

new covenant Voice

'On January 12th 1723, I made a solemn dedication of myself to God, and wrote it down; giving up myself, and all that I had to God; to be for the future, in no respect my own; to act as one that had no right to be himself, in any respect. And solemnly vowed to take God for my whole portion and felicity; looking on nothing else, as any part of my happiness, nor acting as if it were; and His law for the constant rule of my obedience: engaging to fight against the world, the flesh and the devil, to the end of my life'.

Jonathan Edwards (1703-58), the great American philosopher and theologian. Under his preaching the Awakening broke out in Northampton, Massachusetts.

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to GOD the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect and to JESUS the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel See that ye refuse not him that speaketh

HEBREWS 12:22-25

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HE DECEIVETH THE PEOPLE

GEORGE W. NORTH

'And there was much murmuring among the people concerning Him; for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but He deceiveth the people' (John 7:12)

THIS MAY SEEM a strange verse from which to launch the topic of 'faith'; yet, in the last resort, this is the heart of the matter. There is a great cleavage between faith and unbelief. Unbelief must come back basically to the position that you believe that God is deceiving you. In the end, it is the character and person of God that is at stake in this great matter of faith. Once we see that, of course, it should at once put us fully on the side of God. It cannot be too greatly emphasised that faith is the leading principle in salvation. In the epistle of Paul to the Romans, within the space of the first 17 verses 'faith' is mentioned 5 times and the active word 'believeth' once. Let us look at these verses.

The Character Of God ...

Verse 8. At the inspiration of the Holy Ghost the verse begins with the word 'first'. 'First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world'. It was not the wonderful healings that had taken place in Rome, the miracles, the sensational, the wonders and the signs - but their faith.

It is so easy, by a trick of the mind, for us to think that these other things are actually what Paul is writing about. But it is faith that is being spoken of, not the results of it. That is fundamental; first; I thank God because of your faith.

Now verses 11, 12 and 17. 'I long to see you ...' Who would not long to see such people whose faith is spoken about throughout the whole world! '... that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift ...' Paul is a man with his heart full of love and his hands full of gifts from God. Who is he going to give them to? To the people of faith; they will receive; his visit to them will not be in vain. '... to the end ye may be established; that is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me'. '... the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith ...'

Here is a principle. Paul says, I've got faith in my heart and you've got faith in your heart ... When we meet, what wonderful things will happen! It is from faith to faith. Mutual faith. We must grasp that anything that God does in the realm of grace - and everything is in grace in this dispensation - is from faith to faith. And it is to everyone that believeth.

Here we are having the foundations laid; God is laying down the great principle upon which He works. In chapter 3, verse 27, we are told that there is a 'law of faith'. This does not refer to laws that are made; but to laws that are! Not to laws that are written; but to law that is.

Fundamentally, I am saved by a great law resident in God Himself, which therefore cannot mis-fire! It is the law of faith. The bed-rock of this law is in God Himself; its foundation is that God is, and that God is true. This we may call the law of God's being; no a law made by God, but a law of God Himself, a law written eternally in the nature of His own being.

... Is At Stake

Paul has already introduced the word of God in the Old Testament: 'As it is written, The just shall live by faith'. Under the old covenant God spoke in terms appropriate to their systems of faith. The Law and the prophets were an adaptation down to the needs and states of the people as they were with their systems of the sacrifices, tabernacles and temples. God was with them in type and shadow.

Now, under a new covenant, we do not have an adaptation of God, we have God Himself. We do not just have a 'tent', we ourselves are the temples of the Living God. He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. In the Old Testament, God spoke through the prophets; now the very Word, the Logos, has been made flesh, and has come to live within us. We are thus brought right into the great realm of God's own life; we are made partakers of His divine nature, and thus inevitably brought into the sphere of God's own being, into the realm of His life, and that is into the heart of the realm of faith. Faith is essential to God's very being. Jesus lived by faith, and Paul says, speaking for all true Christians, 'And the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God ...' Faith is the law of life and living in God, the law of being. And as it is in God, so, in Christ, it is in us.

We are thus brought into the realm of life and being; we are now in days which anticipate eternity. Our life is hid with God in Christ who is our life and who says, (putting it into the first person) 'I am the Author and Finisher of faith'. God's aim is to bring us right out of ourselves altogether, out of our primal self-state. How will God do it? Here is a great secret: it is FROM FAITH in God, THROUGH FAITH in the preacher, TO FAITH in the hearer.

Out Of The Law...

Here is the wonder of the word of God ... It has pleased God through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. You may say you have not faith sufficient for these things; then if you will listen to the word of God that is preached in faith, and are willing to come out of the maze of what you think in your own mind, and get a clear thinking through from God; if you will stop listening to yourself, and responding to the feelings of your own flesh, then faith will come by hearing, and hearing by the word of God; faith unto salvation.

We must learn that in us, that is, in our flesh, there dwells no good thing. Indeed, it is time we all started to learn the lesson of Romans 7, instead of just being able to quote it. This chapter is not pushed in before chapter 8 just so that we can have a thumb-nail cameo sketch of Paul's autobiography. It is a picture of a 'man under law' (see the first verse, which is the key to the whole chapter) and the last verse shows us the highest that a man can reach outside of Christ: delighting in the law of God after the inward man ...

The man of Romans 7 takes his delight in the law of God, not grace! To such a man faith is completely foreign. The whole chapter is a picture both of a man that has never been born again of the Spirit and of a man who though having been born again, has relapsed into law and become 'carnal'.

A true condition in Christ is that of living by faith; living in the good of the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus who Himself was the epitome of faith, its full revelation and manifestation, its beginning and ending. God does everything by faith; that is the law of His being; and His being is Love. Although we are insisting that faith is a law, we are not dealing with a 'thing'; and it is Love that puts flesh on the framework of faith. Faith, if you will, is a skeleton; Love is a being - God's being.

The way that God works, then, is by the law of faith. By the very nature of what a 'law' is, this means that all we need to do is to discover the law and operate on that basis, then the law must work, things must happen. But again, the law of faith is not a 'thing', it is a divine principle embodied in God Himself, and expressed particularly in Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, being law, it follows that whatever God has spoken

already - is; that is, it already is reality in the unseen realm of law. It is ours to find a place of complete correspondence with these unseen realities.

The law of life in the natural is that it is sustained by breathing fresh air. At the birth of a baby the fresh air is there already and the baby is born with a perfect built-in breathing system. Baby's first little 'cry' is a sign of its initial correspondence with this law of life. It has become related to the law - it is alive ... and so it lives.

... Into The Law Of Faith

If we are going to have spiritual life - to say nothing of spiritual phenomena - we must have spiritual law; we must know how it works; and knowing that 'law' is infallible, commit ourselves to its working. So, let us go to the Gospels and see it working ... Matthew tells the story (Matt. 15:21-28) of a woman of Canaan, a Gentile dog in the opinion of the Jews, who cried unto Jesus, asking for mercy for her daughter who was grievously vexed with a devil.

Jesus at first answered her not a word. When, however, she persistently cried out after Him He said that He was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. What a reply to a seeking soul.

What did she do? She came and worshipped at His feet! She did not say 'Well, that's it; there was no harm in trying'. She did not feel like that ... There are far too many people today who do feel that way though, and that without any justification. This woman had a very good reason, given by the Lord Himself at that! She could very well have let her hands fall at her side and with drooping head and eyes filled with tears, gone home disappointed in Jesus. She did not; but many people today are going away disappointed when they have no need to.

No! She came and worshipped Him, saying 'Lord, help me'. She knew the basis on which faith works. She could not have explained the law of faith, or how it works - or even if there was such a thing! - but she knew ... something inside her knew. On the other hand, men and women today, who ought to know because they have an open Bible, act as if they do not know - and they find a suitable text on which to hang their excuse!

Simple Heathen Faith...

This woman acted out of the stuff of life, acted out from what she knew at a deeper level than she could explain. She fell at the feet of Jesus and crashed through every barrier. It was not right for Jesus to grant her request; the time for the Canaanites had not

yet arrived. But she would not be shaken off ... Would God we could get some red-blooded thinking into us!

Jesus answered and said, 'It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs'. 'Yes', she said, 'that is true, Lord, that is true ... yet ... the little dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their masters' tables ...'

Jesus marvelled; 'O woman', He said, 'great is thy faith!' She broke through to God, through all the status-quo, in spite of impossible opposition, over-leaping even a dispensation. There is a place in God where the dispensation gathers into one. She found it and touched the heart of God! 'Be it unto thee even as thou wilt', said Jesus.

Not long before this incident Jesus had come walking on the water to the disciples in the boat (Matt. 14:28). When Peter saw Him he cried out, 'Lord, if it be Thou ...' Not so this woman; she had no doubts. Bless God for the intuitive faculty in the heart of some of the ladies! shame on the unbelief of Peter, and by inference, on the menfolk!

Jesus answered Peter with one word, 'Come'. So he got out of the ship and walked on the water to go to Jesus; but when he saw the wind boisterous he was afraid. His knees knocked and his feet went straight through the water!

Jesus answered him, 'O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?' And it is quite possible that the reason why Jesus took His disciples - and Peter - into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon was specially to see and hear this woman. She would teach them a lesson.

Peter had had every advantage, the Lord had given him His word, the Lord was already walking on the water alongside the ship. This woman had nothing but a rebuff, but she took it and got through with

tremendous faith. She must have known God in a way that put those disciples quite to shame. Only one of the twelve had even had faith enough to ask to get out of the ship. This one Gentile woman had more faith than all of them put together!

After she had departed, Jesus returned to Galilee and sat down on the mountain side, and there were brought unto Him all manner of sick people, the lame, the blind, the dumb, the maimed and many others, and He called His disciples unto Him, still wanting to teach them more about faith, and said unto them, 'I have compassion on the multitude ...' That's the secret. Compassion.

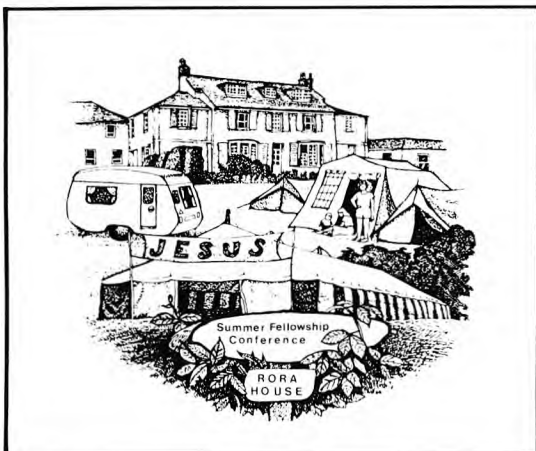
... Puts Apostles To Shame!

The woman of Canaan did not care a fig for the interpretations of Leviticus, she knew nothing of the voice that thundered from Sinai. The God she knew had a heart of compassion. That was all; but that was enough.

Some insist they must have a special word from God. How about it if there is no word from God? - and what if the word from God insists that what you want is not for you? She knew His heart of compassion and got what she wanted even when the word said, 'no'. You say, that was an exception. Well, maybe it was; but that is what I want to be in the matter of faith!

What is the use of our preaching if we cannot preach faith? What is the point of our gathering together if we cannot find a place of mutual faith? The Spirit of the Lord will help our infirmities if we will allow our hearts, minds and wills to be merged in mutual faith. The woman of Canaan had never known the new birth, had never had a spiritual awakening. If dead people can do what she did, what should living people be able to do?

SUMMER FELLOWSHIP CONFERENCE



AUGUST 1st - 8th 1987

ODE TO AUTUMN

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the
thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease;
For Summer has o'erbrimm'd their clammy cells.

John Keats

This first verse of Keats' poem forms the introduction to Norman's article on the following page.

FRUITFULNESS

NORMAN MEETEN

Fruitfulness is intrinsic in the whole creation. Seed time and harvest - the constant cycle of birth and death in the animal kingdom and the cry of the human heart - 'Give me children or I die' (Gen. 30:1). What is manifest in the natural world is but a picture of what is true in the heart of God. God's desire is fruitfulness. He has so created man that he might co-operate with Him both naturally and spiritually to bring forth fruit 'Be fruitful and multiply' (Gen. 1:28) and find the desire of God perfectly expressed by Jesus 'He came and sought fruit thereon and found none' (Lk. 13:6/10). Much of the teaching of Jesus uses this simple illustration to express profound spiritual truth. The purpose of this teaching is not only to instruct us in the nature of God and the mysteries of His Kingdom, but that we should enter into the outworking of those truths in our own lives. This we can do, only as we receive the Holy Spirit - the same Spirit of God which worked in Jesus, made Him the first fruits of them that slept to bring us into all the promised blessings of Pentecost, which was the feast of first fruits.

The New Testament unfolds to us divine principles. Let us consider these and believe the Spirit of God to write these upon the 'fleshy tables of our hearts'.

1. The Nature Of The Seed

'Every tree is known by his own fruit' (Lk. 6:44)
'Ye shall know them by their fruits' (Matt. 7:16)

In the earliest chapters of Genesis we are told that every seed will reproduce after its own kind. That is an indisputable law in nature. We plant potatoes, we get potatoes. We plant peas, we get peas. No matter what you do, you cannot alter this law. We say it is 'natural' - common sense! Now what is true in nature is equally true in the Spirit. Every human being is born with a seed in him. When God created man and commanded him 'to be fruitful and multiply' he had the potential to reproduce after the 'likeness of God'. All that he needed to do was 'partake of the Tree of Life' (Gen. 2:9) 'Divine Nature' (2 Pet. 1:4). He would have brought forth fruit that was eternal! But then the tragedy happened - man fell - sinned. Instead of partaking of the Tree of Life, He partook of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil - forbidden by God, and sin came in (that was original sin), independence from God, and man began to reproduce 'after his own kind', which was sin. The seed sin was now the universal inheritance of man. Sin produces sin. As Paul says 'By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death

passed upon all men, for that all have sinned' (Rom. 5:12). The fruit of sin is called by the apostle in Galatians 5 The works of the flesh - the wages of which is death .

The cancer of the human race is sin - from a human point of view there is no cure. The whole creation is blighted - the whole human soul is infected. Now if you have a tree in your garden that is diseased, you don't solve the problem by removing the bad fruit - for it will only reproduce the same again and again. The problem is alleviated but not solved! The only solution is to lay the axe to the root of the tree or tear it up by the roots. Now that is what God had done for man in Jesus. When Jesus Christ was crucified, He was made sin for us, He became our substitute. God laid the axe to the root (Matt. 3:10). God hanged Him on a tree and then chopped Him down for you and me. That is more than forgiveness of sins - although it includes forgiveness. It is the radical provision that God has made to deal with SIN at its root. It's much better. Now in the place of the old seed of tree, the Holy Spirit plants a new seed 'And your seed is Christ' (Gal. 3:16). The seed sin produces sin. What does the seed Christ produce? CHRIST - or as Paul puts it 'The fruit of the Spirit - love, joy, peace' etc. (Gal. 5:22). Thus we are reinstated back into that position that Adam forfeited by his rebellion.

2. The Law Of The Spirit

'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it will bring forth much fruit'.

Jesus Christ is speaking prophetically here concerning His own death. He fell into the ground and died - the fruit being His Church. In Him we have the blueprint for all genuine evangelism that has the guarantee of fruitfulness - 'much fruit'. The explanation of the lives of the so-called great men and women of God has been that they embraced this truth and God has honoured His word. This was one of the great key verses in the lives of people like Amy Carmichael, Ragland Spiritual Pioneer, Hudson Taylor, A. Judson of Burma, Henry Martin, Jim Elliot and so on.

Again this great law of the Spirit is constantly revealed in the natural world 'Death unto resurrection'. Lillias Trotter, in her book 'The Parables of the Cross and the Christ Life', illustrates this truth again and again.

'Measure thy life by loss and not by gain;
Not by the wine drunk, but by the wine poured
fourth,
For love's strength standeth in love's sacrifice,
And he who suffers most has most to give'

The apostle Paul embraces this law and expresses it in 2 Cor. 4:10 'Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus Christ, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us but life in you'. That was why Jesus was always seeking to point men and women to the way of the cross. 'Take up your cross and follow me'. Apart from the Spirit of God, no man can understand or follow this counsel.

3. An Abiding Relationship

The greatest illustration of this glorious truth is to be found in John 15 - Jesus' teaching concerning the relationship between 'The Vine' and 'The Branch'. Jesus said 'I am the Vine, you are the branches'. Those who are familiar with vines will know that vine and branch are essentially one. The vine is all branch - it is the visible expression of the vine. It is the vine, one without the other becoming non-existent! This speaks of the most profound interdependence of Christ and the Church - His people.

He has ordained us into fruitfulness - that is why in the wisdom of God, 'He hath need of us' - as he says in 1 Cor. 12. He cannot do without us. That is amazing - more than the mind can comprehend.

John 15:

v 16 'Ye should go and bring forth fruit'

v 5, 8 'The same bringeth forth much fruit'

v 2 'That it may bring forth more fruit'

Fruit - much fruit - more fruit. We are ordained to bring forth fruit. As we abide in Him we will bring forth much fruit. In the Spirit everything is progressive, nothing is static, because it is life.

4. Marital Union

One of the most precious themes of the whole scripture is that of marriage. It runs from Genesis to Revelation. It speaks of the intimacy of union which God desires to have with man - Christ and the Church, which is the crown of His creation. The purpose of this union is that we might 'Bring forth fruit unto God'. 'Ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God' (Rom. 7:4). It was the divine urge that made Rachael cry 'Give me children or else I die' (Gen. 30:1) This is also the explanation of the great covenant promises that God made to Abraham and his successors. The natural desire and outworking of every marital union is

children - fruitfulness - as it should be and must be in the Spirit. God is a God of reproduction - of fruitfulness. As we are intimately related to Him so the two-fold nature of fruitfulness of which the scripture speaks will inevitably manifest itself in our lives, i.e. the reproduction of the nature of Jesus in our own lives and the bringing forth of children unto God.

5. The Nature Of Sin

The parable of the sower and the seed is one of the most important of the parables, according to Jesus. 'Know ye not this parable, and how then will ye know all parables?' (Mk. 4:13). Also implicit in it is 'the mystery of the Kingdom of God (v. 11). In this parable both the seed and the soil are important. 'The seed is the word of God'. 'The soil is the human heart'. The good of the former is conditioned by the nature of the latter. Jesus speaks of four different kinds of soil.

1. The wayside ground
2. The stony ground
3. Thorny ground
4. Good ground

In the first three it is impossible to 'bring forth fruit unto perfection' (Ik. 8:14) but 'On the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it and bring forth fruit with patience' (Ik. 8:15). In verse 8, Dr. Luke says 'have fruit an hundredfold'. Mark's record speaks of 'some thirtyfold, some sixty and some an hundred' (Mk. 4:2). The important thing is that good seed planted in good ground will be fruitful. Have we faith for an hundredfold? There are no limits in God, He gives without measure. It is vital that by His grace we prepare our hearts to receive the word of God - to be quickened by His Spirit - to bring forth fruit. 'One plants, another waters, but God giveth the increase' (see 1 Cor. 3:6/8).

6. A Prayerful Disposition

Fruit has to be harvested. A harvest not reaped is a harvest lost. Jesus speaks of this work and sense of urgency. Procrastination is the thief of time 'Say not ye, there are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold I say unto you lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest ...' etc. (John 4:35). 'Then says Jesus unto His disciples, the harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few, pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth labourers unto his harvest' (Matt. 9:37).

E.M. Bonar says 'Everything secured by Gospel promise, defined by Gospel measure and represented by Gospel treasure is to be found in prayer. All heights are scaled by it, all doors are opened to it,

all victories are gained through it and all grace distills on it. Heaven has all its good and all its help for men who pray'. David Brainard is possibly one of the greatest examples of this great divine principle being outworked. Murray McCheyne said of him 'The missionary spirit of the nineteenth century is more due to the prayers and consecration of this one man than to any other one'.

I believe we are living in tremendously urgent days. The fields are white - many doors remain open - even though men would seek to close them. It was Mildred Cable, I think, who once said 'If you find the front door closed, if you look closely you will often find the back door open'. Men like J.O. Frazer of the Lisu proved this. The Psalmist says 'Ask of me and I will give thee the nations of thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession'. There are no barriers to God. He is going to have fruit from every kindred tribe and nation. He just needs men and women who will believe Him and pray.

7. Obedient Hearts

'For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ' (2 Pet. 1:8). 'And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful' (Titus 3:14). 'Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account' (Phil. 4:17). Obedience to the word of God

releases the Spirit - this quickens the word - waters that seed and thus makes it fruitful. Disobedience will always quench the spirit and frustrate the purpose of God. Disobedience breaks the source of life. It's a break in relationship and so prevents and hinders fruitfulness. Mary said 'Whatsoever He says unto you, do it' She was able thus to speak because she had done it. She said 'Be it unto me according to Thy word'.

8. By The River

The final explanation of fruitfulness is that we have our roots in the river - which speaks of the Spirit of God. 'On either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month' (Rev. 22:2). One sees the same truth in Ezekiel 47:12 and again in Psalm 1:3. 'He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season'.

For the born-again, spirit-filled Christian, the river is no longer external - flowing out from the temple in Jerusalem - or even restricted for the future in heaven, but 'flowing out of our innermost being'. As that river is maintained from 'the springs of living water' which Jesus promises 'so they whose roots abide in him, will neither thirst nor be fruitless'.

'YE SHALL BRING FORTH MUCH FRUIT'

THE ANOINTING - PART TWO

GEORGE W. NORTH

IN A FORMER article we traced from Scripture the true nature and first purpose of the Anointing, viz, (1) the public manifestation of Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, the Son of God. We will now proceed to discover two further purposes of God in the Anointing, namely (2) mastery over the devil, and (3) ministry to men.

It will be noted that in this classification the devil stands between God and man. Both revelation and experience prove this to be true, and so, before the Son of God could effectively minister to men He must first master the one on whose account men stood in need of God's ministry at all - the devil. Too often and glibly we point to the ministry as the immediate purpose of the Anointing, whereas it is better understood as the ultimate purpose in view. Effective ministry is totally dependent upon complete mastery over the devil.

In the life of the Man of Galilee God worked out a basis for all His activities in other men. Having anointed men in past years to act in His name, God now in Christ demonstrates the reason for this. Jesus Christ's life was a continuous justification of Jehovah's ways and means with men, whilst His death - the sacrificing of that life - was the redemptive act that permitted the justification of men with God.

An Exalted Man...

Returning from His anointing full of the Holy Ghost, Jesus was led, (Mark says 'driven') by the Spirit into the wilderness that the all-important second purpose of God in the Anointing may be revealed. If it was the Spirit of the LORD upon Him that caused Jesus to say, 'He hath anointed me ...'

then before He preaches the gospel He must prove His lordship firstly over the one who hitherto had 'lord-ed' it over man - the devil himself.

The battle for mastery lay between man and devil, extended through forty days and crystallized into three specific temptations. In them the devil sought to defeat God in Christ. Full well the devil knew that Jesus could not be man's Saviour unless He was first Satan's conqueror, so with skill and malice he sought under most favourable circumstances to destroy God manifest in flesh.

The contest lay around Jesus' Sonship - who He was. Did the Anointing set Him forth as the Son of God? If so, then the devil must seek to keep Him from effective operation under that consciousness. If Jesus was properly to deliver man from Satan's mastery then He must act as an exalted man and not as a humbled God. So the whole purpose of the temptation was to induce Him to act as exalted God and not as a humble man solely dependent upon God; to make Him a self-contradiction, a divided personality, a disintegrated being, a failure.

Jesus was not only God made man to redeem men, He was also man set forth by the Anointing to minister and be an example to men. Throughout His whole life-ministry the Lord did everything as a man, for men, by the same means that any other man may use. So in the day of temptation in the wilderness He took His place and countered and conquered Satan as a man. The devil strove to drive a wedge between Godhead and manhood in Jesus - and failed.

... Not A Humbled God

It is often rightly pointed out that when Jesus answered Satan He always quoted Scripture to him and was thus the perfect example to all believers for all time. But it is not to be assumed from this that the absolute answer to Satan is inscribed somewhere in Holy Writ and may be found for the searching; nor that this incident is here recorded as the highest example of the Lord's familiarity with the written Word of God (though that is certainly true) and to challenge us to copy Him in it. We can do that with profit indeed;

but it is far more profitable to note that Jesus in His answers told the evil one the truth about His own life; that He was living a scriptural life; that is, a life that fulfilled Scripture. For this reason the devil found Him indestructible.

Jesus had lived and was actually living the life prescribed and described in Scripture for man, therefore He was impervious to the devil and was not just giving us the copy-book method of answering Satan when tempted. The rather He proved - to the devil's consternation - that He was living a life that could be defined in Bible terminology; the life that man must live to be a true man of God, the master of Satan, and deliverer of men.

Satan's threefold temptation may be stated thus: satisfy yourself, you need bread; you are the Son of God and rightful king of the world; you trust God - then do thus and thus. Answering, the Lord really said this: 'I am a man and (1) I am living and am going to live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, (2) I am living for the sole purpose of worshipping and serving my Lord and God, and (3) I shall never do anything to tempt the Lord my God to disown me or to repent of begetting and anointing me'. This was His three point charter for life.

He did not attempt to out-quote the devil; He simply told him the truth. No amount of scriptural quotations mis-applied can cover up lies. Jesus was the truth and the Scriptures He quoted told the truth about Himself. He proved Himself to have the quality of life the devil could not tempt unto defeat. The devil was mastered.

Satan Lost The Battle ...

Perhaps these vital facts may be reduced to a simple formula for all other men who, by grace, are also sons of God, anointed to the ministry. Life is by God speaking into an ever receptive and appropriating heart. Positively it is for but one purpose - worshipping and serving God. Negatively it is just this - that I may not do anything else but that. The net result is power. To this heart condition in Jesus, God gave the Anointing; and the heart that received it retained it by the same means.

Continued on next page

The devil's time is short

Jesus was in all points tempted as we are. He was directly tempted by the devil in the wilderness - a devil so real and personal that he quotes Scripture deceitfully and is corrected by Christ. He is the arch-enemy of God, and will resort to unimaginable acts of deception to effect the perversion of our Christian life. But although he is the Prince or ruler of this world, and works all deceivableness of unrighteousness, yet he knoweth that his time is short; his power has been broken, CHRIST HATH TRIUMPHED. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil, and now sits waiting to make His enemies His footstool. Satan shall be trodden underfoot shortly. Thank God for that promise for today: 'He that is in you is greater than he that is against you'. Let us take the whole panoply of God.

Selected by the Editor

Peter tells us that Jesus was anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power. Power for ministry is basic life-power that in and of itself overcomes all other opposing powers and brings its own innate conditions unto others in deliverance, recovery and liberation, as the signs of God's approval of the minister as well as of the gospel he preaches. All this is extra to (though based upon) the fundamental totality of regeneration through the blood of the Lamb.

Now notice afresh the subtlety of the devil's temptation. At Jordan there had been a voice from heaven which said: 'Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased'. Jesus lived by that word on a journey too great for Him without it. In the strength of that meat, forty days and forty nights in the wilderness, He went to the contest with the devil who vainly sought to turn the Anointing to the anointed One's destruction. Instead he came against the Anointing to his own undoing.

... Therefore His Victims

Losing the battle in the wilderness, Satan had at the same time lost his other victims. As Jesus moved out into ministry, Satan could not maintain his mastery over men; he had to admit defeat. The ministry to men was in part but the application of the victory won in the wilderness.

It will be of value at this point to trace the relationship of Jesus to the Holy Ghost in Luke 3:21-4:9. Five most important things are stated in this passage. Each of them must be clearly understood by all who seek to walk as He walked.

1. Baptism in Jordan: the Holy Ghost descended from heaven in a distinct bodily form, and lighted upon Him.
2. Jesus was full of the Holy Ghost: now no longer two distinguishable forms, just one body full of the Holy Ghost; two persons merged as one.
3. Jesus was led of the Spirit: Jesus became the expression, the embodiment, the temple of the Holy Ghost (see John 2:19).
4. He returned in the power of the Spirit: not His own power but the Spirit's. They were one. Jesus had deliberately weakened His body by fasting and had yielded Himself entirely to the Holy Ghost; therefore He was IN THE POWER of the Spirit. His spirit (as a man) was fully integrated with the Holy Spirit.
5. The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me: He was completely possessed and dominated by THE LORD. He had proved it; He had mastered the devil; He was moving, speaking, acting, in the power of the Spirit.

The Holy Ghost was still upon Him though not now in a bodily form, but as the empowering, authorizing, guiding, controlling Spirit upon His spirit; clothing,

saturating, permeating, identifying with Him. The devil, that great spirit adversary of God and man, had been overcome as Jesus had sheerly subjected Himself to the Holy Ghost.

The Anointing was not only set forth the Son of God, but also the Man of the Spirit. So the Son of Man set out on His ministry to man. No human extremity lay beyond His notice nor did any cry unto Him in vain. Every conceivable state wrought in man by the devil was successfully met and dealt with. On all sides the devil's defeat became a headlong rout as Jesus drove home His advantage. Wherever Jesus went Satan found no way to retain his usurped position as lord of man; the 'strong man' was bound, disarmed and rendered powerless to defend himself. He was beaten by a Man, Hallelujah!

Satan could muster all his powers of darkness in their most dreadful forms and forces, but he knew that the 'Man of the wilderness' would expose him and his impostures at every turn. There was no way of escape; Jesus hounded him to the death. He was his Master because, AS A RESULT OF THE ANOINTING, HE WAS IN THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT.

The key to 'sign ministry' is a personal mastery of the devil, which is not a matter of 'knowing all the answers' but living a life that Satan cannot over-awe, overwhelm or overcome. Winning the decisive battle alone in the wilderness, Jesus proved the ministry to be nothing more difficult than 'mopping up' operations among men.

Christ's Anointing ...

To read the history of the early church in the New Testament is to be convinced that they were as much acquainted with the Anointing as with the Redemption. To watch them upon the pages of the Acts of the Apostles is to realise that whether working or worshipping they were true witnesses to their risen Lord in the way He had defined. Of course, this is not to be wondered at because they were 'built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, (who had been witnesses of the things the great Apostle and Prophet Himself had done) Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone'.

Peter especially seems to have grasped the great fact and significance of the Anointing. Recall his inspired answer to the Lord Jesus at Caesarea Philippi, 'Thou art the Christ (Anointed) the Son of the living God'. This revelation from the Father seems never to have left him, for in Acts 10:38 he refers to the sacred Anointing; 'How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him'; whilst on the day of Pentecost he had used the words, 'approved of God', when referring to the earthly ministry of the Lord.

There is little doubt that the early church fully related the Anointing of Jesus of Nazareth at Jordan with the sign ministry promoted among them by the Holy Ghost in their own day, for in Acts 4:23-30 they lifted up their voice to God with one accord concerning the vital Anointing of 'Thy Holy Child Jesus' and signs and wonders being done in His name. This prayer met with such divine approval that in answer God shook the place where they were gathered and filled them all with the Holy Ghost in order, presumably, that they may stretch forth His hand to perform miracles as proof of the word they were preaching.

... Is For Now!

In this connection the point of the word 'began' in the opening verse of Acts 1 must be duly noted.

Connected with verses 21 and 22 this undoubtedly refers to the Lord's Anointing. Luke was inspired of the Spirit to record what he and the Church knew - that all the miracle-ministry shared among them was by the power and authority of the same Anointing and was but the continuation of it.

Their united prayer (4:23-30) asked that His Anointing, His hand, His name alone should be the media of ministry - not their Anointing, or hand, or name, but His, JESUS! In other words they were not saying, 'Lord, anoint us that we may do it', but 'Lord, Thou art still Anointed - YOU do it'.

All of which is a revelation of the particular understanding and perspectives our forbears in the faith had in relationship to the enthroned Lord. They saw that the Anointing of that Man of Galilee, the Lord Jesus Christ, was intended by God to be as efficacious for the healing, deliverance, recovery and liberation of men as is His blood for their redemption throughout the whole of this age.

YOUR FEAR IS AN ASSET

EDGAR PARKYNS

FEAR IS COMMON to most living things from the house-fly to the elephant, and without it few of us would be alive today. How many times has it saved you from being knocked down by a bus? Yet, like every other God-given instinct, it has become perverted through the Fall, and so is one of the chief causes of failure in the adventure of living. Throughout the Bible we find exhortations to courage:

'Be strong and very courageous'

'Fear not, for I am with thee'

'Be not afraid of their faces'

'Fear not, believe only'

We are familiar with discourses based on such scriptures as these, and some people have even been delivered from a spirit of fear. The popular conclusion is that all fear is of the devil and God hates it.

With all th's preaching there should not be one timid person among us, yet the majority of us are basically unchanged. Some dear souls may be persuaded, in a crescendo of mass-emotion, to join in some corporate demonstration, but if you were to visit them in their homes the following day you would find them as retiring as ever. If you encounter one brash, noisy, extroverted, Billy Bray-type believer, you will meet twenty who just cannot be that way, however hard they try. Although they half envy their boisterous brother, they also find him somewhat wearing, and wonder if there is something missing in his make-up.

We may sing: 'Like a mighty army moves the Church of God', but we are more like an army of sparrows, and a hint of persecution gives us the twitters!

George Fox used quaintly to record: 'I found a few tender persons there'. The Fisherman-Apostle exhorts us to receive with meekness the engrafted word, while the dauntless Paul comments: 'Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many mighty are called ... God hath chosen the weak things ... and things that are not, to bring to nought the things that are'. Yes, God can both care for and use two-a-farthling sparrows.

I have a ridiculously old-fashioned suggestion to make, which in these days will sound radical. Don't discard your fear; develop it! YOUR FEAR IS AN ASSET. It is a basic instinct of life which has become perverted. Turn it in the right direction. Take up your concordance, and you will realize almost before you turn the pages, that while the fear of man bringeth a snare, the fear of the Lord tends to life. It is the beginning of wisdom. Would I be right in saying it led you to the Saviour in the first place? We have all been conscripted into Christ's army by the fear of the Lord. If you have kindly volunteered your services I doubt if the Saviour even knows you. You need to be born from above!

'Ah, yes, but ...' A phalanx of 'modern' teachers charges to the rescue:- 'Not that kind of fear. Not frightened fear. God loves you. He is your Father' ... By the time they are through, they have given us a Father Christmas, a benevolent uncle, and reduced the fear of the Lord to a mere gesture, a schoolboy touching his cap. (That is not original, and is

slightly out of date.) For too long we have played down the fear of the Lord, often with a view to popularising our brand of Christianity. We are afraid of the bondages of Victorianism. We speak of liberty, joy and peace, declare that there is nothing to give up, and reiterate 'Come to Jesus', like ice-cream vendors at a Sunday School outing. There is no medicine, only jam, and there is no cure either.

The sanest moment in Paul's life was when he, trembling and astonished at the blinding Presence and the Voice, said: 'What wilt Thou have me to do?' The Macedonian jailor must have been for ever thankful for that crisis when all his courage oozed out of him, and he came trembling to his own prisoners and posed the eternal, urgent question. When the River of God was in full spate, and Ananias and Sapphira were overwhelmed in judgement, did Peter and John preach assurance, saying to believers: 'Don't fear! It won't happen to you. God loves you in spite of your failings!' - ? Indeed not. Great fear, the trembling kind of fear, came upon all the church, and was the groundwork for the mighty miracles that followed.

There was such a holy awe surrounding the church, that 'of the rest durst no man join himself to them'. The fear of the Lord was the very atmosphere in which the Spirit did His mighty work. When the beloved disciple saw his Lord in heaven, he did not lay his head on His bosom as in the old days, but fell at His feet as dead, nor would nor could he stand until His Lord lifted him up, nor cease to fear until He said 'Fear not!' John's attitude was instinctive and utterly right. The same holy awe pervades the whole book. The angel (or was it an eagle?) flying in the midst of heaven with the everlasting gospel for all nations, did not cry 'Come to Jesus', but 'Fear God'.

This fear of the Lord is the basic response of those created to the Creator. In the child of God it is mingled with love to Him. It is part of the 'Tingle of Eternity'. Readers of C.S. Lewis will recall Lucy and the Lion, where mingled love and awe thrill the child, and her response was implicit obedience.

Men who have moved the world have known it. Luther was terrified of God, spent years in penances, fastings, alms-deeds and prayers before he discovered justification by faith, a truth which shook Christendom. Modern congregations scarcely know its meaning, because there is no fear of God before their eyes. Whitefield's and Wesley's ministries bore the same stamp and left its sanctifying mark on two nations. Jonathan Edwards, David Brainerd and Finney carried the fear of the Lord with them, and dared not continue without it.

Haslam, whose delightful biography, 'From Death Into Life', is now almost unobtainable, was deeply religious and under awful conviction before he was converted by his own sermon. He then saw orderly congregations in paroxysms of distress under his ministry, crying for mercy and entering into peace

with God as individuals. He saw strong men rigid with conviction, when the presence of the Lord changed whole communities.

We have replaced all this with bright singing and happy choruses and 'put your hand up' appeals. This is no gain. Forty years ago the teaching that Christ may come at any moment put a healthy element of fear into the revival. The doctrine may have been erroneous but the fear was right. We have grown stale.

My Timid Brother ; Your Fear Is An Asset

You have heard the slogan: 'Turn your faith loose', and maybe you wonder if you have enough to turn loose. It might flop, not fly. I am going to say: 'Turn your fear loose!'. You have plenty of fear. Turn it to God as you did when you were converted. Your fear has strong pinions even though your faith is a fledgeling!

You may find that you are actually afraid of the fear of God, afraid that it will drive you into bondage, make you peculiar, demand more than you can afford, spoil your life. See then in your own heart how the prince of this world has tricked us! Let us hear what the Bible says, in passages which we have half forgotten.

Job 28 is a hymn to the unsearchable wisdom of God, and concludes: 'Unto man He said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding'. Solomon declares that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and proceeds to sing such praise of wisdom as should persuade us all:

'If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as hid treasure, thou shalt understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God ... Be not wise in thine own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones ... Happy is the man that findeth wisdom ... she is more precious than rubies, all her ways are pleasantness, and all her paths are peace'.

Does that sound like bondage, or fanaticism? Take your concordance and search the Old Testament. You will find that the fear of the Lord is one of its great themes. Turn your fear loose!

The healthiest thing a man can have is an uninhibited fear of the Lord.

The early church walked in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Ghost (Acts 9:31). We are seeking the comfort without the fear. Vainly we look for new stunts or new doctrines to multiply the believers in our day. The remedy is at hand. First the fear of the Lord, then the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

Paul rejoiced that his letter wrought godly sorrow. 'Yea, what carefulness, yea, what fear!' We rejoice

Continued on next page

31st March - Keswick Calendar

The Lord loves to manifest peculiar kindness towards those who have been brought low, even though it may have been through their own folly.

R.C. Chapman

when everybody is happy, feed our congregations with honey ad nauseam, and wonder why they do not thrive. Christ from heaven rebuked and chastened those He loved: we dare not inculcate the fear of the Lord lest we scatter the remnants of our dwindling congregations.

I used to dislike Faber's hymn, for I am not fond of 'Puseyites'. But now my attitude is changed. Faber had a truth which we have too often despised:

O how I fear Thee, living God
With deepest, tenderest fears ...
... Yet I may love Thee too, O Lord,
Almighty as Thou art...

Duncan Campbell is reported to have said that revival is most likely to break out in the Church of England, for Anglicans do reverence God.

Let us review some objections, which I might have made not long ago and append appropriate retort:-

Paul insists that we have peace with God and cry 'Abba, Father'. He also urges: 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you ...'

But Hebrews says that the Old Covenant has passed away, and that we have boldness to enter the 'holiest' by the blood of Jesus. The same writer says: 'Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: FOR OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE!'

We have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear. The old theologians rightly differentiated between 'slavish' fear and 'filial' fear. Our High Priest, in the days of His flesh, was heard in that He feared. Though He were a Son, yet learnt He obedience by the things He suffered. His was filial fear. If you have His Spirit you must share His fear.

From the very mountain peak of blessing, Paul cries: 'If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die!' He is not afraid of making his converts afraid. He knows, by the Spirit, what they need, lest they should turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. In Hebrews also, assurances centred in our High Priest alternate with alarms that have disturbed so many Christians that the phalanx of teachers aforementioned wheel about in extraordinary manoeuvres to explain them all away. They would hold the arm of the Shepherd who slings His warning stones to safeguard His erring sheep, and advise Him to 'leave them alone, and they'll come home!' They forget that security lies in hearing His voice and following Him.

Substitutes for the fear of the Lord are often mistaken for the real thing. One is the fear of man, which maketh a snare. We may be afraid, not only of bad men, but of good men. We fear for our reputation. 'What would THEY say', is a motive for superficial godliness. We are afraid of 'letting down the testimony'. It is not the fear of the Lord.

Another is the fear of sin. This looks virtuous but is satanic. The wretched bird usually flies into the jaws of the serpent in the end. Has that happened to you?

Another is fear of conscience. This is much better, but the direction is inward, not upward. Many are

bound by conscience in futile behaviour-patterns, like the famous Miss Thompson; who goes shopping:-

Angels, stop her ...
From doing anything improper!

And that is not quite the fear of the Lord.

Then there is the fear of judgement, which is better still, especially when carried on the wind of the Spirit, and has brought thousands to the Saviour.

The fear of the Lord, however, is deeper than all these things. It is a continual and growing awareness of His holy, all-pervading presence. It is the practice of the presence of God. 'Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?'. The whole of Psalm 139 perfectly expresses, without naming it. It is understood in heaven. The Cherubim cover their faces. The angels fall down and worship. The saints cry aloud: 'Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name. For Thou only art holy!'

If you pray for God's will to be done in earth as it is in heaven you must reach out for a measure of the fear of God. If the church is ever again to have days of heaven on earth she must learn the same lesson. The Hebrides revival began with a few saints who feared the Lord and spake often one to another and to God. Great fear begat great faith.

Your fear is an asset. Turn it to God. Cry: 'Unite my heart to fear Thy Name' (Psalm 86:11). 'Stablish Thy word unto Thy servant, who is devoted to Thy fear' (Psalm 119:38). He will do just that. The promises will live again for you. You will run into the place of refuge, into the wounds of Jesus, into the Father's arms, into the word of His grace.

The ground of the fear of the Lord is the ordained seed plot where the promises flourish. They wilt and wither without it. You will depart from evil. Your very fear will produce co-responding faith, and put backbone into your consecration. Your eye will become single, your whole body full of light. Things once condoned will be utterly condemned, and at the same time you will find surprising liberty in matters which used to loom large in your conscience.

'Health to your navel' says the Old Book. I like its expressive language. If it causes offence, you are too squeamish, too prudish, and that is not the fear of the Lord either. Lose your life for Christ's sake in the fear of the Lord, and you will find it. Many other fears will fade out. There is no need for you to shrink back: 'O fear the Lord, ye His saints: for there is no want to them that fear Him!'

Fear Him, ye saints and ye will then
Have nothing else to fear...

Old fashioned? Yes. A wise scribe brings out of his treasure things new and old. Take it out. Clean it up. Examine it. Display it. Its price is above rubles.

If the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and Christ the fulness of wisdom, why not make a fresh beginning now? The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever. The medicine may be without jam, bitter and astringent, but it will do you good.

SPIRITUAL SLAVERY - PART THREE

BERNARD HULL

God was quite clear in His heart as to what He wanted when He paid the price for us. He had purpose in mind; He wanted to include us in His set intention. God is a God of selection. It is not that He selects according to the fittest, as is the law of nature, it is rather that He chooses for the fulfilling of those thoughts of His heart which Isaiah tells us are 'higher than our thoughts' (55:9). God purchased us in the market-place that we might be for His pleasure. He desires us that He might make of us useful servants in His great eternal household. Already He has other servants; they are ministering spirits, the angels. These do His bidding, yet, in the world to come God has chosen that it shall be man who will be glorified and worthy to serve in the place of responsibility. His will in that world shall be administered by a host of sons who are His servants too. The real purpose of God's selection of us will only be realised in the world to come. The great Son-slave, Jesus Christ, shows us the principle and the way through. He was made a little lower than the angels' (Heb. 2:9), but now 'God highly exalted Him' (Phil. 2:9). Whilst He was on this earth He 'took upon Himself the form of a bondservant' (Phil. 2:7), and yet now He is 'crowned with glory and honour' (Heb. 2:9). In this world He was a slave and was subject to His Father's will, learning obedience through all. Now, in the heavenlies, He reigns. Jesus' apprenticeship, His schooling, His proving, was in this world; yet let us mark this fact - now He is in glory, for 'the Lamb is all the glory in Emmanuel's land'.

Much will need to be administered in the world to come. There will be many tasks to be performed. These delightful labours will be carried out by God's family of servant-sons. They will be those who have been faithful in the 'little' in this world; they shall be entrusted with 'much' in the world to come. Only those who prove themselves worthy to reign will have such responsibilities in that future age of glory. It is necessary for them to learn all the fundamental lessons concerning their Master's ways whilst they are living in this present evil age. They learn of Him from the Chief Servant, the Holy Spirit. Many of the lessons are learned in the context of the life in God's household, called the Church. The principles of God's eternal kingdom are intrinsic in the true life of the Church upon the earth. The

Church of Jesus Christ and of God is a kind of microcosm upon earth of that which is in heaven. It is not of this world and is quite different in habits and culture and the ways it is run, from the kingdoms of this world. In this present age we are slaves learning from the Holy Spirit the ways of our Master. We are being prepared for service in the world to come, for places of responsibility that the Master, God, has in mind for us. There will be glory for us also, as we show ourselves worthy by obedience to His will whilst we are under training here on this earth! A line of a hymn says, 'I know there's a crown that is waiting, in yonder bright mansions for me'; however, let us all understand that crowns shall be given to those who, by obedience to God, as His loving slaves in this life, have proved themselves worthy to reign in that 'bright heaven'.

It should be borne in mind that all spiritual gifts that God pours upon us, all callings to ministry, are to be seen in this light. All temporal gifts and supply from His hand are given for us to steward with care. Time is not ours to squander, but to fill usefully as bidden by our Master. We all have our varying spheres of service; giftings vary, callings also are varied, but this fact is constant - namely that we are under commandment to serve God with such as we are given. To one is given five, to another two, to another one, but let all diligently apply themselves to willing service to God in that which they have, not in that which they have not. If the servants of God do this in this present age, then shall they hear from His mouth when they render up account the 'well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord' (Matt. 25:21).

Further truths are illustrated for us as we consider the Roman slave. We have written a little already concerning the price God has paid to purchase us for His house. Jesus came to this earth to bring us to His Father's home. Now we are under the care and instruction of the Chief Steward of that house, who is the Holy Spirit. He is sent to 'guide us into all truth' (John 16:13). The Spirit 'shall teach you all things' (John 14:26), He shall all the while 'bring to remembrance' that which Jesus has said, and glorify Him to our hearts as He takes the things of our heavenly Master and shows them unto us (John 16:14).
Continued on next page

The importance of spending our time for God above is the principal theme of the Gospel, 'I beseech you brethren', says Paul, 'by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice: holy and acceptable, which is your reasonable sacrifice'. To be devoted like a sacrifice to Holy uses is the great business of the Christian ...

William Carey

The Holy Spirit is a most wonderful person; He is our only direct link with the Master's mind and will. Access to the Master is through Him. The first thing He does as we are put under His care by the Lord Jesus is that He washes us; at the same time He anoints us with that anointing peculiar to the House of God and then clothes us with the garments befitting a member of the heavenly, holy house. All this the Spirit of God does in the Master's Name. The importance of the ministry of the Holy Spirit should not be underestimated. In First Corinthians chapter six and verse eleven, the matter is clearly expressed: washing, sanctifying and justifying of erstwhile slaves to sin and corruption is accomplished 'in the Name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God!'

Note that justification is following upon the washing and the clothing with holiness (sanctification). How could a slave justifiably stay in the master's house if he did not experience first the washing and clothing-upon with the livery of the house? There would be no justice done to the master who had purchased him if he insisted on remaining in the woad, dirt and rags of his former life! Yet it seems that some of the Lord's people think that they can live in their former sin-state, whilst being at the same time in the house! Such things are ludicrous in the light of the aspect of truth revealed in this analogy. No wonder Paul says concerning the Corinthian saints, 'such were some of you' (1 Cor. 6:11). Note the tense he uses; it is past; homosexuality, fornication etc. etc., are part of a past life and are now actually washed away by the will of the Lord and Master, and the Holy Spirit actively applies these truths to the life. Another concept sometimes held in the churches is that justification of the believer is something unconnected with the work of the Holy Spirit, they think of it along the lines of something 'objectively done'. They also teach that it happens long before the eventual (and to them dubious) making holy of the person concerned. The person justified in God's sight is that one who has availed himself of all that He has basically provided for him in true new birth as it is revealed unto him. God justifies because we have accepted all and received the washing and the making holy by the Spirit of God. There can be no going on to other things in God's house except on this ground. No teaching and bringing up into the ministry for which one was chosen can take place unless the basic work is done which makes a man fit to walk in the Lord's House.

Some of the lessons taught to our hearts by the Spirit are very simple; how to keep ourselves clean having been initially bathed by Him: how to keep our garments in order to be presentable in His sight. 'Keep yourselves in the love of God' says Jude; 'keep yourselves unspotted from the world' is another that comes, this time from the pen of James. The Holy Spirit will instruct us as to how we can perpetuate these basic states, obeying these commands until they become habitual in our lives and therefore are built in and carried out without thought. Is it not true that after some days of instruction a slave would have

learned to wash himself and keep himself the way that his master desired? The saints of God should do just the same; these things should be quickly learned so that the Spirit can lead us on into the things pertaining to our work and role in the house.

How the tastes of the new slave would be changed. There were new foods to eat, the diet was now entirely different to that which he had known formerly in his village life. The Spirit of God leads us into these things also: how to feed, how to distinguish the various tastes. Because the House of God is directed from 'the throne of grace', it should be no surprise to find that the intrinsic taste of all the food that the Lord gives to us is 'gracious' (1 Peter 2:1-3). There can be no doubt that certain so-called churches are not fed upon the right fare. Authoritarianism does not have in it the taste of graciousness. The Holy Spirit feeds the household with such food that, whatever its form, always has the unmistakable quality of 'grace' in it. All is grace there; this is a most wonderful thing. Just to think that a man did not have to go foraging for food; he was not required to dig it up; rather the master freely gave to him all that was needful to make and keep him strong for service in the house. Bless God for these great things and blessed are those who live in the good of that which He has provided for us.

In Roman days slave-masters would have varied tremendously. Some were just and good in their dealings with their charges, handling them with care and understanding; to such a master the slave was not a mere commodity, a body for use, but a person with feelings just as himself; it was simply that the slave was in another station in life to himself. Other masters were tyrants, terrifying their slaves into abject fear which was degrading and servile. All slaves in such households would neither love their master nor work with gladness for him. The type of man elevated to the position of chief-slave would usually reflect the dominant characteristics of his master, thus he would handle the slaves with unkind arrogance or with a patient but firm understanding.

It is a great thing to know what kind of person our Master is. 'God is love', 'God is light', 'in Him there is no shadow of turning, no variableness', 'God is faithful', thus do the scriptures of truth yield up their store of statements concerning God our Master. He is like this toward His slaves; in all His dealings with us, it is love. At the beginning, when He purchased us, it was not because He had a vacancy in His House that He wanted to fill; He purchased us because of the great compassions that He has felt, and does feel, towards us in seeing us so dreadfully handled while under the bondage of satan and sin. He bought us because He loved us! In His great love He works to make us live unto Himself. 'The servant as His Lord shall be', says Wesley; it is true. God has brought us home to His house to lead us into total identification with Himself, that we should know just 'how He ticks' that we should 'tick' like Him too.

When first we enter into His House all is so new, so unfamiliar. The way that our new Master conducts things is so diverse from what we formerly experienced. Even when problems arise in the household, He handles them with such tenderness and understanding. We begin the process of a total re-education; we discover that 'His kingdom (household) is not of this world', the underlying philosophy is entirely other to that which we knew whilst we were in slavery under the elements of this world; nothing of those former ways can be incorporated into this new household; they are not fitting at all. The transition of thought taking place in the heart of the slave is not without its trauma in these early stages of learning; to find that our Master is not an austere man, hard and wielding a big stick, is quite a shock to some of the new slaves! It is with such grace that He directs everything.

There is an ease and flow in administration, all joins together in harmonious unity and runs so smoothly, as long as each slave abides in that place of obedience to the Master as he should. The implications of these truths are very great for the Church of Jesus Christ; O that they were known as they could be, and experienced and enjoyed as God would have them enjoyed. God's House is not directed with harshness, nor is it a cold, hard dictatorship. Let all elders and ministers in it take note! People in His House are not put into slots and compartmentalised. The principles of its running are not degraded into mere formulae, and dutiful actions are not the order of the day where He really reigns. Everything throbs with His life; it seems that the life of the Master permeates to every corner of the house. The Chief Steward, the Spirit of God, seems to be everywhere imbuing all with the Master's presence, thus imparting to all duties and service something of freshness and gladness. The Spirit interprets to each slave the will of the Master specifically, so that the slave is not relegated to a place of slavish obedience to principle learned earlier on; neither is the slave's duty made his lord, but the Spirit present at all times is Lord, and this turns the slave's life into one of liberty!

There is newness in every way for the slave in God's House. The atmosphere, the cultural ways, the standards and values are so different from those he had formerly known. It is only gradually that it begins to dawn upon him that he now has no cares. The only decision he has to make and maintain himself in is simply to obey his Master. He has no worries about his future, all is entirely secure, the slave can say with truth, 'I am His and He is mine', the joining is so complete, that should the Lord's House fall, he would perish with it also. There is much rest in living the life of a true slave of God: rest from anxiety; questions such as 'where shall I be in two months' time?' or 'what shall I be doing next week?' do not have relevance for him; he does not plan for himself in anything, not even in matters of marriage. The Master will lead in that particular also and will bring two together as it pleases Him. Incidentally, it is worth mentioning in this regard that a slave must marry a slave! Perhaps some of the Lord's people have not realised this: a love-slave of Jesus Christ would never want to marry a slave who owned allegiance to another master. The master himself would make the decision concerning marriage in his household, it could not be otherwise. Let those in the churches eligible for marriage who know themselves to be slaves of God marry someone whose heart is like their own!

How our heavenly Master cares for us, providing all we need when we need it, showing us what to do when it needs to be done; He does not tell us of things too early, but leads us into understanding of His will as we are able to bear it and do it. There is such simplicity in this lifestyle: 'I have no cares, O blessed will, for all my cares are thine', sums up the whole. So we leave our consideration of this subject, realising how truly carefree a slave's life is to be; he is the Lord's responsibility, taught, fed, clothed, gifted, washed by Him; the list is almost endless, indeed it embraces all that pertains to life lived here in this world!

Let this be so in us as we walk with our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, that He may be able thereby to show forth His wonderful care for His own.

God's threshing machine

God is preparing His saints for glory, and, as someone has said, the devil is His threshing machine. As with Job, everything he can touch he will touch, but only with God's permission. 'Satan hath obtained you by asking, that he might sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not'. 'This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith'.

Are you free from the trammels of this world? You have thought much of putting your life right, have you got your spirit right? If you have an independent spirit, an unyielding spirit, a grasping spirit entangled with the goods of this world, how can the Holy Spirit fill you and liberate you and give you victory over the prince of this world?

'He that is begotten of God overcometh the world', and it is then that you can overcome the spirit that is in the world.

Jessie Penn - Lewis

WITH NO DARKNESS AT ALL - PART THREE

GEORGE W. NORTH

THE CHURCH is that body in which the risen Lord lives and moves and has His being both in heaven and on earth, by the Spirit. As the Lord is the Vine of which we are the branches, so Christ lives in the body of which we are the members. In that part of His body which is yet resident here on earth, the Lord Jesus intends to continue and to increase His former works unto the salvation and deliverance of men until the time of the last trumpet.

Sadly enough, signs are not wanting to show that the modern church is and has been as neglectful of its high calling in the field of deliverance as was its ancient counterpart Israel. A reference to Ephesians 6 may suffice to confirm this. We are there exhorted to put on God's own armour which, He assures us, is a 'whole'. Itemised, the various pieces are the girdle, the breastplate, the shoes, the shield, the helmet and the sword.

Cap - à - Pie

Now, in much that is both spoken and written about this passage, as apart from holy writ, there is an almost total silence concerning the shoes, as though they were of insignificant meaning as compared with the five other pieces. But the armour is a whole; it is a panoply - the 'suit' that Jesus Himself wore. Surely Paul who wrote about it and countless other saints of God who have worn the whole armour of God must have known precisely what each piece, including the shoes, represented. Seeing that the whole point of the exhortation is to 'stand ... withstand ... and having done all, to stand ...' it surely must be of vital importance that we understand what we are to stand in, as well as what we are to wear whilst standing.

The Lord Jesus Himself furnishes us with the key when He instructed His disciples to preach peace to cities and households. They were to use healing from sickness and deliverance from spirits as the overtures of peace to the people. These were the shoes they were to wear on their mission to men. Differing only as two of a pair they were, 'the preparation of the gospel of peace' as worn by the Lord Himself.

By these they gained entrance into the homes and hearts of the people and predisposed them to listen to the gospel, and receive the King Himself who had declared that He would follow in their wake. Healing and deliverance are the shoes that we are still to wear as we wage war with the enemy in heavenly places and seek entrance into the homes and hearts of men.

It is a thousand pities that obscurity of understanding in this glorious aspect of the 'whole' truth has left us well girded, plated and shielded, with head covered and sword in hand - but unshod. To

think we are 'cap-a-pie' when all the time our 'Achilles' heel' is visibly exposed in that we possess no shoes to give us entrance for the gospel of peace, is virtually to render ourselves a laughing stock to our ever-mocking adversary.

Achilles' Heel

Feet, to be 'beautiful', must be shod with this 'preparation' in order to turn defensive, insurmountable barrier-mountains into a 'way'. We must stand and walk in these shoes; we must approach people in these shoes, or they will never want to hear our gospel. Indeed, unless deliverance is administered first, many will not even be able to hear the good news, for they are cut off and isolated unto destruction, whose ears are deaf and whose eyes are blinded by Satan and his hosts.

If whilst among men the Lord Himself found it necessary to be so shod and insisted that His immediate followers were equally well shod, how shall we be found standing in this our day except it be in the same shoes? These are those sandals that never wear out; received by direct heredity from Jesus Christ and worn by command, they fit the feet of all who are called to wear them. Moreover, they expand to the growing requirements of each one who aspires to develop from childhood to a full grown man in Christ.

There can be little doubt that the church has lost much of its former glory and authority through failing to stand upright in these divine shoes. Alas! She has put off her shoes, and, it seems, knows not how to put them on again. But there is no substitute for them. Training in medicine and psychiatry does not replace them. She cannot stand against the wiles of the devil without them, nor in any other, for hosts of wicked spirits are themselves producing 'cures' and 'healings' and 'pseudo-deliverances' in mocking derision, humiliating the church and thereby 'getting at' the enthroned Christ.

Perhaps it holds a deeper significance than first meets the eye that the miracle immediately recorded after the descent of the Spirit of God at Pentecost, is that of the healing of the man who had been lame from his birth, lying at the gate of the temple. He had foot trouble! But beautiful feet, well shod with the 'preparation' were approaching the gate. The right hand of power worked in the name of Jesus; the feet received strength; they leaped, they stood, they walked, they entered ... and later, the man stood there before the council whole; and they could say nothing against it. I wonder if, being healed, the man himself put on the whole armour of God, including the shoes so blessed to him?

No Need Of Deliverance...

In the narrative of the Acts this miracle is the major connecting link between the account of the descent and 'embodiment' of the Holy Ghost in the waiting disciples at Pentecost and the audacious request in chapter 4:29,30. These saints recognised it to be a 'sign and wonder' and were emboldened to ask for more just to prove to the people that Jesus was both Lord and Christ. Of course, they never knew their request would have such far-reaching and solemn consequences, nor that in the process of fulfilment of God's next great sign to men, Ananias and Sapphira would die.

This second great awesome wonder produced amazing results. Prohibitive and purifying within the church, it was preventative and productive among the people; for whilst 'no man durst join himself to them', nevertheless, 'believers were the more added to the Lord'...

This may be the fundamental reason why it is impossible to find one instance recorded in this narrative of any individual needing any kind of deliverance subsequent to regeneration. It seems that such a radical work was accomplished immediately prior to, or at the point of, each one's addition to Christ and inclusion in His body, that nothing else remained to be done but to abide and grow in Him.

A relationship was established with Christ in His body that superseded and precluded all contrary states of spirit and soul. And this is that truest life of the church on earth; it is an experience of unbroken and unclouded enjoyment of the identical inward states of spirit and soul known by the Man Jesus of Nazareth in the flesh. This in terms of practical attainment is what is meant by 'knowing Jesus Christ after the Spirit'; not an approximation thereto, but an identification therewith. Though absolute in Him, being God the Son; it is but relative in us, being sons of God. Nevertheless, upon fulfilment of the conditions, this life is invariably supplied and maintained exactly as it was in Him, by the same Spirit through faith, according to the word of God and the blood of Christ; through the life, intercession, mediation and ministry of our crucified and risen Lord.

... After Regeneration!

It would be foolish and harmful to assert that no-one ever entered the early church except he was physically fit; there are no grounds for deducing or surmising any such thing. But it is equally foolish and harmful to think that God has provided salvation-deliverance for the spirit and soul of man whilst making no provision for his physical body. A frank reading of the Acts reveals that miracles of healing and deliverance were used where necessary to prepare the way for the gospel proper, by which the beneficiaries of the healing power of God, and the

witnesses thereof, were graciously initiated into the body of Christ, whereby in turn, the Lord showered His love upon them.

We need not here be occupied with theological or doctrinaire matters, neither questions concerning the relationship of the atonement to healing, and such things; but solely with a loving God. It is most unlikely and it would be uncharacteristic indeed if our heavenly Father who knows so well how to give good gifts to His children, should arrange that two thirds - even the most important two thirds - of a human being may benefit from Christ and not the whole ...

Beyond, and to some it may seem, far beyond the sense and measure in which our bodies are ethically and morally related to the spirit and soul indwelling them, the Lord has made provision for our mortal bodies - flesh and blood, bone and marrow, nerve and cell.

But the order previously noted in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 (spirit, soul and body) is beyond question the order of importance in the realm of deliverance. Though the method of approach to needy man may be through some miracle of divine healing or other work of power wrought upon his body, the spirit of man is God's objective. And if this is not immediately reached, then it must be the ultimate objective lest a 'worse thing' befall the subject of the miracle and this in turn worsen to a 'last state'. And should that happen, then void indeed of eternal fruit has been the miracle.

It is, therefore, profitable to us to distinguish the things that differ in that most important two thirds of man: spirit and soul.

Psychiatry ...

The scriptures clearly state that it is the word of God which pierces 'unto the dividing asunder of soul and spirit'. We are not told that anything else can do this; and it would appear from this and from the writings of men, as well as from observation, that man of himself cannot distinguish between soul and spirit - and no great discredit to him either, for the two are so intentionally integrated by God within the human personality as to be in many things totally identified with each other.

Thus they are impossible of division or even distinction to investigators, however learned, who have not God nor believe His written word, or speak His word in and by the Holy Spirit. Because of this, much of the benefit we could receive from the researches and discoveries of clever and dedicated men is invalidated; for he who sets out atheistically or agnostically to investigate mind as distinct from, or opposed to, spirit and soul, has already fore-doomed himself to failure. He can never perceive the true cause(s) of the trouble he seeks to eliminate, nor can he promise or promote a perfect 'cure', for he deals only with symptoms.

His best attempts, therefore, are but experiments and his end-products but palliatives. And this is chiefly because his theories take no more account of

that most essential part of man which is spirit, than they do of God who is Spirit, nor of sin which is of the spirit, nor of the devil ... nor, in short, of anything which is spiritual in essential nature, quality or character.

Let me illustrate. Quite recently a young Spirit-filled person mentioned that he had heard the Lord speaking to him. The result? He was seriously advised and even pressed by the medical people to see a psychiatrist! And any-one who happens to say that he or she has seen the devil (often a manifestation of an evil spirit) is quite commonly regarded as 'certifiable', especially if signs of mental illness or emotional stress are evident.

Seeing that so many who are needing the deliverance of God are being turned aside to a science falsely so called, it is vital that in this paper we take a close look at the situation as it is with us today. Paul was commissioned of God thus: '... I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God ...' Blindness, darkness and the power of Satan are prevalent fundamental conditions in which men exist; neither are men lightly to be blamed or condemned out of hand because they turn to other men for the help they ought to have from the church. For this pseudo-science has been almost universally accepted and substituted for the truths of the Bible, the preaching of God's word and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. And that not only by the openly acknowledged opponents of the gospel, but also by many of the supposed ministers of Christ themselves.

... Is Not The Answer

Now, this whole trend has to be reversed. Psychiatry does not hold the answer to man's needs, and though its practitioners genuinely seek to help their fellow-men, they mostly operate from a wrong basis. The gospel alone holds the key, and the Bible is the handbook of deliverance. Therefore, one of the major tasks confronting a church newly awakening to the need of deliverance in this age, is to re-educate people in Bible terminology.

We must replace and instil into the minds and mouths of men the original God-given words and terms of the scripture of truth, however despised they may be. Words invented by minds shy of the truth have been substituted for Spirit-breathed words that state exactly what God means, and describe with infallible accuracy man's true inward and, for that matter, outward condition.

The Bible is not a treatise on psychology, but whenever it speaks of man it is absolutely right in the same way as it is also unerringly correct when it speaks of God. Neither Freud, Adler, Jung nor any other mere man wrote the original classic textbook on man-soul. It was God. And that book is the Bible. It is God's word on the subject and it is final.

Therefore it is better - in fact, imperative - that the church of Jesus Christ chooses to use 'words which the Holy Ghost teacheth' instead of the pseudo-scientific jargon coined by man in attempting to analyse and understand himself. And this, not in

order to be reconciled to God, but to come to terms with himself and/or with life and become a useful, integrated member of society. At best psychiatry is but humanism.

Pseudo-scientific Jargon

It must ever be borne in mind that almost all, if not the entire output of unregenerate man upon the subject of human personality is the product of minds conditioned by an education based upon the Bible denying theory of evolution. Such men use terms specifically designated to eliminate spiritual truth from the heart and aim at total destruction of faith in Christ.

The Bible reveals man as having fallen from an original innocence in which our first parents walked in communion with God. Modern psychology having perforce to write its own textbook, or at best refer us back but a generation or so for its unwarrantable assumptions, sets aside this revelation, for the myth that humanity is evolving into perfect manhood and only needs ridding of its many inhibitions, complexes and environmental anomalies to be utterly free.

To the extent then that psychiatry profounds basic assumptions contrary to God's word, it is part of the devil's overall plan to waste the church of Jesus Christ and destroy the faith from the earth. It is an enemy of the gospel, a dangerous snare to humanity and an end-time deception. Mankind must convert to a wholehearted acceptance of the true revelation from God ere it can know proper deliverance; and fundamental to this is the Bible with its gospel of redemption for the whole man, spirit, soul and body, through the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

When God breathed into the dust the breath (spirit) of life, man 'became' a living soul. Spirit then is greater than soul or body, for the body was formed of the dust of the ground; whilst the soul just did not have any being at all until spirit, direct from God, was breathed into and subsisted in the 'form'.

Spirit exists and expresses itself in and through the body, in and as a soul; and it is identifiable to man only as that soul. Man cannot distinguish spirit from soul; although spirit is without doubt transcendently superior to soul. Man's spirit is to man intangible, undefinable and immeasurable. Though to many unbelievers the human spirit is non-existent, nevertheless in every person on this earth it is there; the real 'I', either dead or alive according to its relationship with God. And in all deliverances. the Lord works primarily towards, upon, and/or within the spirit of man.

Here let us distinguish between healing and deliverance; that is, between that which is deliverance in character, or of a kind, and that which is deliverance proper. We have previously noticed that to live as God's chosen people in conditions prepared by Him, is to know constant deliverance from all contrary or lesser states. That is deliverance in kind, but not deliverance properly so-called.

Perhaps this difference may be more readily grasped if we note that in 1 Corinthians 12 there is a distinction made between 'miracles' and 'healings'. Both are proper gifts of the Spirit, but quite distinct the one from the other. Equally with all other gifts, 'healing' is miraculous in nature, inception, operation and result. But 'miracles' though quite capable of ministering healing to those in need, is normally reserved for works of power, outside of and beyond the range of the gift of 'healing'.

So, in like sense, deliverance functions in a manner peculiar to itself. Embracing both 'healings' and 'miracles', and quite likely using other of the the gifts and powers of the Spirit as well, true deliverance is beyond simple healing from sickness; it ministers freedom to every part of the human nature-person-personality, spirit-soul-body.

Deliverance then, properly so-called, is spiritual. The Spirit and power of God operates through the spirit of a regenerate man, upon the spirit of another man, and from there by intention unto and upon the whole of that human being. This kind of deliverance should be preached and practised as part of the gospel unto the uttermost part of the world.

BIBLE STUDY

EDITOR

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

We are told by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:14 that 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolish unto him: neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned'. Also in his letter to the Ephesian Church he expresses something of his prayer life for those who were held in love in his pastoral heart, even though he was in the restriction of a Roman prison cell. Ephesians 1:17 '... that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of REVELATION in the knowledge of him'.

In our Epistle the word 'MANIFEST' (GK phaneroo, phaneros:- manifest or manifested) both in its form as a verb, and as an adjective is used to underline the fact that at all stages of God's dealings with us, we are taught by revelation, and not natural understanding. The meaning of the Greek word is: to make apparent, show openly, make manifest or know. It is used in 1 John 1:2 where the Apostle John explains that the Eternal entered time and was manifested to men. The Word became flesh and thus presented Himself to the three higher senses of man (hearing, sight and touch). This audible and visible and experience of handling of that which was from the beginning was only possible because God chose that THE LIFE WAS MANIFESTED in the miraculous fact of the incarnation (Cp John 1:1-18)

In the third chapter the word translated manifest occurs again on three occasions: declaring three of the principle purposes that any revelation given by the Lord in the sphere of our ministerial life should by the operation of the Holy Spirit show today.

VERSE 2 - we are told we can have no complete understanding of the blessing that anoints the child of God, but are assured that when the Saviour is MANIFESTED at His Second Coming, 'we shall see Him as He is' and shall then be 'like Him' (for reference of seeing God or Christ in Heaven Cp Matt. 5:8, John 17:23, 1 Cor. 13:12, 2 Cor. 5:7, Heb. 12:14, 1 Pet. 1:8, Rev. 1:7 and Rev. 22:14). This principle stands true for us also today, that in whatever degree, we are to minister by revelation something of what we are in Him.

VERSE 5 - the theme of the manifestation of Christ to the world and in our own hearts is 'to take away our sins'. John 1:29, Heb. 1:3. The same thought is found in 1 John 4:9-10. So it is that as the Saviour was through the incarnation brought into this world to destroy sin in the flesh, it continues to be the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the Body of Christ to help expose the existence of sin and direct the hearts of men and women to Christ. This continues through to our function in the revelatory ministry.

VERSE 8 - here is another reason for His manifestation. 'To destroy (loose, unbind, sever) the works of the devil' (Cf Luke 4:18). This verse describes the purpose of Jesus' authority. So we are to move also in our authority of the Holy Ghost to continue to verbally pronounce and act in the ministry of the Spirit that which Jesus Himself 'BEGAN to do and to preach'.

'Such an emphasis on the historical revelation of the invisible and intangible is still needed today, not least by the scientist trained in the empirical method, the radical who regards much in the Gospels as 'myths' (but you cannot 'demythologize' the incarnation) and the mystic who tends to become preoccupied with his subjective religious experience to the neglect of God's objective self-revelation in Christ'.

John R.W. Stott

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In this issue:

- 1 He Deceiveth The People.....G.W.North
- 4 FruitfulnessN. Meeten
- 6 The AnointingG.W. North
- 9 Your Fear Is An Asset.....E. Parkyns
- 12 Spiritual Slavery.....B.Hull
- 15 With No Darkness At All.....G.W.North
- 18 Bible Study.....Editor