

## WHAT WE PREACH AND TEACH

**"For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." – 1 Corinthians 2:2.**

AT NO time in the Church's history has our great Adversary been so active in multiplying false doctrines and in diverting attention from the Truth by introducing unprofitable and irrelevant questions as at present. Just when the exaltation and glory of the Church are soon to be accomplished, and when the faithful are about to be received into the joy of their Lord, every device is resorted to to beguile them of their reward and to frustrate this feature of the Divine Plan. To really frustrate any part of the Divine Plan is impossible: God has purposed to take out from among men a Little Flock, "a people for His name," a Royal Priesthood; and such a company is assuredly being gathered; but whether all of those now in the race for the Prize will surely be of that number, is still an open question. Take heed, beloved, that no man take thy Crown. (Revelation 3:11.) If any come short of their privileges and prove unworthy of the inheritance, there are others who will fill their places.

We beseech you, brethren, as you value the glorious hope set before you in the Gospel, that you give no heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, as the Apostle terms them (1 Timothy 4:1); but that, with fixedness of purpose, you apply yourselves to the ***one thing*** to which you are called and are privileged to do as prospective members of that Royal Priesthood. Let us never forget that we are a "peculiar people," separate from the great body of nominal Christians, as well as from the world, having higher hopes, aims and ambitions and favored with a clearer insight into the deep things of God, having been called out of our former darkness into His marvelous light. And if thus separate from the world and from Christians who partake largely of the spirit of the world, what wonder if we find them all out of harmony with us, and either ignoring or opposing us!

## OPPOSITION TO BE EXPECTED

Such opposition is to be expected and will, doubtless, continue until we finish our course in death. To submit patiently to this opposition is to sacrifice our own *natural* preferences for the friendship and the pleasures of the present life, and to endure hardness as good soldiers for the Truth's sake, in whatever shape that hardness may come, in our effort to do the Lord's will and work of advancing the interests of His Kingdom. This is what is meant by the presenting of our bodies living sacrifices in the Divine service. To be really in this service involves, First, the careful and continual study of God's Plan; Second, the imbibing of its spirit; leading, Thirdly, to an enthusiastic zeal for its accomplishment, and to activity to the extent of ability in its service, at whatever cost or sacrifice it may require.

If we are faithful in this service we have no time, nor have we the disposition, to give heed either to false doctrines or to other themes which have no bearing on the *one thing* to which we have solemnly dedicated our lives. Our time is not our own if we have dedicated all to God; and consequently, we have none to spare for the investigation of fanciful false theories, built upon other foundations than that laid down in the Scriptures. Neither have we time to devote to the ideas and pursuits which engross the world's attention, many of which are harmless in themselves, but would be harmful to us if we were to allow them to occupy consecrated time and divert our attention from the *one thing* we ought to be doing. The Apostle warns us to "shun profane babblings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness"; but adds, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth." "Teach no other doctrine; neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than godly edifying which is in faith." – 2 Timothy 2:15,16; 1 Timothy 1:3,4.

## NOT HIGHER CRITICISM NOR EVOLUTION

Ours is not the gospel of the Higher Critics and Evolutionists. We cheerfully accord these friends of a modern gospel their liberty to believe as they think proper, reminding them, however, of the warning words of the Apostle Paul in Galatians 1:6-9. Our own faith is firmly planted on the Bible as the only Divine Revelation of the will and Plan of our Creator. But this does not mean that we believe the Bible to teach all that our well-meaning forefathers of the Dark Ages supposed were its doctrines. We find that they burned one another at the stake for disbelieving things that the Bible does not teach.

The growing scepticism of today regarding God and the Bible, we find, is generally the outgrowth of a misunderstanding of the Bible's teaching respecting *Hell*. No sane man can be blamed for rejecting the old theory that God first made a roasting Hell, and then made a race, knowing that all would spend an awful eternity there, except the few who would hear of Christ and become saints. This blasphemy against our Creator's holy name needs to be rebuked. The people need to be taught what the educated clergy and laity already know – that the only Hebrew word translated "hell" is SHEOL, and that [R5970 : page 308] its Greek equivalent is HADES, and that neither word signifies a place of torment, but the *tomb*, the *grave*, the state of *unconsciousness*, in which both good and bad must remain after death until the resurrection, which is to follow the Second Coming of the Redeemer.

The literature of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY has helped thousands along this line, as we go into details of explanation of the parables, dark sayings and symbolisms of the Bible, which other Bible teachers do not find time for, with their many and varied cares connected with modern church activity. In a word, the work of our Society is conducted on the belief that the Bible is Divinely inspired, and that we are now living in the wonderful Day,

mentioned by the Prophets, when "the wise shall understand," when they shall receive "meat in due season" from God's wonderful Book. By the "wise" we mean, of course, those who are wise toward God, not the worldly-wise.

## **OUR VIEWS OF THE MILLENNIUM**

If our understanding of the Bible's teaching is correct, we are on the threshold of the Millennium. And this fact explains not only the progress of invention and natural science, but also the finishing of the Mystery respecting God's gracious purposes for our race, foretold in the Bible in symbols and types. However, our expectations of the Millennium are along different lines than some might suppose. We find no Scriptures to teach that the world will be converted by our commendable missionary efforts or any other efforts. To us the Bible teaches that the conversion of the world will follow the Second Advent of our Redeemer to gather His Elect Church (the saints out of all denominations), that they, changed to the spirit nature, may be, under their Lord and Head, the teachers, guides and helpers of the remainder of the race – those now dead as well as the living nations – to uplift all the willing and obedient from sin and death to perfection and everlasting life on earth, which will then, during those Times of Restitution, become Paradise restored.

Statistics agree that the Millennium is not coming by the conversion of the heathen; for there are twice as many today as there were a century ago, notwithstanding all our missionary efforts. On the contrary, we must agree that the signs of the times presage the near approach of the culmination of the great "Time of Trouble such as never was since there was a nation," by which, the Scriptures assure us, Messiah's Kingdom will be ushered in, to "bless all the families of the earth."

## SCRIPTURAL TERMS AND SCRIPTURAL ORDINATION

Perhaps we should explain that we do not recognize as Biblical the terms "clergy" and "laity," nor the titles "Reverend," "Doctor of Divinity," and other similar appellations now in vogue. This, however, does not lead us to disfellowship those who differ from us. We use the Scriptural terms "Pastor," "Evangelist," "Teacher," "Elder," "Deacon," etc., and recognize that all of God's consecrated people are ministers – that is, servants – each authorized to serve his brethren as his talent may permit and as the brethren may desire. As for *ordination*, we cannot accept as Scriptural the theory of the "Apostolic Succession," and that the specific power or authority comes from men to men. We hold that the anointing of the Holy Spirit alone gives the power and the authority to understand and explain the Scriptures.

## HOW ERRORS OF THE PAST CREPT IN

The Editor is being attacked at present by about one-fourth of all the ministers of the world, simply because we preach the Bible Message voiced by the angel at the birth of Jesus: "Behold, I bring you *good tidings* of *great joy*, which shall be unto ALL PEOPLE!" (Luke 2:10,11.) That good Message of God's Love and of His merciful provision in Jesus' death for the sins of the whole world began to be lost sight of in the close of the second century. The doctrine of "Apostolic Succession" led the people of that time to respect the bishops as successors to the Divinely-ordained Twelve – St. Paul, and not Matthias, taking the place of Judas.

It is not to be wondered at, that at a time when ability to read was not general, when Bibles were few and expensive, and when this doctrine of Apostolic Succession [R5971 : page 308] had gotten a foothold in the Church, the people hearkened to the so-called Apostolic Bishops. It is not wonderful that those bishops liked to be considered authorities. For fourteen centuries there was no Bible

Study – merely a study and worship of *creeds*. Bibles were publicly burned, and those who dared to study the Bible and accept its statements were hunted like the wild beasts of the forest – even in Scotland.

The Reformation Movement brought the Bible forward, but its friends had much of the smoke of the Dark Ages still in the eyes of their understanding. As one leader after another prayed, "Lead, kindly light, amidst the encircling gloom," and rubbed his eyes, new sects were started, all endeavoring to reach the *light*, yet all acknowledging that the *creeds*, for which many of them *died*, were not satisfactory to either their hearts or their heads.

### **PRESENT ERRORS AND OPPOSITION TO LIGHT**

Now we have come to a time when the various divisions of God's people have too much enlightenment to burn each other at the stake, and when they are disposed to federate, and to ignore their differences. Meantime, Higher Criticism has come in and has turned a majority of Christian preachers away from the Bible entirely. But they are still tied to their sects and to the creeds which they no longer believe.

Meantime, in God's providence, the Bible has come into the hands of the people. Education is now general, and Bible helps are abundant. This seems to be, according to the Bible and facts, a favored time for God's people to obtain proper knowledge of His Word. With others, the Editor has been greatly blessed in studying the Bible and in making clear to others its true meaning. We have been doing this for the past forty years without serious objection, until recent years. The objection now is that the teaching of ourself and our associates of the INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION is beginning to exercise a world-wide influence. We have Bible Study Helps printed in thirty-two different languages. We have Bible Study Classes in all parts of the earth. This leads some of the ministers to consider our work a menace – just as the Episcopalians once thought

the Presbyterians and the Methodists a menace, as the Jews thought the early Christians a menace to their institutions, and just as the Baptists thought others a menace to them, etc.

As we make clear the meaning of our Lord's parables and dark sayings, and show the harmony of the Bible's teaching from Genesis to Revelation, the creeds of the Dark Ages become unpalatable, nauseating. As some of the best people renounce these creeds, the class of preachers alluded to become bitter. Unable to meet our Scriptural arguments, they indulge in personal abuse and invective, with a view to hindering people from hearing us and from reading our publications. But nevertheless the work goes grandly on, with increasing momentum. Those who get their eyes of understanding open are prompt to help others. As the people learn the real motives of the attacks which are being made upon us, they have less sympathy [R5971 : page 309] for those making the attacks, and are more disposed to investigate our teachings.

### **ALL NEEDED BIBLE HELPS NOW AVAILABLE**

We have never claimed to be a finished scholar in either Greek or Hebrew. More than this, we claim that not one minister in a thousand, of any denomination, is a scholar in these languages. The ability to read the Greek and Hebrew alphabets, and to spell out the words in these languages, is not *scholarship*; nor does it follow that the person able to do so has thereby any knowledge of these languages. By *scholarship* we mean thorough understanding of the grammatical construction of a language.

Furthermore, we claim that in God's providence such knowledge is not necessary to the right understanding of the Word of God. Bible students today have access to numerous translations of the Bible made by the scholarly *few*. More than this, the Presbyterians have Young's Greek, Hebrew and English Lexicon-Concordance; the Methodists have Strong's Analytical Greek, Hebrew, Chaldaic and English Lexicon-Concordance. Besides these, there is the Englishman's

unsectarian work, covering the same ground; Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon, McClintock and Strong's Criticisms, the Emphatic Diaglott, which has the original Greek text with interlineary word for word English translation, and parallel emphatic version in English, etc.

The value of such concordances as an aid to the correct understanding of the Scriptures cannot be over-estimated. In the preface to "Young's Analytical Concordance," the author says of his work: "Its great object, as Tyndale says of his New Testament, is to enable every 'PLOUGH-BOY' to know more of the Scriptures than the 'ancients,' by enabling him at a glance to find out **THREE DISTINCT POINTS** – *First*, What is the *original* Hebrew or Greek of any ordinary word in his English Bible; *Second*, What is the *Literal* and primitive meaning of every original word: and *Third*, What are thoroughly true and reliable *parallel passages*."

Whoever has these works in his possession, and knows how to *use* them, and *does use them*, has a better working knowledge of the Hebrew, Greek and Chaldaic of the original Bible than could be gained by four years' study of these languages. We possess these books and many others, and have learned how to use them effectively. As a result, we have better knowledge of the Bible in its original languages than have nine-tenths of the ministers who have taken merely a four-year theological course. We advise all Bible students to use these wonderful helps of our day, which represent the highest scholarship, rather than to waste their time spelling out the words in the original languages, the meaning and the grammatical value of which are appreciated by only about one in a thousand. We are glad to say that thousands of Bible Students habitually use Young's and Strong's Concordances, besides numerous versions of the Scriptures, such as Young's Translation, The Variorium, Leeser's (Jewish) translation, and of the New Testament, Tischendorf, the Syriac, Rotherham, Emphatic Diaglott, etc., etc.



## BIBLE ORDINATION

As for ordination: However ignorant the public may be in regard to this matter, we can but suppose that ministers and editors of religious papers are well-informed. These all know that the word "ordination" simply signifies *authorization*. Thus the Baptists authorize, or ordain, their ministers; the Methodists authorize, or ordain, theirs, etc. There is no such thing amongst Christian people as a *general ordination*. On the contrary, Catholics dispute all ordinations except their own and denounce all Protestant ministers as unordained. The Anglican Church similarly refuses to recognize the ordination of those whom they term non-conformists.

As God has but *one Church*, so He has but *one ordination* for all who are His ministers. The one Church of God includes the saintly Christians of all denominations, and the God-ordained ministry consists of those only who have received the Divine benediction – the begetting of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the Head, or Chief, of this Church. He is its Chief Minister. His ordination took place at the time of His consecration and baptism in Jordan, when He was thirty years of age, under the limitations of the Mosaic Law. All coming into membership in Him and receiving the begetting of the Holy Spirit share in His ordination. The Master declared, "As the Father hath sent Me, even so have I sent you." – John 20:21.

This commission is referred to in prophecy, The Christ, Head and Body, being the Speaker: "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me; because the LORD hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable Year of the Lord, and the Day of Vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning; the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;

that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified." – Isaiah 61:1-3.

The Holy Spirit is symbolized by the oil poured upon the head of Aaron the high priest, of which we read that it ran down the skirts of His garment, even to its hem. This typified that the Holy Spirit, poured out upon our Head, Christ Jesus, has come down over the Church, His Body, during all these nineteen centuries, beginning at Pentecost – the anointing, ordaining, qualifying power of God on all His Royal Priesthood, authorizing them to declare the "Good Tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people." And any who give evidence of possessing this anointing of the Holy Spirit, and who have the ability and the spiritual qualifications of character-development in the likeness of Christ, which are Scriptural requisites in teachers of the Church, may be chosen by the Ecclesias of the Lord's people to minister to them publicly, as their more special servants in spiritual things. But any one who has received the Spirit's anointing is Scripturally ordained to proclaim the Message of God according to his ability and opportunity, observing only the proprieties pointed out in the Word as to sex distinctions, etc., regarding public proclamation.

So then, adhering closely to the written Word of God in our teaching, and striving to follow faithfully in the footsteps of the Master in our daily walk and conversation, we pray with all saints: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in Heaven."

-----

"And this hath been the Lord's wise will,  
To find one here, one there,  
Who counting earthly gain but dross,  
Would daily take the Christian's cross,  
E'en at the risk of any loss –  
God finds one here and there.

"And oh! the grandeur of the work  
For this one here and there,  
To join in lifting up our race,  
To wipe away of sin each trace,  
To make of earth a perfect place,  
Put glory everywhere!"

