

## "THOU PREPAREST A TABLE BEFORE ME."

– PSALM 23:5. –

When the Lord prepares a table we may be sure of several things: first, that it will be clean; secondly, that it will be good; thirdly, that it will be orderly, bountiful and beautiful. And wherever we find the truth thus carefully set before the household of faith – whether by the press, the pen or the pulpit – there we may be sure the spirit of the Lord has been at work, directing and superintending the matter. The Prophet Isaiah (Chapter 28:8), referring to the tables of popular theology now spread before the masses of nominal Christians, graphically described their present condition when he said, "For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean." For centuries past they have been feeding on the miserable husks of human tradition, until now a reaction has set in and they are vomiting forth the abominable stuff, and their tables are full of filthiness.

Then again there are many more tables being spread with new traditions and human speculations, to which those are promptly invited who turn away in disgust from the old, polluted tables. In all of this the great adversary of the Church is diligently and faithfully at work with all his accustomed craft and cunning, using with great effect both the press and the platform, the two most potent agencies for reaching the people.

It is an increasingly popular idea among religious journalists that such a journal should be a medium merely for the expression of all shades of human opinion upon all matters of divine revelation, and that each individual should abstract from them all what he conceives to be true, and reject the rest. But this is precisely what the readers, and often the editors, too, of such journals are unable to do, and the general confusion is only

increased unto greater blindness and denser darkness, and thus the purpose of the adversary is accomplished.

There is a deep responsibility to God which every man assumes, whether he realizes it or not, when he becomes a public teacher. "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall *teach* men so, he shall be called *the least* in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever *shall do* and *teach* them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." – Matt. 5:19.

No table is fit for the household of faith to be summoned to that has not been spread by careful hands, fully submitted and obedient to the great Head of the house, whose directions are found in his Word. God says (Hab. 2:2) to some to whom he has granted a measure of ability to serve the household, and who (verse 1) are watching (studying his Word) to know what he would have them communicate – "Write the vision [what you have seen of divine truth] and make it plain upon tablets." That is, set it out in an orderly, systematic manner, "that he may run that readeth it" – that he may run for the prize. Observe that it is not every man that is called to make the truth plain, but that some of the class specified are called to do so for the benefit of all the rest. In the Scriptures there are many surface truths which all may see and appreciate, but the systematic ordering of the divine plan, much of which was purposely hidden and obscurely expressed, and the bringing out of its wonderful details, was left for an appointed time. And when the appointed time has come and the faithful watcher is led to *see* the systematic harmony of divine truth – not to guess at it, or to surmise about it, but to *see it*, so plainly that he can clearly, logically and Scripturally demonstrate it to others – then it becomes the privilege of such a **[R1475 : page 359]** one to make plain to others what the Lord has made plain to him. And such a one may consider his ability in this direction (together with a possible opportunity and a strong love

for the saints, which longs to bless them with a fuller knowledge of God and to exhort and stimulate them to greater faithfulness) as the Lord's call to him to make it plain.

But such should remember that the commission is to "*make it plain,*" not to make it obscure. And if a man has no truth to make plain, but is only seeking for truth, he makes a great mistake in launching out his crude and inharmonious ideas for the confusion of other minds. Such a one should maintain the proper attitude of a disciple, a learner, until he does see clearly and is thus fitted to become a teacher of others. And if he is a faithful student, studying to show himself a workman approved unto God, ere long he may enjoy the privilege of declaring the truth to others through some medium, and be greatly blessed in so doing.

Let none of the consecrated be in haste to rush into print with crude, undefined ideas, and thus become stumbling-blocks in the way of many others. Be content to spread the truth you have received, and proved to your thorough satisfaction, before some other hungry saints; but keep the table clean: don't make up for your deficiency of knowledge by spreading out a host of idle speculations. Better is a pure morsel from a clean table than great abundance under other conditions. By and by to this morsel another morsel will be added, and in due time the wealth of divine bounty will be realized.

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