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ENCOURAGING WORDS FROM FAITHFUL WORKERS

DEAR BROTHER: – I am glad that I am able to inform you that we are still strong in the faith, and growing in grace: we have good meetings, without strife or contention. Our only regret is, that there are so few of us.

There is a point on which we would like further advice from you. You advise us to mingle with other Christians, in their churches, at prayer meetings and revivals, and to take part with them.

Now, if, as we understand, the nominal church of to-day is in much the same condition that the Jewish church was in at the time of Christ, is it not *wrong* to help them, knowing as we do that they do a great many things that they ought not to do, if so be it increase their denominational greatness, and that every one that they convert to their way of thinking is being led that much farther from the truth?

The church here (Methodist) will not listen to even a hint about future probation, and would not even allow me to attempt to show whether a certain passage was figurative or literal.

Your brother in the race,

J. N. SHOEMAKER.

[REPLY. The spirit of our advice is that we do not hold ourselves aloof from our fellows who *profess* to love the Lord and to respect his Word, whatever denominational names they may have erroneously adopted or whatever creed-fences they may have been deluded into putting around them. We know, from our own experiences, that they need just what we have – "the bread of life" and "the water of life" – the Truth; and this we long to give them.

But our love and zeal must not lead us to intrude upon these blinded friends, if they refuse to make us welcome, or to hear our loving message; nor to ignore the truth and remain silent where error is free and where truth is bound hand and foot; we must find other more willing ears or [R1768 : page 36] adopt other methods. Above all we must not misrepresent our Lord and his Word and our own honor by professing what we do not believe in the form of a Church creed or confession. "He that is ashamed of me and my Word, ...of him will I also be ashamed before my Father and his holy angels." – EDITOR.]

DEAR BRO. RUSSELL: – I know you are always busy, and for that reason I would not trouble you unnecessarily; but I feel that it would be of great benefit to the Church here and in the vicinity, if you would give your opinion upon a point about which there has existed a difference, and which has come to the surface.

The question is, "How are we begotten by the Spirit of God? Does the new life come to us as individuals direct from God, or through Jesus Christ, who is "Head over all things to the Church?"

A brother recently made this sweeping statement in public: "The Lord Jesus has nothing whatever to do with the selection of the Bride." Another brother, when I asked him whether he believed that we could deal directly with God apart from Christ said, Most assuredly; and said in plain terms that this favor was something that the Father gave to each individual after justification by faith, and we were begotten of God independently of the Lord.

Now I cannot see why there should be this difference in view of the plain Scripture teaching. My understanding of the matter is that we have our relations to the Father as sons, only because we are *in* Christ; and if we were out of Christ, we should be in condemnation (Rom. 6); that we are anointed *in Him* by God (2 Cor. 1:21); and that the anointing with the Spirit of adoption comes to us from God *through* Christ the Lord. "He (God) saved us ...according

to his own mercy, through the bath of regeneration, and a renovation of the *holy Spirit*, which he *poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ*, our Savior." – Tit. 3:5,6.

Referring to the type of anointing the High Priest, of which the Church are members, we find in *Tabernacle Shadows*, p. 23: – "This oil typified the holy Spirit of adoption whereby we, the real Royal Priesthood, are sealed;" and (p. 32), "As Aaron had the holy oil poured upon his head, so our Head, the Lord Jesus, was anointed with the antitypical oil – the holy Spirit....The anointing oil was poured *only upon the head. The under-priests were not anointed individually.*"

Many similar explanations occur in the *Tabernacle Shadows*, one other of which I quote (p. 54): –

"Just as soon as the sacrifice of Jesus on behalf of his 'Body' and 'house' was complete and presented before the Father, after his ascension, came the evidence of his acceptance in the Pentecostal baptism upon the representatives of the Church, his body and his house. *And this anointing* (symbolized by the oil), which came upon the Church, continues ever since on all the living members of the High Priest's body. This impartation of the divine mind to those consecrated ones was the energy in them which killed each as the Lord's goat. This coming of the holy Spirit, the Lord's power or 'hand' at Pentecost, was shown in the type by the *High Priest* coming to the door of the Tabernacle and laying hands upon the Lord's (Jehovah's) goat and killing it. Just as the *Spirit of the Father* enabled Jesus to sacrifice himself, represented by the killing of the bullock, so it is the *same spirit* or influence of the truth, *through Christ*, upon the 'Lord's goat' class, which enables them to crucify themselves as men – to kill the goat – in hope of the promised glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature."

The manner in which the members receive life from the body, the branches from the vine, also illustrates how the supply of God's

spirit reaches the members of the Church. Our sacrifices and death are acceptable only because reckoned in with his perfect offering. Our death and resurrection are part of his. We will be raised by the power of God which raised Jesus, but the power will be *exercised by* "the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform the Body of our humiliation into a conformity with his glorious body, according to the energy (God given) by which he is able even to subject all things to himself." (Phil. 3:21.) It is *through him* that the Father leads forth those who sleep in Jesus at his coming. – 1 Thes. 4:14.

It seems to me that we ought to be very guarded in making radical statements which may not be in touch with the truth at all points. There is danger of stumbling some at the very threshold of present knowledge, by appearing to ignore or detract from the all-sufficiency of the blessed Lord. "You are in the anointed Jesus, who became our wisdom from God, righteousness also, and sanctification and redemption [deliverance]; that as it has been written, Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord." – 1 Cor. 1:30-31.

Yours in the one spirit,

E. C. MOTT.

P.S. Please explain in the same connection Col. 3:23,24.

REPLY BY THE EDITOR: – It is well that we keep clearly in view the facts, that the *world* during the Millennium will recognize Christ as their Life-giver or Father (the "Everlasting Father"), and will have no introduction to Jehovah until the close of the Millennium, when those only who shall have reached *perfection* and been found worthy of everlasting life will be presented. But the Church, the "Bride," the "Brethren," the "joint-heirs" of Christ are granted fellowship with the Father Jehovah from the time of their begetting of the spirit, when they *consecrate* themselves, being previously "justified by faith."

This, undoubtedly, is the point which the Brethren mentioned have in mind. However, they should not forget that our standings, both as justified men and afterward as sanctified new creatures, are not *actual*, but merely *reckoned* standings, before Jehovah. We can maintain the *reckoned* acceptance only by abiding in Christ. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me;" and "He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide [R1769 : page 36] not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered."

To reject the continual necessity for the covering of Christ's robe of imputed righteousness would be to attempt to stand judgment before God's bar in our own filthy rags of unrighteousness – an impossibility, an absurdity. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Heb. 10:31.) He has provided a shelter for us in Christ which covers our unwilful weaknesses and imperfections; and to reject it first or last would be to do despite to the favor of God therein extended to us.

We commend all that you have said above, dear Bro. Mott, and are glad that you see the subject so clearly. We would add to the texts you have cited just three more; viz., Acts 2:33; John 5:23 and Eph. 1:6.

Col. 3:23,24 is in agreement with all this. "One is your Master [Lord], even Christ." Of him we shall receive the inheritance, even as of him we received the foretaste of it. He received from his Father and our Father, his God and our God, all that he has given or will give to us. (John 20:17.) And so fully is the will of Christ the Father's will, that to serve the one is to serve the other also.
