesus was actually Virgin Born, He may have and probably did possess a human father. If so it would make no difference to me, I could revere, follow and love Him as truly as if it were otherwise." All of this is not merely unscriptural; but actually anti-Scriptural. It is un-Christian, anti-Christian, blasphemous and foolish. Note the language in 1 John. 4:2-8; 2 John. 7. This is not our language, but the words of the Holy Spirit. The subject is too large to treat in small space, such as afforded here, but the correspondent may find what the Word of God teaches (as over against what your teacher asserts) in the following passages:

(1) Divine Incarnation, via Virgin Birth was predicted In the Old Testament (Isa. 7:10-14; 9:6-7; 49:1, 5; Ps. 69:8; 86: 16; 116:16; Jer. 23:6-6; Micah 5:2-3).

(2) Divine Consummation of the Prophetic Word is affirmed in the New Testament (Matt. 1:18-25; Lu. 1:26-36; John. 1:1-3, 14, 18; Rom. 8:3; Gal. 4:4-5; Phil. 2:5-6; 1 Tim. 5:16; Heb. 2:14-18).

(3) Divine Valuation of the Incarnation is seen in the following facts. It was by Divine Incarnation and by Divine Incarnation only that God could:

- A. Reveal or Manifest Himself to men. John. 1:14, 18; 14:9.
- B. Relate Himself to men. 1 Tim. 2:6; Heb. 2:14-18; Eph. 2:11-19.
- C. Redeem or Reconcile men. 2 Cor. 6:21; Col. 1:16-22; Rom. 6:6-11.
- D. Refresh, Restore and Radiate His blessing upon men in their need.

It was by incarnation that God came into intimate relation with the experiences and manifold needs of men.

- (a) In their Temptations. Heb. 4:14-16.
- (b) In their Weariness. John. 4:6.
- (c) In their Sufferings and Hunger (Matt. 4:2; 21:18), Thirst (John. 4:7; 19:28), Pain (Lu. 22:24; Heb. 12:1-2), Sorrow (John. 11.-.88-89), Death (Phil. 2:6-8).

This is not all, but it satisfies and we trust will strengthen your faith and testimony. (R.A.H.)

(Inside back cover)

II. THE SECOND BASIC TEXT—2 Tim. 2:15.

- "STUDY." This word means literally — "be diligent," "endeavor." That "all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable" makes it vitally important that we study. What could more truly claim our study, our earnest endeavor, than the Holy Scriptures ?

- "TO SHOW THYSELF APPROVED UNTO GOD." Not unto man, but unto God. What an objective for study! Who of us would not desire to have the Divine approval? To realize the approval one must follow the instruction.
- "A WORKMAN NOT ASHAMED." An ashamed, or confused, work- man cannot know the approval of God. There is no sense or safety in confusion. Confusion is next door to delusion. A confused workman is ever doing the wrong thing. How can a workman honor God when that workman is confused, ashamed, or embarrassed while he ought to be clear, concise, and confident.
- "RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH." Now the secret is out. Rightly dividing the Word of Truth will produce an unashamed workman approved of God.

The Word of Truth has many parts and many portions; division is possible.

Wrong division is exceedingly dangerous and leads to confusion.

If there no danger of wrong division there would be no need for the exhortation to rightly divide the Word of Truth.

How is it possible for God to approve a workman who disregards dispensational distinctions?

Order in all its perfection belongs to God. He has a place for every- thing, and everything in its place, conscientious recognition of this fact will prove invaluable to the student of Scripture. To disturb, re- arrange, misplace or jumble the people, places, and portions of God's Word is disgracefully insulting to the Divine Purposes and pro-grams.

Rightly dividing the Word of Truth will get one started right in Bible Study, and by a diligent adherence to the order he will be kept right. A motorist stopped by the side of the highway to make inquiry of a boy as to how far it was to a certain village. The boy replied: "Well, mister, the way you are headed it's about 24,996 miles, but if you turn around and go the right way it is only about four miles." There is a right way to study the Word of God.

2 Tim. 3:16 tells us of the material for study—ALL SCRIPTURE.

2 Tim. 2:15 tells us the method of study—RIGHTLY DIVIDE.

HOWARD NATHANAEL BUNCE, Ph.D.