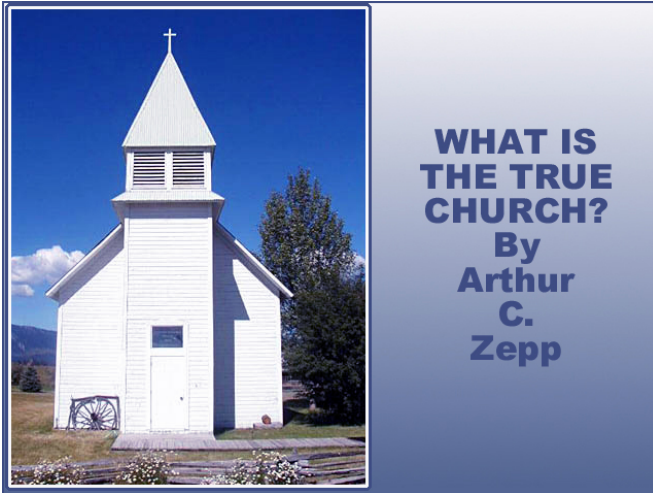


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**WHAT IS THE TRUE CHURCH?
By Arthur C. Zepp**

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CONTENTS

Preface

- 01 -- Introductory Chapter
- 02 -- Protestant Popery
- 03 -- Destructive Criticism Everywhere
- 04 -- The Greatest Fundamental
- 05 -- What The True Church Is Not
- 06 -- Some Positive Characteristics
- 07 -- Man's Unities Versus God's
- 08 -- Views Of The Early Spiritual Reformers
- 09 -- Transition From Christ To Church
- 10 -- Further Schism Not The Remedy
- 11 -- Scriptural Separation
- 12 -- The Great Cause Of Separation
- 13 -- John Wesley On Separation
- 14 -- Vital Considerations
- 15 -- The Master's Method
- 16 -- Separation Versus Contact
- 17 -- The All-Essential Remedy

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Preface

"And he is the Head of the body, the Church that in all things He might have the preeminence" (Colossians 1:16).

Where is "The True Church" found? Who composes it? What are some of its characteristics? How much bewilderment there is concerning it! Many seek a satisfactory answer. A Jewish gentleman and his son made a tour of many churches, resolved to join the "True Church" if they could find it: more perplexed about their relationship to God than indifferent to it. Others, confused by hundreds of denominations, are reading their Bibles and searching after Christ which is the greatest consideration.

To say association with the people of God is conditional to salvation and absence from the house of God is proof of lapse, the thoughtful reverently ask, "Where are they?" and, "Which is it?" Today even to Christians Paul's word, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is," (Hebrews 10:25), has its difficulties.

The "True Church" is not exclusively Catholic, Lutheran, Protestant, Methodist, Presbyterian or Independent. I asked a company of preachers, half seriously, if any of them could tell me the way to heaven. One replied, "Frankly, I fear not, as that is a special way and we are not that way." To be nominally any kind of an "ist" excludes being vitally Christian, which is to be like Christ.

Whatever the name, form or government, wherever "The True Church" is found, I seek to write the truth to it in love: harsh criticism ill becomes the least worthy of all saints. Despite spiritual impotence God found the writer through one of the visible communions, in which he still remains.

Yet truth is incisive. New ideas are painful. The Word of God is a sharp sword. I write as far as I see, without conscious acridity towards any Church, for "Cowardice never manifested God." Consequences will care for themselves. One wrote that "Today messages of truth were not half severe enough;" another, "This materialistic age needs a stiff jolt to awaken it." The Church equally needs the jolt! Bishop Henderson said "There can be no conviction for sin in the world until there is first conviction for sin in the Church." A greater said: "When He (the Spirit) is come, (unto you disciples), He will reprove the world of sin" (John 16:8).* [*But He came to abide in "The True Church" at Pentecost and though oft grieved, has never left it (John 14:16). It may offer Christ's atonement to sinners with the assurance His work of reproof has faithfully been done.] The omnipresent Spirit is not everywhere equally manifested. He sovereignly convicts the world of sin but more particularly through the spiritual Church: "God is greatly to be feared in the congregation of the righteous." Conversely: "Where there is no vision the people perish" or "cast off restraint."

The Church's great light and privilege fixes its great responsibility, the world's degree of conviction being proportionate to its possession by the Spirit: "That servant which knew His Lord's will," and did it not, "shall be beaten with many stripes." "But he that knew not,...shall be beaten with few stripes" (Luke 12:47-48). "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17).

A surgeon's knife saved a loved one. The Church's condition is acute. It needs the surgeon, else, as is, a prominent preacher said, it is a

passing institution. But the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Invisible Church Christ is building! "There is a place for vigorous protest against error." The controversialist must "Earnestly contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints," but without a contentious spirit. Institutions destitute of saintliness are not depositories of the faith: saintliness enhances the contention. Polemics without compassion for opponents is deplorable. It was said "McCheynes' denunciations were so terrific because they were so tender." Christ followed His Philippics against the Pharisees with tears: "O Jerusalem how often would I have gathered thy children together,... and ye would not!" (Matthew 23:37).

Effective defense of the faith calls for fullest personal submission to it. As it is life in the contenders will it be light to others. Unless modesty and humility possess the controversialists, they assume a perfection to teach which is perversity. "The greatest heresy of all is the heresy of hatred and intolerance, so rife in our time. Whatever truth we know must be taught in love--in a spirit worthy of the truth--without which the most perfect theology and the most fiery zeal are nothing."

Each movement has truth the others need: overemphasis of part-truth, lack of right perspective of whole truth, afflicts all. Truth is the instrument of spiritual unification and should be freely communicated, not strong-arm guarded: "That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:6). Because the most perfect knowledge any have of Christ is fragmentary, each should welcome and humbly share what the great Enlightener, which "lighteth every man that cometh into the world," has taught the other. (John 1:9).

When the Visible Church is synonymous with the "Invisible Church"--"Whose praise is not of men but of God"--it craves not human praise: its highest ambition is to exalt its Head. Faith depends upon Another and excludes boasting: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent."

The question calls for wisdom towards those who are without, comfort for the feeble or "little-minded," reception and support of him that is weak in the faith, and fairness and patience to all: "Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God" (I Cor. 10:32).

I have doubtless overlooked vital things, written with more warmth than necessary, not properly qualified some statements, and often mistaken the human for the Holy Spirit's inspiration. But despite the volume's limitations, I trust it may prove helpful to the "Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood," and warn against the

"grievous wolves" who would "enter in among you, not sparing the flock:" and the others, who from within should arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:28-30). To combat this double peril Paul commended the believers to God "and to the word of His grace."

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01 -- INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

Dr. Brown wrote: "Usually when God wants to correct a thing which is against His kingdom, He selects a bigoted representative of it, claims him for His own and sets him to work to make it right; e. g., Paul and Phariseism, Luther and asceticism, Wesley and formalism."

Booth rebuked the Church's impractical attitude towards the poor. Finney combatted inability and unscriptural predestinarianism. Moody partly restored the Gospel of grace. Evan Roberts taught the leadership of the Spirit. Divine manifestations teach the place of the gifts of the Spirit in the life of the Church. The conversion of religious people to Christ is needed because we are not purely Christian but "ISTS" following "ISMS."

To enthrone Christ in the heart "as Lord" (1 Peter 3:13), includes the all of sanctification, healing, manifestations, doctrines, organizations, government, ritual and whatever is good in schisms.

When God moves in History He not only stingingly rebukes the things "against His kingdom" but He quickens into newness of life in every direction. Often men with a sectarian view of His kingdom, ambitious for leadership and tribute, think God calls them to purify His Church by splitting it into new factions, and like Moses, run before God calls them. To assume that any are better able to conserve pure religion than others is Pharisaical. Without a Christ-exalting message migration is worse than formality. Transference without a well-balanced Gospel-ration spells leanness. Issues are not bread. Only Christ is the bread of God who gives life.

All hail to every Church which exalts Him and His death! But to insinuate it needs the efficacy of any Church brings back the Dark Ages. Joining church is not a condition of salvation or its retention, though it often results in it. "Are ye so foolish, having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (Galatians 3:3). "We walk by faith not by sight."

The Need

A Hindu who had suffered many rebuffs when seeking a place to room, said: "America is not Christian. She should come to India and learn to know Christ before she seeks to evangelize us." America certainly needs to know Christ. But if India thinks she alone can teach Him, or would teach Him as the nationalized Christ, of the "Indian Road," she too overlooks that He is the unsubsidized Christ of all roads.

A mulatto complained because she could not eat in a restaurant, buy a glass of soda, nor stop at hotels. But she hated the Southern white men! Where is the nation or denomination that does not seek to subsidize Christ to their interests and prejudices? Hate is as unChristian in the mulatto as race prejudice in Southerner or Northerner.

Grieved Hindu, suffering wrong patiently is a mark of the Christian as well as the spirit of accommodation you missed! Yet I have no sympathy for the conditions which grieved Hindu or Mulatto.

An institution which claims 100% Christianity welcomes Chinese and rejects colored people; another shelters unfortunate white girls but excludes fallen colored girls. The race-prejudice demon is so deep seated, it can not be cast out by ordinary means. Many who claim exalted victory, have difficulty over it. Harmony with God excludes it but not with the theories. "God is no respecter of persons;" whoever is, is evil, and commits sin, James said. Race animosities are not found in the "True Church." In it the free man is Christ's slave and the slave is His free man. Love and reverence for personality permeates all. A mulatto, brought up under an inferiority complex, said to her mistress: "You'all is nebber differun; you is allus de same. Whatebber you'all professes nebber changes you; you'all is like all de res: what dey one does, dey all does. You'all has dun got what am de custum; but you ain got what am Christyun." What a stumper!

Crux Of Teaching

Paul writes searchingly to those who pride themselves on the knowledge of the vital in religion--lights they are to the darkened souls, guides to the blind, tutors to the foolish, teachers of the simple--"Well then, do you ever teach yourself, you teacher of other people? You preach against stealing, do you ever steal? You forbid adultery; do you ever commit adultery? ('In thought or deed')? You detest idols; do you ever rob temples? You pride yourself on Law; do you dishonor God by your breaches of the Law?" (Moffat, Romans 2:21-23).

Under the priesthood of all believers each admits his need of Christ's present work of intercession. Paul said he needed self-judgment with the Corinthians: "For if we would judge ourselves we should not be judged." (1 Corinthians 11:31).

"Character is caught, not taught," merely; it is a contagion from the teacher. "The Lord our righteousness" precedes effective Christian teaching. Christ taught from life and so must all effective teachers: "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." (John 1:4). An effective sermon is the expression of a good personality. Truth was incarnate in Christ. "The Word (Christ) was made flesh." (John 1:14). It must be incarnate in teachers. He "dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory full of grace and truth." (John 1:14). "And ('the result'), of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." Peter said to the cripple: "Such as I have give I unto thee." How startling! We give out identically as we have: Some friends were distressed because when I was near nervous prostration, I did secular work. But the department head was helped to an enlarged vision of Jesus! Christ, inliving in us and outliving through us, is most needed.

Paul said "in me first for a pattern." Auntie Cook spoke with profound wisdom to all teachers when she told Moody he needed the power. Nicholas of Basle rebuked John Tauler because although he preached to others, he himself had never surrendered fully to Christ nor been truly converted. Remorse and shame seized Tauler. He retired for two years from preaching and then returned to preach as "Doctor Illuminatus" on whom had shone a great light.

Outside Christianity

Stanley Jones wrote: "Christianity is actually breaking out beyond the borders of the Christian Church: and it is being seen in most unexpected places. If those who have not the Spirit of Christ are none of His, no matter what outward symbols they possess, then conversely those who have His Spirit are His, no matter what outward symbols they may lack." The Hindu is finding "Christ without the western civilization--the incrustation of ancient controversial doctrines"--and even without the system called Christianity, supposed to be built around Him.

"Will the present Christian Church be big enough to be the medium and organ through which Christ will come to India? Will it be Christlike enough to be the moral and spiritual center of this overflowing Christianity? Or will many of the finest spirits and minds in India accept Christ as Lord and Master of their lives, but live their Christian lives apart from the Christian Church?"

"If Christianity centers in the Christian Church in the future, it will be because that Church is the center of the Christlike Spirit.

"I believe in the Christian Church with all my heart, and believe that it has centered the finest moral and spiritual life of the world."--Christ of the Indian Road.

If the "finest spirits and minds in India" make Christ Lord, they will not want to live apart from contact with either Church or world. Every race and Church must have Christ-consciousness or partake of the narrowness they condemn. Christ and His disciples are eager to help the misguided and the unguided. Likeness to Him excludes intolerance within and without the Church. This is complementary to what Stanley Jones calls the "Outside Christianity," which "is going straight to the heart of the matter and saying to be a Christian is to be Christlike." All who assent to His mastership are brethren: whosoever does the will of His Father, the same is mother, sister, brother, to Christ.

As for the Church being the medium through which Christ will come to India: He who fills the universe cannot be limited to any medium. He sets Churches aside like individuals when they fail to serve His purpose, and carries out His sovereign will independent of them.

To seek to center the Christianity of the future in the Christian Church would limit Him who fills all space to a place. It is impossible to "center" the Christlike Spirit. He fills the circumference and the center of the universe. He is everywhere present but not equally manifested. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." He is universal, but His conscious presence is the portion of His Church wherever it assembles. In every place He is "rich in mercy to all who call upon Him."

As to the "Christian Church centering the finest moral and spiritual life of the world," it is not finest because it is found in the visible Church, but because it is in Christ the Head of the Invisible Church, and because He is in it.

When Jesus and Christianity are not longer synonymous, we must part with it and hold on to Him who is "the way, the truth, and the life." "Man's vision must be purged from prejudices before he can grasp the truth," especially the truth about Christ's Church.

Many today feel that Christ is again lost in the Temple and seek to know Him whom Pilate found faultless; and often, like the centurion outside Israel, they have purer faith, clearer vision and better spirit than many within the churches, and like the Hindus they are asking for Christ without the encumbrance of Christianity, meaning the church-systems

supposed to have been built around Him. The Christ-like Spirit is the test of Christianity.

Paul describes Christian liberty, whose it is, and where it is found: "The freedom which is ours in Christ Jesus." (Galatians, 2:5, Weymouth). Again, Ephesians 1:7: "We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Who? "We," the unworthiest sinners! When? "Have," (now). Have what? "Redemption," deliverance. What is the only source? "Through His blood!" What result? "The forgiveness of sins." What measure? "According to the riches of His grace"--His favor, kindness, mercy, pity, love--the Jew near, the Gentile afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

Christ without the "isms," "ologies," and irrelevant conditions the church-hierarchies would bind upon the soul, is the portion of Oriental and Occidental. Why look elsewhere? Paul links Christian liberty with Christ "Set forth, crucified among you." (Galatians 3:1). To add a whisper after Christ "gave Himself for our sins," except faith in His perfect atonement, brought God's terrible anathemas upon men and angels. (Gal. 1:8-9).

Boussett says "Whenever Christianity has struck out a new path in her journey, it has been because the personality of Jesus has again become living, and a ray of hope from His being has once more illuminated the world." But incomparable though His personality, until crucified there was no salvation in it.

"We do not get Jesus from our beliefs, but our beliefs from Jesus." Jesus is the central Person of the doctrinal system: it flows from Him and not He from it. The traditions of men leave much to be unlearned, when "God withers the joy of our former experiences to lead us to Himself." Christ's method was the personal adjustment one. He did not ask that doctrine be understood in order to do God's will, but that His will be done to understand doctrine: "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John 7:17). Christ's doctrines were Another's: "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me." Only such doctrines, purely from God, and learned by doing His will, are worthwhile. What humility! The Jews had just marvelled at Christ's teaching: "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" Jesus explains: "The Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works." "For I have not spoken of myself:...He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (John 12:49). Christ did not get His Father from His beliefs but His beliefs from the Father, whose indwelling led Him to reverence His commandments.

Whom And What

What one calls the "What do you believe emphasis" separates; "Whom do you believe" draws all, unites all around Christ's magnetic personality. Paul said "I know Whom I have believed." That insured that what he believed was sound. He exalts Christ first, then the things which flow from Him: but which divorced from Him are meaningless. Whom to believe leads quickly to what to believe. Christ, the greater, includes the lesser things; they do not include Him: "How shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32). All the "things which accompany salvation" are guaranteed by Whom to believe. Faith in Christ includes every fundamental: "If ye love Me ye will keep my commandments." "Love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12), insures Christlike attitude and service to all.

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02 -- PROTESTANT POPERY

Christ's preeminence is not challenged by one Church. There is far too much Protestant Popery. Luther said "There is a Pope in every one of us." Paul had one man "like-minded," who would care for the estate of the Philippians; the rest "all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's (1:2021). Some say "To exalt Christ confuses the people." But Christ is not our confusion, "He is our peace." One preacher said "Christ is sufficient, but it would be a calamity to our church to preach it; the people would follow Him!!!" Calamity indeed! Better say to the souls who follow such leaders! Yet this church denounces popery! Verily, many "by this craft" (church-craft) have their living!

Independent Churches have gone into the excommunication business. Where they get their authority, how they trace apostolic succession, I know not. One wanted nothing to do with a certain movement nor with anyone who did. Without countenancing excess and counterfeit I am appalled at the unChristian attitude of this leader. Where are we going? Are we entering "New Dark Ages" and reign of persecution for Gospel liberty? The missionary spirit extends to all. The leader's attitude is followed by many--"Like priest like people"--and the Holy Spirit is grieved. A missionary told me a rattlesnake looked as good to her as one from the denounced movement; loathing, aversion, horror, and a creepy sense of abomination filled her at the thought of them. They were full of the Devil! I ventured that they were as good missionary timber as those where she labored and Christ would redeem both: he who has no missionary spirit at home has none abroad; it reaches to every creature. (Mark 16:15). Until like Christ, why go as a missionary? He died for all. "You are not a Christian." She was speechless! Her husband stood silently weeping. All agreed we needed Christ. We prayed. The Lord took away her heart of stone and gave peace. Thousands like her claim the fullest Christianity and to preach the

fullest Gospel, but show unChristlike attitude to others and give them restricted fellowship; and sometimes excommunicate them for preaching to or attending services with the tabooed. What an offense! Seeking help, or to give it! "He follows not with US" or, "Thou wentest into the Gentiles."

A school defends the Bible. Its clientele ask them to condemn an author and his book. Though Biblical and fruitful the book is condemned and copies are burned, an easier method than to answer its arguments. How familiar to students of history! In the name of "His Holiness" it was done in the 16th Century, and in the name of "Our Holiness" it is done in the 20th Century. But God's holiness influences attitude and action: know, esteem, love, "very highly in love for their work's sake" them which labor among you, and "are over you in the Lord." And this preceded God's work, (1 Thes. 5:23). What if this kindly attitude does not follow the profession of sanctification? Then they want "no new views of truth nor any new statements of doctrine." Stand-pat priests said the same of Martin Luther and his doctrines.

A great school, the child of a great evangelist, forbids Dr. ____ to sit on its platform (wonderful platform, what would one not give to sit upon it) because he had sat on another platform with Dr. ____ who had preached to those that said great school adjudged heretical.* [*It is far more heretical to forbid an orthodox preacher to preach fundamentalism to heretics than to preach it. Consecrated money built this ultra-fundamental school. The apostasy is making rapid strides everywhere.] Frankly, I can not see the sin of preaching to heretics. They are included in Mark 16:15, and Paul said even heretics were entitled to the first and second admonition before rejection. But who is the infallible judge of who are and who are not heretics? The Vatican has one papal throne. Are Protestants erecting many?

Dr. ____ is reprimanded and given a restricted fellowship because he gave the commencement address for a school not in the University Senate. Instances of bigotry might be greatly multiplied. If such be the leaders, what of the poor sheep? They often have a finer sense of Christian tolerance. Is it yet costly to play the man?

An alumnus has his lecture engagement canceled because he had received a new vision of Christ which purported a content he had not received in his Alma Mater. Holiness as a doctrine had gotten loosed from Christ, and like Paul, he saw it all fulfilled in His enthronement: then, and only then, it is not a "hollow mockery" or contention for mere shibboleth. Another sees the heavenly vision, Christ all in all, and disturbs the established order: prayer ascends for his removal, not restoration. (Galatians 6:1).

We were holding revival services in Pennsylvania and a Lutheran pastor said to his flock: "You may go to the Methodist revival when there are not services at our Church; but remember, when there are, it is the door!" Shades of Martin Luther! Wonder the old monk does not stir in his grave and pray to return to teach modern Lutherans the door is not a Church, but a Person: "I am the door of the sheep." "By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John 10:7-9). But "He that climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and robber" (John 10:1). Christ is the entrance. "No man can come unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6).

Little wonder Charles Wesley wrote:

I.

"Weary of all the worldly strife,
These notions, forms and modes and names,
To Thee, the Way, the Truth, the Life,
Whose love my simple heart inflames,
Divinely taught at last I fly,
With Thee and Thine to live and die.

II.

"Forth from the midst of Babel brought,
Parties and sects I cast behind;
Enlarged my heart, and freed my thought,
Where'er the latent truth I find,
The latent truth with joy to own,
And bow to Jesus name alone."

The "hostile dividing-wall" Christ threw down by His cross. It was a literal stone wall in the Jewish Temple which the Gentiles were not to pass beyond into the inner court. There were towers on this wall with warning inscriptions which threatened death to any Gentile who passed it. This "middle wall of partition" between Jew and Gentile, Christ removed. (Eph. 2:14). Lightfoot says "Ten years after Paul wrote these words to the Ephesians, the Romans razed the city with the Temple and wall to the ground; and in 1871, the archaeologist's spade dug up one of the towers of the wall, and the prohibitive inscriptions which were read confirm the Scripture." "Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain (Jew and Gentile) one new man, so making peace" (Ephesians 2:15). Powerful grace of Christ! To reconcile by His death two so utterly opposite, provides peace for church factions.

* * * * *

03 -- DESTRUCTIVE CRITICISM EVERYWHERE

The corruption is the strong argument of the separatists. But no church has a monopoly on it, as President Coolidge said of the Republican party and the oil scandal. The imperfections of the older churches are contrasted with the perfections of the newer ones: "At last you have found a Church of which you may be justly proud; it is the best thing going; it has the minimum of corruption; thank God for the _____ Church. None of its preachers are destructive higher-critics." Bear with me: there is not a Church, movement or school, that does not have the needs of destructive higher criticism within it! Be offended at any part of the Bible and you have the destructive critic. This is a concise criticism of some of the critics of the destructive higher critics. I submit some proof. I know "Full Gospel" advocates who say "the Sermon on the Mount is law, for Jews, and not for Christians:" and that "the Spirit's leadership annuls both it and the Law of Moses." Again, "Jesus' words are mere germ-thoughts for the Epistles which should now be preached, not the Gospels." "Paul is the only authority for the Church's guidance now." ("I am of Paul"). What destructive critics these "Full Gospelers" are! They take from us the Four Gospels Jesus gave us. The sermon on the Mount, Law and no Gospel? Germ thoughts for the Epistles? Jesus words were "spirit and life" not germ thoughts, not seedlings of life. His words are to abide in us. Even Paul, the supposed only authority now, said "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom" (Col. 3:16). Though heaven and earth pass away, His words shall never pass away! The Gospel of Christ "IS the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Romans 1:16). Paul preached the Gospel; he did not exclude it by his Epistles. The Gospel, not his Epistles (only as they contain the Gospel), "is the power of God to salvation." The leadership of the Spirit do away with the Gospel? He inspires men to preach it "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven," not to preach the Holy Ghost ("He shall not speak of Himself"), nor guide us independent of the truths of the Gospel: ("He shall guide you into all truth;" and, "Thy word is truth"). He confirms the Gospel He inspired. The Spirit brings to the mind the words Christ spoke in the Gospels which shall judge us in the last day. Set aside the Gospel because this is the dispensation of the Holy Ghost?

What full-fledged destructive higher critics those Pentecostals are who teach "Close the old, black Book and be led by experience and the Holy Ghost!" Jesus opened the understanding of the disciples that they might understand "the old black Book:" its entrance gives light, cleanses the way of young and old, and hidden in the heart, it is power not to sin against God or man. Subtle Devil! He would close it through the so-called superior leading of the Holy Ghost who inspired it, and never moves out of harmony with it! The Spirit never "minimizes the Word. His manifestations must harmonize with it. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in

righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2nd Tim. 3:16-17). The Spirit alone is not our life: Christ by Him, is our life. He is true bread, meat and drink, through His Word which the Spirit illumines. The Spirit is not the way; Christ is the way. The Spirit guides on the way--not into all Spirit--into "all truth" and inspires not to preach Himself, His gifts, or the experiences He gives, but "He shall glorify Me; He shall testify of Me." "He shall take of mine and show it unto you." "He shall not speak of Himself."* [*Many err today by preaching the experiences of the apostles more than what they wrote afterwards to regulate the experiences. Three fourths of the New Testament, one said, was written to those who had received the Spirit at Pentecost. God has much to say after that great crisis experience.]

Colleges which claim championship of the whole Bible against the destructive higher critics are guilty of a most pernicious destructive criticism when they deny the Pentecostal Baptism--even if accompanied by its original sovereignly-given phenomena--or the utility of those manifestations which Paul said were pleasing to God and given for profit, instruction, teaching and edification. Wesley said at the close of the dispensation God might restore these gifts as at the beginning. Wesley never used the Baptism of the Spirit as synonymous with sanctification because he knew the phenomena, as originally given, do not accompany the work of sanctification. The Pharisees spoke of Christ as a "vain fellow," a babbler. Their descendants so treat His Successor, the Spirit. To call what may be the pure manifestations of the Spirit, "gibberish," approximates their sin. Whether the modern type is of God is not the question, but the denial altogether to the Church of the manifestations of the Spirit, and their utility. Many prominent theologians see no use in these manifestations; God says every spiritual man has some manifestation of the Spirit, given to profit. Dr. Wray says the Spirit's manifestations are for the entire dispensation of the Spirit. God gave the gift of His Son; Christ, when He ascended on high, gave gifts to men; the Holy Spirit, when He came down imparted His gifts too. And that He bestows them upon the weaker members of the body of Christ for speaking to God, edification, instruction and consolation, no spiritual man objects: though he does "try the spirits" for harmony with reason, utility, and the Word of God.

The stronger members of the body of Christ who need not the gifts, should rejoice when the weaker members receive them. But the Spirit of Christ is so far lost that the weaker members say, where there are no gifts there is no Spirit; and the stronger charge that the weaker with the gifts are altogether of the Devil, heretical and fanatical. Alas for the loss of Christ's Spirit!

John Wesley said the only reason the gifts of the Spirit ever disappeared from the Church was because of the loss of that faith,

holiness and humility, which were prerequisite to their bestowal. I am not speaking of counterfeits but trying to expound this as I would any other subject of the Bible. Else I am a destructive critic. Fairness to all is imperative. Unfairness is unChristian. To excommunicate for speaking in tongues by the Spirit, is like the Dark Ages Church which excommunicated for disagreement with them; or to do so for not speaking in tongues, "What do ye more than others?" The Holy Spirit cannot be put in a straight-jacket. The word of God is not bound. Spurgeon said, "before the close of this age, God will have people walking this earth who will embody everything His Word teaches."

Is there any difference in missionary work for Hindus, Chinese, Africans or Americans? The glad tidings are to ALL people. No man can love South Americans and hate North Americans! It is a strange forgetfulness of the Spirit of Christ to send missionaries to Africa and be ashamed to have a colored pastor sit on our home platform, for fear of offending the race prejudice of our clientele. Does the nobility of missionary service differ? Farewells to out-going missionaries and excommunication for those at home with a missionary spirit to all, is such depth of satanic deceivableness none can fathom. This spirit in Higher Life Movements makes one long for perfect love free from intolerance, fragrant with Christ's Spirit.

A most subtle higher-critical heresy is the "married in the Spirit" one: like all perversions of holy matrimony, it is destructive to soul and body. It teaches an easier method of separation than the lax divorce method. The gist of the heresy is that if you are not compatible with the wife you married legally, you were not really married, or joined together by God, and He does not prohibit such separating, but only "what God has joined together." When the one is met for whom there is affinity, the soul mate God intended, they are already married in the Spirit, in fact God had selected them for each other. It would not be so serious if it stopped at being married in the Spirit, but lust and adultery inevitably follow. Such believe very much in manifestations without being particular to investigate their source. Their standing with God is all right as long as they have signs, like speaking in tongues. This preternatural (satanic) manifestation is the sign to the susceptible that they are some great one and should be obeyed.* [*I received a letter of profound gratitude from a young woman who was delivered from the verge of this heresy through my little booklet, "Pentecost Contrasted with Corinth." The man who was enmeshing her was aided by speaking in tongues.] Unquestionably, when such manifestations are from a life contrary to the teachings of Christ, ("the husband of one wife"), they are wholly from the Devil. God's pure manifestations flow from hearts holy in all manner of living.

"Married in the Spirit?" Really filled with the Devil and living in adultery! He who bids such Godspeed, if they be not also legally married before man and blamelessly before the standard of God's Word, is partaker of their evil deeds. The homes that entertain them are turned into assignation houses, subjecting all to arrest. No manifestations can justify a course in sin. Scriptural manifestations comport with all manner of righteousness. The Devil's counterfeit fills the heart with "all deceivableness of unrighteousness" in them that receive not the truth but have "pleasure in unrighteousness." Rightness with God never fruits in sin. However marvelous manifestations may be. "The soul that sinneth it shall die," "the wages of sin is death," and "the wicked shall be turned into hell" (Ezek. 18:3, Rom. 6:23, and Psalm 9:18).

Practiced And Taught

Hence the deductions of destructive criticism may be rejected as dogma and embraced in practice. It matters not on what pretext the Bible is annulled. The Pharisees made it of none effect by their traditions. Dr. Trumbull said the rankest kind of destructive higher critics were those professing Christians who claim to believe the Bible from cover to cover and then live as though its promises were not true. To fight the destructive criticism as false dogma while we reject the Bible's authority to regulate our lives, is as effectively to set it aside as those do who openly deny its inspiration and authority. They are at least open and above board in what they believe. But we believe what they deny and condemn them for not believing! It is fifty-fifty! By carelessness in its practice we as effectively annul it as the destructive criticism. There is no difference in the result, only in method. To love, salute, labor for, support, and feast only our own, is to be like the publicans. Christ's Church has a broader program: love for enemies, good to those that hate, and prayer for them who spitefully use and persecute.

A bigot for a while felt content in a perfect Church. But God showed him other dear children "not of this fold." Them he must love. He shrank from this, fearing defilement. Dissension filled the new Church. Its theory failed. The friends were scattered. The doors were shut. His indignation abated at one who had told him the Church Vision was not sufficient. Only Christ could satisfy. The truth dawned upon him. Clapping his hands for joy he shouted, "I see it all now! I have the Vision! The Son abides forever." "All other lights are failing, we would see Jesus."

Have radicals the perfect Church? Christ's disciple must forsake all, and place no value on anything he possesses only as it may extend His kingdom. What Church realizes this? A tenth of substance and a seventh of time is rarely consecrated. Christ demands all. Perhaps we shall never see

Pentecost: "A multitude of believers of one heart and one soul," having "all things common."

Christ looks not for the perfect Church, but "Shall He find faith?" He will perfect by glorification the most perfect Church extant when He comes, hence the fallacy of any Church being the only right one. All will need the grace to be received at His coming. (I Pet. 1:13).

The standing of the soul with God is more vital than with the movements of men. Commend their origin and doctrines, and you are in. But God receives us on the basis of His call and preparation for the fellowship of His Son. (1 Cor. 1:7). Refusal to fellowship whom He receives makes the Word of God of none effect, and again we have the fruit of destructive criticism. One Bishop sees the need of a successor to the class meeting at its best--that the Sunday School, Brotherhoods and Epworth League, do not meet this need--"a small, intimate, growing group within the Church, in a fellowship for the enlargement of the spiritual vision." And I would add without it, extended to include fellowship in Christ with all who love Him from all churches, and even without them.

One suggests in all our controversy we should hold up Christ and then "the antagonism will work both ways, searching the heart of the antagonizer and the antagonized."

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04 -- THE GREATEST FUNDAMENTAL

Love for a Person is the greatest fundamental: nothing else satisfies God or man. Church federation brings no mighty movement of God. Even a spiritual Church saves not meritoriously but instrumentally. We look to Christ's death alone or make a covenant with works. A "unified social, educational, moral, economic, industrial or international program" helps man, but his salvation is in Calvary's bleeding lamb. World betterment, the original Edenic, satanic program, has led increasingly from God. Men from the higher social stratas and the lower social scale must be born again. Men are "up and out" as well as "down and out" in spirituals. The religion of the senses believes that worthwhile which has taken visible form in organizations and buildings. But the Personal God may dwell in the hearts of His children by faith without either: "I will dwell in them" and "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people" (2 Cor. 6:17, Heb. 8:10). The indwelling of a Person is the all of Christianity. John Watson said, "If we would have New Testament living we must revive the ancient passion for the Person of Christ, and we can then dispense with all other exhortations. Devotion to Christ is the whole of Christianity." "Ye call me Master, and Lord; ye say well, for so I am." But that carries the whole program of

service to men: "If I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet." The personal devotion method yields more service than the appeal of loyalty to our organizations. Love for Christ insures service only limited by its degree and our capacity. "For we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord: and ourselves your servants for His sake" (2 Cor. 4:5, Revised Version).

Our devotion is only to Christ. Prostration before the forms of our fellows may lead to grievous demon service. God showed Luther the abominable idolatry of prostration before the Cardinal. Men have no authority with which we are conversant to call their fellows to submit to their propositions as conditional for salvation: "None of them can at all redeem his brother." Straight to Jesus we go and plead nothing except the love of Him who justifies the ungodly --"for nothing"--(Rom. 3:24, Moffat), who believe in Jesus. He gave us natural life and He gives spiritual life, (Acts 17:28). Man's propositions, syllogisms, altars, conditions, may result in Satan's cheat: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh."

"The Church of Christ does not profess to be an association of superior people, but of those who candidly acknowledge their need and desire help, both human and Divine, in the conquest of life." The "I am holier than thou" spirit is abashed in the presence of its meek and lowly Head. Debates about who is greatest are silenced by the Master: the disciples are to be like a little child. The big-blow, ballyhoo-spirit, "behold the conquering hero comes," offends, unaffected humility attracts. Christ's Church sojourns in lowly fear lest it lose His fellowship, service and rewards, (1 Peter, 1:17). President Coolidge said that the American people could not help the world solve its problems by assuming that they were a superior people, and inferring that the other people of the world were inferior. How vitally suggestive are these words to the religious movements which arrogate superiority! Help, in things spiritual, can never come from such an attitude. We must descend from our stilts and admit constant need with our fellows, to truly help them. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12). Spiritual treasure is given for the good of all (Paul said, "Given to me for you"); it resides in a fragile earthen vessel; its power is from God moment by moment. "We are not sufficient of ourselves." Our Bishops must not say the Church needs reviving, but be flaming evangelists who lead the way to it; pastors who receive large salaries must not plead for equalization of salaries for the poorer paid brethren, but head the list. Evangelists must not be mercenary, professional or covetous, but examples of sacrifice for Christ; the laity must not seek their own, "but by love serve one another."

The Way That Reforms

"The way of truth that reforms is the way, however, and must be one of modesty, humility and meekness, not of boasting and violence. Its way does not admit of claims to infallibility or of bold assertions that no other course is right. Its way is the way of love, the way of life, the way of truth and the way of light. It takes its kingdom by persuasion, not by force, and it triumphs by convincing the mind and moving the will, not by fulminating its authority. It wins, if it wins at all, because it discovers that which fits the deepest nature of man's life, and finally proves it to be so in the sphere of practice and moral effects." --Rufus M. Jones.

Again, "The way of Christianity was not found alone in the theology of Luther or the dogmatic system of Calvin, or in the strict asceticism of Francis of Assisi. Neither is it to be thought of in terms of doctrine only, or of the presence or absence of the sacraments, nor yet in sacerdotal authority.* [*Hugh Black says we are cursed with authorities. It may be a pope, church, creed, man (or woman). What does it matter? It is the same irreligious thing. Authority is always irreligious.] Christianity is found alone in no sacred and infallible institution or in anything external. It is a way of living, a full, a complete life in God."

Architecture has nothing to do with Christ's Church. It may awe the unthinking and help secure their tribute. It is not dependent on atmosphere created by art or music. Christ alone is its source. Outward authority, supremely centralized in one (Pope) or many, (Assembly or General Conference) or all the machinery pertaining thereto, affect it little. It dwells in the heart.

It is divinely foreknown, selected, "afore prepared unto glory," "elected," and "called according to His purpose: For whom He did foreknew, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." The predestinated He called, the called He justified, the justified He sanctified, and the sanctified He will glorify. Such, who can be against? For such, all things work together for good; such, nothing shall effectually separate from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. Peter said they are "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit:" Paul adds "and belief of the truth, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." Such will be the apostles' "hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming.* [* 1 Thes. 2:19.]

Such are sealed unto the day of redemption; that "In the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward them through Christ Jesus." Through them will "be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages." Startling it is that "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." Thus spoke Christ of the worthless external religion of the Pharisees which

could not change the heart. Of His True Church, the Father's planting, He said: "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." It is Divinely created, sealed, guarded, guided, preserved, and, glorified, it will eternally elicit the admiration of believers, exhibit the kindness and long suffering of God towards it, and magnify the grace of Christ throughout the "ages succeeding the ages" of eternity. God's revelation to His Church, His creation of it, are independent altogether of the traditions of men, and the ruins and defects of all churches. We may flit from church to church but short of God's revelation to and in us never gain entrance into the "True Church." The flitting process alone removes not the heart of stone.

Christ Found Anywhere

Love for Christ, within or without the churches, includes love for "all the saints" (Col. 1:4). Otherwise where should the bewildered go? One thousand sects! Which is right? Peter answers: "Lord to whom (not where) shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." "Being born again by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever" (First Peter 1:23). Systems are valueless to God and man unless they are repositories of these living, saving words. Many have found Christ through the Evangelical churches; other adherents never find Him of whom Moses and the prophets wrote: yet others will find Him through them. Salvation is conditioned neither on identification nor separation. God sends by whom He will: saves through or independent of the churches. An all-fundamental Church is not essential to salvation. Christ revealed Himself to the man excommunicated from the orthodox Jewish synagogue, and forgave outcasts though the religious preferred their systems, orthodoxy of doctrine, ten thousand human traditions and exact worship, to the Prince of life. Hypocrisy in a church hinders and consistency helps, but in the final analysis, "Every man shall give an account of himself to God." The Church can live in spite of the world's antagonism; it may find Christ though the visible Church lose the way.

When Zwingle was pastor of an Alpine church, the superstitious flocked to it as though they could be saved nowhere else. Zwingle said to the eager crowds which overflowed the Alpine passes, "Go back! Go back! He saves anywhere!" Such preaching is unpopular with systems which profit by the credulity of the people, but it is Gospel-true. The boy who said he would confess his sins directly to God, like the Pope, without cost, had the right idea of Christian freedom.

Christ Supreme, Guarantees Discipline

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." To make Christians wholly responsible to Christ, the Head of the Church, does not mean the breakdown of discipline. Many churchmen think unless

they have a finger in the pie and keep their hand on the administration of discipline all will go to sticks. His authority over each is supreme: only of Him can it be said: "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." His headship guarantees infallibly administered, poetic justice,--punishment equivalent to the character of the wrong--for each trespass, even the ones known only to God. The organized Church can only deal with what is reported or confessed to it; Christ deters: "Thou, God, seest me:" and, "How can I do this great sin?" He also corrects: "The Lord chastens every son whom He receiveth." "But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons" (Col. 3:25). Obedience to others is only to those over us in the Lord. Paul helped joy, more than administered the rod of iron which dominated faith. The spiritual delegate their stewardship to "faithful men" if the visible organization becomes too recreant.

The field is the world. The enemy sows tares in the field. The Church is separate from the world, kept pure by discipline. It does not separate from the bad within, but ejects it by the sovereign direction of God. In the case of gross sin Paul directs the Corinthians to mourn for the removal of the wicked person, and tells them his decision of the case; but its final disposition is reserved until, "in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, (but even that drastic measure was rich with mercy) that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 5:1-7). They were to "purge out the old leaven;" not to separate from the rest because it developed. The terrible sin, punished by the premature death of the body, is dealt with by Church, Apostle, and God. Lesser sins are dealt with in merciful discipline which chastens, corrects and restores to fellowship with God and the "True Church." Service follows. How grateful are we, that our great sins have not been unto death!

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05 -- WHAT THE TRUE CHURCH IS NOT

Denunciation of other's defects--ruins--make a poor foundation for a Church. "Other foundation can no man lay than is laid: Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone" (Ephesians 2:20). True, Christ condemned the hypocritical Pharisees: "How can ye escape the damnation of hell?" But to the penitent adulteress He said, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might he saved" (John 3:17). Heated denunciation forgets Christ died for opponents. The Pharisees were orthodox. Christ commended them for it. But they were remiss in love for man. Unless fundamental, plus love for God and man, the

truth is held in unrighteousness. Wesley said, "We do not, we dare. not separate from it. (The Anglican Church). We are not seceders nor do we bear any resemblance to them. They laid the very foundation of their work in judging and condemning others, we laid the very foundation of our work in judging and condemning ourselves. They begin everywhere by showing their hearers how fallen the church and ministers are. We begin everywhere by showing our hearers how fallen they themselves are." And, "How fallen all we ourselves are from the righteousness and power of God." Wesley followed the vision of His soul, love for all within and without the churches, more consistently than many of his sons. He died in the Episcopal Church fellowship. The Methodist Church, whose organization he stood out against so long, was organized after his decease.

Organization and legal incorporation make not the Church Christ is building. Lawyers were not called into His counsel. He pronounced woe on those lawyers who bound the burdens, grievous to be born, on men's shoulders. Yet His elect are within and without legally incorporated churches. A man may separate from a visible church without affecting his place in the "Invisible Church." Paul and Christ stood not well with priests but did with God. The best man I know, left his church to be free to boost the good in them all. Tauler, when under the ban of the Pope said: "Let a man have been what he may-thief, liar, murderer or adulterer--if he exercises true faith in Christ, he is in Christ's Church and may not be denied its privileges." Luther was cast out of the Pope's Church but God made him a leader, mighty in word and deed, in His spiritual Church. The Church which excommunicated Luther on earth and barred him from heaven (?) claimed to be the only way to salvation. Luther challenged this false position and made everything depend on faith in the Word of God. When history repeats itself, men must see of every Church what Luther saw of the one: that he could belong to Christ's Church without belonging to the Pope's. There is only "One Mediator between God and man, the Man (not the church) Christ Jesus."

Christianity is not an organization receiving us into the fellowship of its fold, but a loving Father receiving us into His arms; or us receiving Christ into our hearts: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him" (Col. 2:6). Andrew brought Peter to Jesus, a Person, not to an organization--that came later--and said, "We (experimental) have found the Messiah" (John 1:41). Philip said to Nathaniel, "We have found Him,"--not dogma or doctrine, theology or philosophy, not it or an experience, not the perfect system or church, but the perfect Person, the Messiah--"of Whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" (John 1:45).

Christ's Church inheres not always largely in a new Church. Lordship belongs to God. His fellowship may be as easily lost by

contention for the control of Church office and emolument, as by heresy. None are lost for not following the schismatics into the new Church!

Revelationed In Or Without

Christ builds His Church on the Father's revelation of His Divinity and Saviourhood, to Peter: not on Peter, his rock-like nature, or his testimony: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." "And upon this rock I will build my Church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). Christianity is "not of flesh and blood," it is a revelation from God, and of God, to man. "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven" (John 3:27). Christ said, "No man knows the Father but the Son and he to whomsoever the Son reveals Him." He thanked God the things of the kingdom were hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed to babes, out of the mouths of whom He had perfected praise. God revealed His Son to Paul and later in him. He attributed his deep knowledge of the mystery of the Gospel to revelation from God: "How that by revelation He made known to me the mystery; whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Eph. 3:3-5). A personal revelation from a personal God, through His personal Son, by the personal Spirit, in the hearts of personal beings, is Christianity. And though great institutions seem to outwardly represent it, God uses them or not, at His pleasure: He sends by whom He will send but ever reserves to Himself the calling, teaching and direction, of His Church.

Can Not Be Joined

Creation is the only way into Christ's Church. Man can not join God's creation. Catechism and confirmation day, with its beautiful setting, lovely flowers and sweet music, leave the soul without Christ's Church if there be no supernatural re-creation. All else, save faith in Christ's death, exhibits the fall from that grace that saves. (Galatians 6:14-16). Grace is wholly "something for nothing to those who do not deserve anything." The acceptable good works follow: "Created unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." How different from much church work!

Christ's Church is not synonymous with the Visible Church but with the inner kingdom of heaven. The name, organization, incorporation, form of worship, or works--activities--make not the "True Church." It comes without observation or outward show, secretly, from heaven, and then it is hidden: "Lo, the kingdom of heaven is within you." There is but one way into it, birth, like into an earthly family: "Except a man be born from above,

he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." The Visible Church, men go into on earth; the kingdom of heaven, comes into them from above. One is earthly, the other heavenly. One is from above, the other is from beneath. The kingdom of heaven is Christ, the king on the throne in the heart, the other is a huge system, theology, machinery, with human leaders often in the limelight. "The Church emphasis makes ecclesiastics; the kingdom note, philanthropists," lovers of mankind. Men may manipulate the one, the Church--and by this craft have their living--but God rules over the other, the kingdom. Nicodemus was in the Jewish Church but outside the kingdom of heaven. Christ's first and last messages were of the things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven: forty-five times in the Gospel of Matthew He speaks of it. Only thrice in the Four Gospels does He mention the Church; and then it does not mean a legally incorporated organization, but the "out called" who have a second birth from heaven. The kingdom of heaven is within the believer now; the kingdom of Christ will be established on the earth for a thousand years when Christ comes; the kingdom of God the Father, will be at the end of the thousand years when Christ turns everything over to Him: "Then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28).

Not Dominated By The Spirit Of The Age

The visible Church is often dominated by the spirit of the age; the "out called" are led by the Spirit of Christ. The Pharisees are good representatives of the one and Christ of the other. They observed 10,000 traditions, were custodians of the Law, claimed to be the official representatives of God on earth, were in charge of the Jewish Temple, lords over the consciences of the people, the descendants of Abraham, disciples of Moses, children of God, and yet Jesus vividly pictured their real character: "Ye are from beneath; I am from above." Beneath or above? This discerns the false from the true Church. Above or below? Animated by "the spirit," that now worketh in the children of disobedience" or by the Spirit of God? (Eph. 2:2).

Not Political

The Church of State--nor the Church which would overlord the State. Its citizenship is not earthly but heavenly: it seeks better things in a better country. It is the "out-called" from the State yet not removed from it, but kept in it from its evil. Here it has no continuing city but seeks one to come. It asks of the State a permit to live a quiet and peaceable life, while making its pilgrimage through it. It has no interest in the State's legal mix-ups; it is taught to take joyfully the spoiling of its goods: "Dare any of you having a matter against another, go to the law before the unjust?" It is separate from complicity with wrong within the State, all churches and men, not separate unto God.

Exodus Never Complete

Luther took not, when he left the Catholic Church, all the pious with him. Some remain today for Christ and the elect, to shine as lights in the churches, holding forth the Word of life. A Catholic priest, converted under Finney, tried to promote revivals in his Church. In the 18th Century, a priest exalted Christ for thirty-five years in the Catholic Church though finally he felt compelled to leave "Christendom to be a Christian." God will have witnesses during the Great Tribulation calling men to Himself: it is not incredible if He calls them to labor in dark churches like in dark continents and periods! No church ever did, nor will any ever, home all the Lord's sheep. (The holy catholic or universal Church never subdivides. It has an inseparable, God-given unity). Usually the schismatics, divinely called or self-appointed, seemingly show little Christlike compassion for those they leave. They sincerely believe God forever abandoned the churches when they left them. Happily, only He knows when all hope is gone! Yet there is an intolerance, even in the "True Church." "They went out from us, but they were not of us" (1 John 3:19). Earlier John wanted to burn all who followed not "with us," for which Christ rebuked him. The "True Church," however, gives not God-speed to the Anti-Christ teachers who abide not in the doctrines of Christ, lest they partake their evil deeds.

Not Of Time Or Place

Not the where of worship but the condition of the heart that worships, makes it acceptable. True worshippers go not to worship but worship as they go. The Bible under the arm and the pious strut to the place of worship at the stated time, are worthless unless the revelation of its truth and Person be in the heart. This inner revelation is the end of intercessory prayer: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you" (Galatians 4:19). But "How much our Christianity suffers from this, that it is confined to certain times and places! A man, who seeks to pray earnestly in the Church or in the closet, spends the greater part of the week or day in a spirit entirely at variance with that in which he prayed. His worship was the work of a fixed place or hour, not of his whole being. But God is a Spirit. He is the unchangeable One; what He is He is always in truth. Our worship must be even so; the outcome of a life constantly lived in His Spirit." "The promises of answers to prayer, given by the Lord Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, are all embedded in the life precepts." Sixfold Christ repeats prayer shall be answered for those who live the Golden Rule life!!!

Not In External Worship

Of five kinds of worship, God accepts one--based on doing His will--the rest ascends to Satan. "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" "God heareth not sinners, but if any man be a worshipper of God, and do His will, Him he heareth." Doing His will is more than formal worship! It is the condition of acceptable worship. Some worship in fanatical frenzy; others, with the emotions--"and that's all"--the Samaritans worshipped God ignorantly: "Ye worship ye know not what;" the Jews worshipped Him intelligently; "We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews;" the true, acceptable worshippers "worship the Father in Spirit and truth." Their whole life is worship and not limited to place, time, season, years or any form, but always ascends from God-enlightened hearts.

Not In The Name

A gentleman said to me "I venture you would call the 'True Church' the Church of Christ?" Not so; for it is the "True Church" in fact and not in the name. His name adds nothing to the "True Church." His name is often applied to churches which are not so in heart. He said some would call Him "Lord, Lord" and yet not "enter into the kingdom of heaven." He asked others why they called Him "Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?" The name of a church means nothing. Doing the Father's will is the passport into the kingdom of heaven. God wants His will done even if His Church be called by some other name; that it be like Him or renounce His name; though many think a church without His name is like a woman called by another name than her husband's. But loyalty is of the heart, deeper than the name, for wives and churches. The "True Church" is in likeness to the nature of Christ. Egomani will develop in churches with either sacred, secular, or human founder's names unless "Each esteem other better than themselves."

We do not get into Christ's Church by faith in rationalistic, abstract propositions, however orthodox: but "Believe on ('some One') the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."* [*Acts 16:31.] The "things which accompany salvation" will care for themselves. They follow, never precede the Vision of Christ.

"Unparalleled is the power of affection for a great Personality" who "loved us and gave Himself for us." Soul progress, though a hard saying for some, is not found in further doctrinal establishment after an experience, but "then shall ye know if ye follow on to know the Lord." We love a Person in order to keep His commandments, not learn them by memory in order to love him. A good Catholic friend and brother said to me: "How shall I keep the commandments if I do not study them and know them?" Certainly we shall never keep them however much we study and

know them, unless our hearts are circumcised "to love the Lord our God," because our natural hearts are enmity to God, not subject to His law, "neither indeed can be." Our work, studying the commandments, insures not their doing, but only God's work of transformation.

Intellectual Fundamentalism Insufficient

The Devil is so fundamental he trembles, but he does not the will of God: "The devils believe and tremble." Not the forgetful hearers but the doers are blessed. "Ye know these things--but knowledge is not sufficient--happy are ye if ye do them." A Fundamentalist on the Virgin Birth (I believe it fully) told me he saw no sin in birth control which was infanticide. Now, "we know no murderer has eternal life abiding in him" though intellectually orthodox. Pure Fundamentalists have sin's power broken. Whosoever seeth Him, sinneth not! God's reconciliation is not realized in head assent to its description, but in practical heart transformation by its power: "If any man be in Christ; he is a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17).

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06 -- SOME POSITIVE CHARACTERISTICS

It is called and quickened into newness of life-organic--by God and endowed with Divine gifts. (1 Cor. 12; Eph. 2:5). Man organizes the organic and corrupts it. Militant, it preaches the Gospel, seeks the salvation of men, the worship of God, the administration of the ordinances, fellowship and inspiration of its members and adherents unto the service of all. The Visible Church, Catholic and Protestant, has members and adherents who are and who are not Christian. The Invisible Church is composed of all who love Christ: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maranatha" (1 Cor. 16:22). Through the Invisible Church--"the Lord knoweth them that are His"--God does His work--"the work of the Lord"--in contrast with church work.

The Church Triumphant homes the redeemed of all ages: their battles are fought, their victories won, their temptations over. The sun smites them no more by day nor the moon by night. Toil, burden, labor, trial, conflict and sorrow have forever ceased. The "Accuser of the brethren" harasses no more. Evermore with Christ they dwell. "God has wiped away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

Entrance Cost

Whosoever would have a place in Christ's Church must forsake all; he must sacrifice; he must deny himself, not merely things to himself; he must die to himself and place Christ above every interest and person. Christ's lovable Person and great sacrifice make the radical demands easy. Men will die for what and whom they love. Love begets love. "We love Him because He first loved us." The sweeping renunciation follows. The highest law of God demands sacrifice--for God, Christ and disciples--the sacrifice for a cause or person is the only measure of love. God's and Christ's great sacrifice show their great love. "If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." Christ has no program for benefit-seekers or thrill hunters, but for those who suffer the loss of all things for Him and count them dross, refuse, worthless, valueless. To such, "Pluck out the right eye," "cut off the right hand," "sell all thou hast," "leave all," "forsake all," are sweet music; when He is loved, martyrdom's history follows.

How gladly will men join many churches, subscribe to many doctrines, observe most any form of worship, and do what men tell them to do before they will submit to Christ's rulership! Yet nothing else is Christianity.

Fundamental And Instrumental

Opposition to old or new theological dogmas, state or denominationally controlled schools, equal not the Christ-control of the controversialists. The nucleus of the "True Church" comes not from intellectual faith in the fundamentals but personal faith in Christ which cancels sin and changes the heart. The "True Church" is fundamental and instrumental: sound in doctrine and an effective channel of service not only talking of what it believes, but ministering the Spirit (Galatians 3:5). Phariseeism emits the smoke most offensive to God (Isaiah 65:5); formality, neither hot nor cold, nauseates Him (Revelation 3:15-16).

My two little boys were hoeing potatoes under protest--they wanted to play--and faulted each other for straining the hoe handles. Artie cried, "Papa, look at Dickie! He is not hoeing." Presently Dickie retorted, "Papa, Artie is not working." Both were wasting precious time needed for positive work. The goodness of God in the death of Christ leads to repentance. Ridiculing doctrinal shortcomings or emphasizing abstract fundamentals, reveal not the love of God like preaching the crucifixion in a "crucified style." All confusion, hardness, bewilderment and bitterness would flee from before the cross. So Paul thought: "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2).

The "True Church" is largely invisible, and like the time of Christ's coming, known to the Father: "The Lord knoweth them that are His." He will show who are His at His coming. Now the tares and wheat grow together.

Christ knows "the blasphemy of them who say they are Jews and are not." Jews are not so outwardly but inwardly. Some feignedly serve Christ in the coming age and revert to Satan when he comes forth from the bottomless pit. He is an angel of light, deception, all deceivableness of unrighteousness, is his role; so his ministers and children.

A friend writes: My heart continues to enlarge toward all people. When we see God I think we shall all say with Isaiah, "Woe is me". We must have the tender heart of Jesus and never pronounce woes upon others without tears. I wonder how many of us preachers could say with Paul, "night and day I ceased not to warn everyone with tears," or, "they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, I tell you, even weeping." There is such harsh controversy going on today in religious circles, and men calling themselves Christians, are saying such unkind things of each other. Some have lost the doctrine of Christ; others have it without the Spirit of the Gospel.

Paul commended his disciples to the Lord on whom they believed. Christ committed His work to the keeping of His holy Father and warned against the leaders who sought a following for gain: "Cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?" When churches prey upon each other for members, revival is impossible: only expert gauntlet runners and resisters of high-pressure salesmanship can escape their wiles. Christ would say to the smaller groups: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold;" to the larger ones: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones who believe in me:" and to all, "Love one another as I have loved you." Wesley, Whitefield and Edwards expected no extensive revival until the churches rallied about Christ. The astonishing spectacle (in 1857) of Christians rushing to a common place of intercession resulted in 500,000 conversions that year!

Christ will catch up no tares nor leave behind a single grain of wheat when He comes for His Church. Within the Visible but without the Invisible Church is solemnly possible. The Invisible Church is known principally to God, yet "If any man love God, the same is known of Him." Organic life has its signs. There is a witness to it: "The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God" (Rom. 8:16). "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. 4:6).

Diminutive, Temple-less Mobile

The True Church is often diminutive; "A little flock here;" the Church which is in thy house," yonder, (Col. 4:15); there, "where two or three are gathered together in my name" (Matthew 18:20). Of such He said, "Fear not little flock (Greek, little, little flock) it is the Father's good pleasure to give

you the kingdom." Few find the "little gate" that entereth into life. The Church may exist without stationary edifices, e g., the early saints by the river-side "where prayer was wont to be made," because it is mobile, "scattered abroad everywhere" by persecution, or sent forth by Christ to preach.

Character

It is the "Church of the First Born whose names are enrolled in heaven," "the house of God," "whose house are we," "an habitation of God through the Spirit"--"the Church of the living God"--"the pillar and ground of the truth," the body corporate, God's dwelling place, building, His temple: "I will dwell in them and be their God." His name only, "Church of Christ" or "Church of God" make it not, but His Divine nature and likeness through the exceeding great and precious promises. Of it God says that "This man, or that man was born in her," regenerate. God confirms its message of grace, adds daily to its numbers such as are saved, and maintains and develops its spiritual life. His Church, "taught of God," preaches His "Word in fact, not in pretense, with the ability He gives.

John Wesley suggested: The Church of Christ is composed of a company of faithful men and women, having the form and seeking the power of godliness, united together to help each work out the other's salvation: existing within and without the established Church, seeking to stir up all, of whatever nation or denomination to worship God in Spirit and truth. His Church is the repository of divine gifts essential to its heavenly direction and government on earth. (1 Corinthians 12: 4-31). Its ministers are chosen, called, and ordained by Christ, "putting them into the ministry" as He did Paul. He anoints and empowers them with authority, gives them effective gifts, "teaching, helps, governments, exhortation, healing tongues and interpretation." The Church is wherever the leadership of the Spirit is recognized. Where He is not, is no Church, whatever else there be. He calls, draws, begets, sanctifies, and directs the Church. The presence of God abides in "The True Church," sometimes glorious, awful, its pillar of cloud by day and fire by night, its Shekinah-glory within the Temple.

"This thing was not done in a corner." Christ ever spake openly. In secret He said nothing; "hidden with Christ in God." His Church is strengthened to go to "every creature" with the good news of reconciliation through Christ: that God is not reckoning their trespasses to them, if they believe.

No Over-Right

The Gentiles exercise over-right--lordship--"But it shall not be so of you" Jesus told His disciples. Slave driving, over-lording, unfair profit from

the blood, toil and necessity of our fellows, belong not to Christ's Church: "Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven" (Colossians 4:1). How fortunes wrung from the distress, anguish, hunger and necessity of men would shrink if Christ's rule were applied! A friend received \$2000.00 from the widow of his employer who thought her husband had underpaid him. Many others received similar amounts. It lessened her fortune many thousands, but eased her conscience.

Another example: Golden Rule Nash was perplexed at the church-medley. Reading the New Testament he discovered that much he had been compelled to condemn in the churches as false, unscriptural and impractical, was not the Christianity of Christ but its lack. He then conducted his business as Christ would. It grew to unbelievable proportions, an industrial miracle permeated with Jesus' fair Spirit.

Never Antagonizes Truth

Truth brings life, cleansing, freedom, progress. Satan abode not in it. Truth-lovers hear Christ's voice; rejection of it is spiritual suicide. Destructive criticism of it, presumption and non-progressiveness in it, are unknown in Christ's Church. Its motto is "truth at any cost." "In the long run, truth wherever found, or by whomsoever taught proves to be of God and wins." "Man cannot receive, nor God bestow, a greater blessing than the truth." As Emerson said, "The most unpleasant truth in the long run is the far safer traveling companion than the most agreeable falsehood." The permitted side is not all of truth. Truth fears not the other side; it annexes whatever truth it has. "To protect truth is to be its enemy. It fears not argument, attack." It asks not that the "controversial lid" about it be put on: any truth from anywhere cannot but strengthen its position. "It is no invalid to be pampered or kept in a wheel chair." "Let it out, let it mix, it can hold its own." It overcomes opposition, invites attack. It ever knows that "the side with the most truth wins." "If what claims to be true cannot defeat all opposition, it is not true." Fire never hurts gold, nor opposition, truth. Truth advances by antagonism.

Two hundred million stars charted limits not the stars but man's power to build telescopes! Vast areas in the Bible await someone with large truth sense to discover with reverent wonder: the "things new and old," of which Christ spoke. Truth's new revelations are intolerable to the static. They say the old wine is better. But it is "living and active" and rewards the receptive with revelations. (James 1:21). "When He is come, (Messiah) He will tell us all things" (John 4:25). Remarkable vision from one in sin. The Pharisees built the hedge and cut off progress but the law of progress in Truth is as "the shining light, more and more unto the perfect day."

One says "we can only hold honestly what of truth we have as long as we do not see larger truth, but when it knocks for admission and we refuse to receive it, we can no longer hold what we do hold in sincerity; for truth, like duty, ever reveals more to us and expects more of us." "Whatsoever doth make manifest is light" (Ephesians 5:13). Christ destroyed not the Law, but filled it full of meaning. Orthodoxy must be full of content. Christ is the fountain of life--"In thy light shall we see light,"-- but dimly we see through men's smoked glasses. His Spirit, not bound by tradition or fear, guides into all truth.

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07 -- MAN'S UNITIES VERSUS GOD'S

The unity God gives fruits in "the genuine spirit of piety, which, in every time and place, tends to promote union in heart and brotherly kindness." Mere human oneness in sect, polity or doctrine, spells dead unity--"a rope of sand when put to the test of genuine unity"--through the Person and work of Christ,"-the only basis of worthwhile unity--it is a living, bright, blessed reality. He fails not however great the strain. His Church is a spiritual brotherhood: "One(only) is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." Luther said, "The Head of the Christian Church is Christ Himself and not man." God's spiritual unity comes to individuals who submit to Christ; their aggregate makes the collective unity of Christ's Church. Legislation brings not Christian unity. Councils add nothing to it, nor do their deliberations or excommunications detract from it. Christ prayed for personal union with God, Christ and the brethren, through the Holy Spirit. Such a Church convicts the world that God sent Christ.

Where I write, three small rivers flow together and make a stronger-flowing river. The identity of two of them is lost to do it. The most powerful one retains its name. Four churches nearby, unwilling to be swallowed, miss the lesson the rivers teach. Church names and traditions prevent flowing together in Christ.

The single post office and sales agency for each auto too, try to teach the waste of unnecessary duplication and cost of operation. Which Church shall survive? The fittest to serve God and man.

The auto industry makes and distributes superb quality cars only by a group of strong companies working together. Banks and railroads are merging. The churches should merge around Christ. Sectarianism is sinful and hopeless; it makes new antagonisms and complexes church problems, like secession the problems of Union.

How little it matters that our names are inscribed on earthly church-rolls if they be not in the "Book of Life"--"The Church of the First Born, whose names are enrolled in heaven"--the only record of "The True Church." And how startling it is that all whose names are not found written in this book will be cast into the lake of fire!

"The believer is not called upon to maintain any of the existent unities, nor to endeavor to form any new ones which he thinks will be better able to solve the problem; but he is called to endeavor to keep the unity God has given, the unity of the Spirit. It is made up of all true believers in Christ. Difference in doctrine or polity does not destroy this unity; it only mars its expression. The unity must be maintained in spite of the differences; it must be held in spite of the severe tests it must go through." (E. A. Knoch). Paul is a good example: fellow-working and fellowshiping with two brothers who were of the opposite party, the Peterine circumcision party. Paul was of the uncircumcision. (Col. 4:10-11). God's spiritual unity in Christ leads to peaceful oneness, "Man's unities are the chief enemy to oneness and peace among God's children; they do not unite; they divide." God-given oneness has "The True Church" because of a likeness of nature or a spiritual unity. "We cannot choose a single member of it, nor repudiate one single saint whom God has been pleased to include in this unity."

A friend who organized a new unity in which he saw success and failure wrote his mature judgment: "The simplest form of organization, if any, is the safest and best. I would not again have any statement of doctrine but the Bible; nor would I have any covenant. I would gather the people together of like precious faith, in the name of Christ, with Himself as the central and attractive personality. If they are never taken in, they cannot be put out. The principle discipline would come from the Lord Himself whom they first sin against when they fault the gathering together. Most of our trouble has come from man attempting to organize and govern God's spiritual forces."

Seasons of spiritual aridity in any church bring great tension on the spiritual remnant: although holding the form and patiently waiting, has frequently been rewarded by God revivifying the spiritual life.

The Great Need Is:

Not a new church, or more of the old, but a new fresh message; not re-organization and re-branding the old death, but new life in Christ. As Henry Drummond said: "not more of the same quantity but a different quality;" not more converts but what kind of converts; not more machinery or the speeding up of the old but liberating vision; not migration, but transformation; not a mere change of the location but of the heart; not

place but Person; not form, but life in Christ "who is our life :"
altogether new vision of Christ and Him crucified. God-speed good men,
methods and movements, with an authoritative message old or new, to
break our bondage!

Philipps Brooks, spiritual Episcopalian, said, "I am a member of the
Church of All Saints, and all saints are members of my Church." Blessed
Christian unity !

Canada Church unification is commendable: God's unity comes not
by organization. "We are baptized by one Spirit into one body." Legal
incorporation is not this act of God. The unities of man are outward, the
product of His works, and often lead to eulogies on the Church's material
resources; but if the glory of spiritual reproduction is lost nothing can
compensate. The unity of God results in humble gratitude. It is a God-given
spiritual fitness, a life and fellowship in Christ.

A religious educator said for the sake of harmony the different
factions should keep and labor apart. Perhaps so, for the factions, but not
for the Church Christ is building! It is inseparably one, and dwells in loving
unity in spite of its great diversity. Real sanctification is found in a Person:
"That they may be one in us," "as we are one." Intimate, inseparable and
blessed oneness like Christ has with the Father through the Holy Spirit.
The Trinity has unity in diversity.

The unity of the Church of Christ is like that of the natural body. It
has many members but one body: different functions, uses, purposes but
all serving each other and the glory of the body. His body, the Church, is
one, its members and functions many. When one member is honored all
rejoice. When one suffers all suffer. This world is the scene of this unity:
"That the world may know that Thou has sent Me."

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08 -- VIEWS OF THE EARLY SPIRITUAL REFORMERS

Luther said "If one would be saved, he must hunt the True Church,"
by which he meant the spiritual organism, the body of Christ, the out-
called, born, sanctified, Spirit-filled and led. Where the Spirit is absent,
there is no Church. The Word is not without the Spirit nor the Spirit without
the Word: some have much Spirit and little Word; others much Word and
little of the Spirit: Christ's Church has both.

A Remarkable Description

Bishop Ryle, deeply spiritual Episcopal Bishop, gives a clear description of what "The True Church" is like:

"I want to belong to the One True Church; to the Church outside of which there is no salvation. I do not ask where you go on a Sunday; I only ask, "Do you belong to the one true Church?"

"Where is this one true Church? What is the one True Church like? What are the marks by which this one true Church may be known? You may well ask such questions. Give me your attention, and I will provide you with some answers:

"The one true Church is composed of all believers in the Lord Jesus. It is made up of God's elect--of all converted men and women--of all true Christians. In whomsoever we can discern the election of God, the Father, the sprinkling of the blood of God, the Son, the sanctifying work of God, the Spirit, in that person we see a member of Christ's true Church.

"It is a Church of which all the members have the same marks. They are all born again of the Spirit; they all possess repentance towards God, faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, and holiness of life and conversation. They all hate sin, and they all love Christ. They worship differently, and after different fashions; some worship with a form of prayer and some with none; some worship kneeling and some standing; but they all worship with one heart. They are all led by one Spirit; they all build upon one foundation; they all draw their religion from one single book, that is the Bible. They are all joined to one great center, that is Jesus Christ.

"This is the only Church which possesses true unity. Its members are entirely agreed on all the weightier matters of religion, for they are all taught by one Spirit. Take three or four of them--strangers to one another--from the most far and remote corners of the earth; examine them separately on these points; you will find them all of one judgment.

"This is the only Church which is truly catholic (universal). It is not the Church of any one nation or people; its members are to be found in every part of the world where the Gospel is received and believed. It is not confined within the limits of any one country or pent up within the pale of any particular form of outward government. Its members will be gathered from North and South, East and West, and will be of every name and tongue, but all one in Christ Jesus.

"This is the Church which does the work of Christ upon the earth. Its members are a little flock, and a few in number, compared with the children of the world; one or two here, and two or three there: a few in this parish and a few in that.

"Reader, this is the true Church to which a man must belong, if he would be saved. Till you belong to this you are nothing better than a lost soul. You may have the form, the husk, the skin, the shell of religion, but you have not the substance and the life. Yes, you may have countless outward privileges; you may enjoy great light and knowledge, but if you do not belong to the body of Christ, your light and knowledge and privileges will not save your soul. Alas for the ignorance that prevails on this point! Many fancy if they join this Church or that Church and become communicants, and go through certain forms, that all must be right with their souls. It is an utter delusion; it is a gross mistake. All were not Israel who were called Israel, and all are not members of Christ's body who profess themselves Christians ... You may be a staunch Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Baptist, Wesleyan or Plymouth Brother, and yet not belong to the true Church, and, if you do not, it would be better at least if you had never been born."

Franck

"The true Church is not a separate mass of people, not a particular sect to be pointed out with the finger, not confined to one time or place; it is rather a spiritual and invisible body of all members of Christ, born of God, of one mind, spirit and faith, but not gathered in any one external city or place. It is a fellowship, seen with the spiritual eye and by the inner man. It is the assembly of all truly God-fearing, good-hearted, new born persons in all the world, bound together by the Holy Spirit, in the peace of God and the bonds of love, a communion outside of which there is no salvation, no Christ, no God, no comprehension of the Scripture, no Holy Spirit and no Gospel. I belong to this fellowship. I believe in the communion of saints, and I am in this Church, let me be where I may, and, therefore, I no longer look for Christ in 'lo heres or lo theres.' This Church, which the Spirit is building through the ages, and in all lauds, is, once more, like the experience of an individual Christian, entirely inward. Love is the one mark and badge of fellowship in it."

"External offices and gifts make no Christian, and just as little does the standing of a person, or locality, or time, or dress, or food, or anything external. The kingdom of God is neither prince nor peasant, food nor drink, hat nor coat, here nor there, yesterday nor tomorrow, baptism nor circumcision, nor anything whatever that is external; ('Lo, the kingdom of God is within you'); it cometh without observation; but it is peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, unalloyed love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and an unfeigned faith."

"God must Himself, apart from all external means, through Christ, touch the soul, speak in it, work in it, if we are to experience salvation."

Schwenckfeld

Schwenckfeld wrote, "Neither doctrine, ceremonies, rules, or sacraments can make a Christian Church: but inner unity of Spirit, of heart, of soul, and conscience in Christ and in the knowledge of Him, a unity in love and faith, does make a Church of Christ."

Rufus Jones, in "The Remnant" said "Sometimes the Remnant movements seem to be laboring for a visible Church composed only of the elect, kept by rigid discipline; other times they seem to care little for the outward and all for the inward; and, again, there were those who sought the middle course."

This fellowship might be lost--not the final salvation--by persistent disobedience. Restoration to fellowship with God and His elect is by the simple look of faith to Him who is faithful and just to forgive our sins (John 1:9).

"Sometimes the Remnant movements were organized and sometimes they were not. They rendered valuable service, and sometimes their zeal led to fanaticism; but they all made valuable contributions to spiritual Christianity and helped to keep alive and transmit vital religion."

"The heretics have served the Church," again, says Dr. Rufus Jones, "by awakening it from lethargy, and stinging it like a gadfly into new life and power. They have driven it back to the source of its faith, and have thus brought it nearer to its true mission. They have brought to light neglected truths. They have championed causes which, without them, would have been lost."

"The word 'Heresy' originally meant an act of choice, and was used to describe those who believed what they had chosen for themselves not what the Church taught. A heretic, then, is one who deviates from the accepted faith of the day, whatever that may be. Because our Lord was out of accord with the faith of His time, He was called a heretic." Ibid.

Heretical groups often had a vision of part-truth. But none have the vision of truth full-orbed, because the truth sense develops gradually. We build on their good foundation--what of truth they saw--as others will build on our imperfect vision of truth. The iconoclast destroys, but truth is supplemental, not substitutional. "Only a dwarfed truth-sense, prejudice, and fear," said Drummond, will prevent us making discoveries in the vast firmament of truth.

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09 -- TRANSITION FROM CHRIST TO CHURCH

The transition from Christ, the "all in all," to whom men went direct, to the necessity of climbing up to Him through the mediation of the Church, has worked all through the Church's history. Some other arm than the everlasting one is sought. Men would improve the perfect way to God, aid finished redemption, help all power, and perfect perfection. The spiritual Church, God is building; the gates of hell shall never prevail against it: not so the organization of man.

The reasons for changing the sublimest hopes of the soul from repose in God to the institutions of men, are many. Early the infant Church was dominated by astute lawyers who had a mania for exact definition. Paul would not make the cross void with wisdom of words. The Church at Rome gradually gained influence over the smaller churches, who looked to Rome for advice. Lordship was assumed until the present hierarchy. Disagreement about doctrine and government bewildered the sheep. Early the Montanistic movement laid great stress on the gifts of the Spirit and gradually became a new movement. Bodily healing, nor any manifestation of the Spirit, is not justification for schism. Perverse men have taken away disciples after themselves. Perhaps the greatest reason for Christ not being supreme is personal: "We will not have this man to rule over us." Then men flock to the outward.

The present divisions were greatly augmented when the Church left off preaching Christ and began to preach theories about Him: when the Atonement, instead of being presented as fact, in the language given by the Spirit, was preached as a theory. Christ crucified on a tree was too simple for the scholarly. Many intricate theories of atonement were preached rather than the fact of it, becoming a great body of doctrine of the atonement. Instead of looking directly to the crucified "lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," men argued about the right theory. To restore the unity God prizes in the Church, we must get back to Christ its source. And so of the other theories. Losing sight of Christ who is not divided, who is the only unifying bond of believers, divisions entered and "Christ was parceled out" and lost in the maze of the theories. Co-existent with just criticism of all churches which have usurped His place, there is a spirit of inquiry in the minds of many to find and know the lost Christ.

Again quoting Rufus Jones: "The most marked and notable change which the first century revealed in the life of the Church was the change from a free, creative, spontaneous, enthusiastic, democratic society, to an orderly, organized, systematized Church, governed and directed by ordained officials. With this outward change was also noted a corresponding inward change; namely, from faith as a personal trust and confidence in the God and Father whom Christ had shown them, to belief in

a body of sacred doctrines, accepted on authority and held as essential to salvation. At the same time a change from the sporadic, inspired, congregational ministry, which depended on the endowment of Divine 'gifts' granted to individual members of the body, to a fixed system of service, in the hands of the local bishop, or presbyter, who was both governor and teacher of the Church, over which he was overseer.

"It is not possible to discover the definite steps which marked these profound changes in the methods and character of the primitive Church, or to designate the person or persons who inaugurated and guided the stages of the great transformation."

But by these steps the church organization came to usurp Christ's place. Satan is the animating power back of the transition, and a thousand years pass before God raises a warrior-priest, Martin Luther, to restore His Son to His place in the minds of the people, and His Word to supremacy over the selfish interpretations of popes, priests, emperors and councils. The Church chained the Bible to the sacred desk, but Luther unchained it and gave it to the people. It is again chained amidst the isms and ologies of today and although the people have it they can not get at Christ for the "press;" the many voices of interpretation bewilder: it must speak directly from God to the individual heart. The Church must take the back, Christ the front seat. In the volume of the Book it is written of Christ over 10,000 times. Of the Church, thrice in the Four Gospels, and then it is not a Temple or organization but a fellowship of the "Out-called." The Epistles speak of the Church more frequently, but it is the Spirit-"Out-called" and directed Church.

P. W. Wilson said "At the outset, the early Church was not even recognized as a definite society; outsiders noted those who belonged to Christ merely because they lived a certain way which differed from the custom of the times; with us worship is public and conduct is sometimes private; with them it was the other way around: conduct was apparent, and worship was concealed behind closed doors." But not behind church doors as we know them. When Christianity was at its best, the first three centuries, there is no mention of a separate or distinct building called a church in which believers met for worship. The Church body who met for worship was all, not where they met; who assembled, not the place of assemblage; though the Church may meet in a building, it is not the Church: "God dwelleth not in temples made with hands" (Acts 17:24).

He dwelt in the early Church believers. Without outward, legalized, organized form, and equipment through which to work, they showed visible temples little important to the Church God is building. Life in Christ, overflowing, abundant, fellowship with God and each other, the presence and power of the Spirit, distinguished the early Church.

Lightfoot says: "There is no clear example of a separate building set apart for Christian worship within the limits of the Roman Empire before the third century, though apartments in private houses might be devoted to this purpose." There was a Church at the house of Nymphas. His house was not the Church, it met there. Paul receiving believers in his hired house, the Church in the house of Priscilla and Aquila, and Nymphas, and the Church which was in his house, are examples of the Church in private apartments. When a friend met me in the room where I write, in a New York City hotel, and we bowed contritely in prayer, and the sacred presence filled the room and melted our hearts and eyes to tears of gratitude, there was a Church.

In fact a sacred place without God is most unsacred and an undedicated place where He deigns to manifest Himself is then most sacred.

Paul describes a Visible Church presided over by men to whom God had imparted different gifts--helps, government, etc.--which the Church recognized, and which were exercised under humble dependence upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Leader of the Church. Only the perversion of the authority and gifts God gives the Church is condemned. It is a far cry to prove that every Church today is in true apostolic spiritual succession: yet organization, despite limitations, does more good than disorganization. Like the few in Noah's day were saved by water, although they were on top of it, many have been saved through the Church. It is the best we have, and we should labor for its purification.

The tendency to shift from Christ to Church is seen by the following magnificent quotation, were Christ instead of Church, exalted:

"I'm Calling You"

"I am the essence of good fellowship, friendliness and love.

"I am hung with sweet memories--memories of brides--memories of mothers--memories of boys and girls--memories of the aged as they grope their way down the shadows.

"I am the best friend of mankind. To the man who prizes sanity, peacefulness, pure-mindedness, social standing and longevity, I am a necessity.

"I am decked with loving tears, crowned with happy hands and hearts.

"In the minds of the greatest men of earth, I find a constant dwelling place.

"I live in the lives of the young and in the dreams of the old.

"I safeguard man through all his paths--from the first hour life's sun slants upon his footprints-until the purple gathers in the west and darkness falls.

"I lift up the fallen; I strengthen the weak; I help the distressed. I show mercy, bestow kindness and offer a friendly hand to the man in purple and fine linen and the man in homespun.

"I give gifts that gold cannot buy, nor kings take away. They are given freely to all that ask.

"I bring back the freshness of life, the eagerness, the spirit of youth which feels that it has something to live for ahead.

"I meet you with outstretched arms and with songs of gladness.

"Sometime, someday, some hour, in the near or far future, you will yearn for the touch of my friendly hand.

"I am your comforter and best friend. (Hardly, the Spirit is).

"I'm calling you! I am the Church!"

One Greater Than The Temple

Sky-scraper temples in our great cities combine business with religion. God-speed to all their Christian activities! But Christ rebuked religion as inherent in grand temples and prophesied their dissolution. Forty and six years was the Jew's Temple in building! Standing in it He said, "There is One in the Temple greater than the Temple." In the frenzy of modern building activity, forget not "He who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house" (Hebrews 3:3). He is greater than all Temple activities. When either obscure Him, He is again lost in the Temple.

Unless worship ascend to God everywhere, it is not possible to worship Him acceptably in any temple. The disciples boasted to Christ of the great stones in the Jewish Temple--even as we boast today of our great modern temples* [*"Three Protestant temples finished or under construction, cost approximately \$40,000,000. Two of them are "Sky-scraper" office type. If Christ came back and wished He could have an office in either for \$2,000.00 to \$3000.00 a year. Legal Loan Co's., Lawyers,

Realtors etc., occupy them. The other is Cathedral type where distinguished citizens repose.] --but Christ said "There shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." He seeks a more enduring temple than brick and mortar, steel or cement, glass, marble, brass, or any temple however costly, constructed by the art and device of man: even the "holy temple in the Lord" composed of believers--"an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:19-22)--whose material is spiritual, "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

"The only worthwhile temple in the universe is the body of man," in it, and the high and holy heavens are God's only dwelling places. "He dwelleth not in temples made with mens' hands." "Where is the house that ye build unto me" (Isaiah 66:1)? The heavens are His throne and the earth His footstool. "Where is the place of my rest?" Temples constructed and dedicated to His name? All the materials of them were His before! The Jewish Temple's veil was rent, its dividing wall between Jew and Gentile and all of its mammoth stones were thrown in heaps; its priests were jobless: all over its rubbish heaps God wrote rejection, repudiation. There is a way to Him that needs no temples, no officiating priests, no grand ritual, no holy or most holy place, no animal sacrifice, no altars of wood, stone or brass; by it the humblest are priests unto Him, and have access anywhere through the blood of Christ, all are God's building, God's temples, "your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost," for it, earth's grandly beautiful and fabulously costly temples, are passed. God dwells in the hearts of His people! Walks in them! Lives in them! Has perpetual worship in them! Man's scrupulous care of his temples, teaches how sacred our bodies should be kept for His habitation: the indwelling of Deity, is Christianity!

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10 -- FURTHER SCHISM NOT THE REMEDY

Everywhere is seen the fruit of schism and the operation of the law of compensation against it. The Fundamentalist-Modernistic controversy will doubtless further rend the churches. Twenty years ago, Bishop Warren said the time of rejection of the sound teaching had come. Prophecy is fulfilled. Impatience Wit it afflicts all. Antagonism to it is not of place but heart. Schism does not cure but shifts it.

Every spiritual movement started auspiciously and--for a while--worked unselfishly to quicken the life of all. A Moravian led the Wesley's, Episcopalians, to Christ. They died in that fellowship. Dr. Simpson was content to quicken spiritual life and missionary interest: he held organization lightly and never dreamed of founding a sect. Dr. Bresee told me he never asked anyone to join his Church: entrapped members were

worthless; sent of God, they were mutually helpful. Spiritual movements always disintegrate proportionate to their sectarian development. New leaders arise without the unselfish helpfulness their founders had, who follow the line of least resistance and "find the way of compromise easy, seasoned with the hope of present reward." Then God, ever working for reality, must break up and start over.

I asked a brother "How many branches have sprung from your original Church? Seventeen," he snapped, "Just sixteen too many." All except his were superfluous! The others echo "ditto," of his Church. Division, subdivision, and the divisions of the subdivision, afflict all. Some, with publishing plant--where copy is censored like war dispatches--and books are published--if written by their own--and annual gatherings are held where the permitted note is preached, and relationship with the movement is stressed more than standing with God, and with machinery like larger ecclesiastical systems, yet claim to be no sect. But the price of fellowship is, submerge personality, suppress originality, and be silent outside the permitted note. Really, a seer wrote, "It is exceeding difficult (if not altogether impossible) to be a free man in Christ and belong to any movement extant." And he asks: "Where shall we find free men?" Between the tyranny of the majority and of the minority, one must follow Christ.

Good people are perplexed, those without are confused. Where shall they look? What shall they do? Shall they follow the schismatics to be saved or does the spiritual declension call for restoratives and missionaries? Is it not as consistent to work in darkened churches as dark continents? Is the formality of the churches worse than the censoriousness? Does scattering the disease cure it? Is a transfer equal to transformation of character? Is not separation negative? The vision of Christ is most needed. Can not one serve Christ as acceptable in one communion, or in none, as in another? The loss of Christ's Spirit makes the deep wound. Can anything better come from the same material which has resulted in the present situation? Stagnation, separation, or Christ? "The resources of the Christian life are just Jesus." A blessed Person asks our love, fellowship, service and worship. Where else shall we lavish them? Membership stands not by us in temptation's bewildering hour. He, the radiant Person, will make the way of escape. (1 Cor. 10:13). No Church can equal Him. Lead stamped gold is lead, The beautiful label affects not the can content. He alone can succor. He and His Church are inseparable: there shall be one fold, the fold of Christ, and there is one flock, "the flock of God." The Church of our choice is indirect. Whom we will serve is direct.

In a day of perplexity and confusion in matters of church and faith, look "off unto Jesus" (Ger. Trans. Heb. 12:3). God justifies directly, without ally other medium, the ungodly who believe in Him: ungodliness, godly sorrow, plus faith in Christ's death equals righteousness. Works a

thousand-fold, fill the air; foremost of them the mania for splitting and organizing new churches, as in some sense essential to salvation.

Church punctuality is good if not trusted: faith is in Christ, not in punctuality. One Church teaches unless within it there is no salvation; another, separate from all or be lost: Jesus simply says, "Come unto Me and I will give you rest." Exit religious monopoly! Enter glorious freedom in Christ!

"Now a worker has his wage counted to him as a due, not as a favor, but a man who instead of working believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, has his faith counted as righteousness" (Rom. 4:5, Moffat). "Ye were reconciled to God by the death of His Son." To add anything after that charges God with folly. Calvary is the nth degree of His wisdom in redemption. "But," says one, "I was led to leave my church so definitely and to join elsewhere." Of that I am not judge. But to think of any merit in this step for salvation is a greater grief to God than the condition left.

There is similarity and difference in the conditions 500 years ago and now. Many of God's people then heard a voice: "Come out of her my people;" of that I have no doubt, and followed Luther. But recently there have been mighty movements of the Spirit in orthodox churches. God has over-ruled schisms to great good. But yearns to permeate all with His Spirit.

"We now forsake the old for the new teachers" said the Swiss to Zwingle. He nobly replied: "Follow only God's word as it alone does not err."

All believers should center around the magnetic personality of Christ everywhere and not only in the movements. Only that will break monopoly and the attempted "corner" in grace. Unprincipled proselytism--sheep-stealing--must cease.

Sinful divisions must be rebuked. "How wonderful," said a leader, "that God has called us together for fellowship in Christ!" But when I joined not his movement, I saw the subtle art of the proselytizer. He meant fellowship in Christ, plus membership in his movement! But Christ needs no plus-es! Said leader will send foreign missionaries, but have nothing to do with the writer who is consoled that Christ dealt kindly with those excommunicated by the hierarchy of His day. Isaiah cried eighty-five woes on Israel before he saw the vision of the Lord high and lifted up: then he cried, "Woe is Isaiah!" Self-judgment, more than of those who follow not our movements, will bring revival.

Christ must be preached--not "party-cries"--no slogan can comprehend Him--exalt His Word--not stock truisms; we must open the Scriptures, not tell stories. Party-shibboleths--watch-words--commit, handicap, enslave. He makes free and sustains manifold relations to His Church, not "Four-Square" or "Four-Fold" only; a glib phrase can not comprehend the Gospel.

Gospel liberty is individual; too much store must not repose in men: the sources of truth are open to all. Painfully we must unlearn much we have been taught. Gamaliel filled Paul with ten thousand traditions which vanished when Christ appeared. Paul afterwards cautiously conferred with men. The satisfying vision of the personal God shows the best that men have taught us is "second-hand"--hearsay--"I have heard of Thee with the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee." (Job). Profound humility, great self-loathing and abhorrence, result: "wherefore I abhor myself." Prostrate before the vision of God!

God thrusts leadership on human leaders of Divine movements. Humility knows its nothingness. Preeminence belongs to One. "You are not to be arrogant champions of one teacher against another," Paul wrote the Corinthians. Every "ist", Modernist, Fundamentalist, Hierarchist, Sectarianist, Emotionalist, Signist, should heed cock-sureness. "Christ said to those who said, 'We see !' "Therefore your sin remaineth." Paul was "less than the least of all saints" and "not fit to be an apostle." Even Jesus said, "The Son can do nothing of Himself."

Lest We Forget

On a tree near a church was a tin sign: on it in red letters you read "Christ died for the ungodly." Said church thought nearby churches should be left because of ungodliness. The incongruity of their position with the text dawned, and, consistently, it was removed. To "Him who gave Himself for our sins" sinners must be very dear. What depths of sin His grace reaches! See whom God calls and prepares for His fellowship! He is hard-pressed for material! As Paul Rader said "He must take what He can get." That Destructive Higher Critic may be a Paul breathing out his threatenings against the pure faith, kicking against the ox-goads of conviction superinduced by some shining-faced Stephen. Who tamed Paul can tame him! That Catholic priest may be a Martin Luther; that Episcopal Rector may be a John Fletcher or John Wesley! That Mother Superior may be a Madame Guyon! That Cardinal, a Fenelon!

Surely none need despair when Paul enumerates the deceived, fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, the effeminate abusers of themselves with mankind, who burn in their lusts--men for men and women with women--working that which is unseemly; the lascivious, the sensual, the

sodomite, those guilty of unnatural crimes--bestiality and incest--the thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners, the immoral and licentious, the lascivious and evil concupiscent. Who exceed in depravity this list? "And such were some of you" Paul wrote the washed, justified and sanctified Corinthians.

God called such by His Spirit to the fellowship of His Son! Is anybody abandoned as hopeless because of corruption? Attack imperfection? They say, "it is imperfection which speaks of imperfection." Sin is the only territory for missionary work: the evangelization of the inevitable. God give us more of the remedy and less of the defect.

The problem of the preacher, teacher, or evangelist is more complicated than that of the laity-though all should be priests unto Him--they must minister to those who will hear. But conflict awaits the godly everywhere. Spiritual pride develops in the new Church and calls for courageous rebuke. "God knows the proud afar off."

"My soul shall make her boast in the Lord" not in any movement; for all flesh is as grass and needs searching more than inflation with its importance; the Word of God more than bouquets; self-judgment more than exaltation; and a vision of its nothingness more than of spiritual superiority.

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11 -- SCRIPTURAL SEPARATION

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not THE unclean thing; and I will receive you (2 Cor. 6:17), saith the Lord!" -- The Divine origin of this call has been used to cudgel many into bondage. From what they are to separate has not been so fairly presented. Existing churches were unknown to Paul. A fanatic wrote me that God had called him to organize a "Methodist New Age Church" and, "I would go to hell if I did not join it!" Another radical told a Presbyterian he was as good as lost unless within the radical's Church. This is a blunt putting. Many so think of their churches, only they are not so outspoken. Horrible!

No Visible Church is perfect! The perfect Christ is a glorious realization: the organization a useless quest. Not until the former things are passed away and God is all in all, will there be perfection.

"Separation in Scripture is twofold: "from" whatever is contrary to the mind of God, and "unto" God Himself. The underlying principle is that in a moral universe it is impossible for God to bless fully and use His

children who are in compromise or complicity with evil. The unequal yoke is anything which unites a child of God and a believer in a common purpose. Separation from evil implies separation in desire, motive and act, from the world, in the ethically bad sense of this present world system, and separation from believers, especially false teachers, who are "vessels unto dishonor." Separation is not from contact with evil in the world or Church, but from complicity with and conformity to it. For though Christ's disciples are in the world, Christ said, "They are not of the world even as I am not of the world." He was in the world to minister the saving word of the Gospel, "to seek and save that which was lost." The rewards of separation are mentioned as the full manifestation of the Divine Fatherhood, unhindered communion, worship and fruitful service. In separation Christ is our model. He was "holy, harmless, undefiled" and separate from sinners, and yet in such contact with them for their salvation that the Pharisees, who illustrate the mechanical and ascetic conception, judged Him as having lost His Nazarite Character. (Scofield).

The Revised Version: "Touch No unclean thing" (2 Cor. 6:17), is suggestive: touch it not wherever it develops! The A. V. reads "The unclean thing," and according to the application separatists make of this text, "the unclean thing" is particularly found in the churches they would proselytize. "No unclean thing" comprehends it even if it develops among the proselytizers who arrogate freedom from it, at least not having so much of it as the churches they would deprecate.

A pastor in a city of thirty churches told me they thrived by beguiling each other's members. What a caricature of the Church of Christ! What false security! What deception! How dangerous the complacency and cheap the substitute for walking with God! What an awakening from such false security! A miser changed churches and glowingly said: "Oh, friends, since I made this change I feel different!" But he had changed only the location of his miserliness! Scriptural separation is concerned with the change of the life external and internal: "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh (external) and spirit," (internal). (2 Cor. 7:1). Covetousness is of the spirit and not affected by location any more than to scatter the inmates of vice districts breaks it. The destruction of bondage, not its transfer, a new heart, not a new Church, a new nature, not a new name, upbuilding in the faith, not initiation into new factions; and, most of all we need Christlikeness. Defilement is inner: without a new emancipating vision, another location affects it little.

My Maryland forefathers had a custom called "shun-piking." Near the place of toll-payment they built dirt road detours which brought them off the main pike before, and on immediately beyond, the toll-paying place. They went to a lot of trouble, but saved a few pennies. Christ is the main-traveled road to God and there are no detours.

Self-judgment is commanded in the Church: "judgment must first begin at the house of God" and, "if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged:" also "if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive" (John 1:9; I Cot. 11:30; I Pet. 4:17). The publicity of other's sins and starting a new Church annuls it not; it is binding upon all. Arrogant pride of our spirituality and the inferiority of the rest, and unholy schism mortgage the future of a church like war debt.

When Germany shifted her soldiers from the Russian to the French front, she had not more but transferred soldiers! Merely transferring the Lord's army is like moving ivory chess-men or checkers; it changes neither their nature nor number. "There it is," said a zealot, (2 Cor. 6:17), God says it: "Separate yourselves, or you will go to hell." His Church changed names thrice in a few weeks.

Only such maxims, manners, habits, customs, motives and methods which are harmful, sinful or doubtful are forbidden.

However corrupt those who would build on another's foundation make the churches, they accept all they can beguile from them. Perhaps afterwards, they stamp their own peculiarities upon them rather than likeness to Christ.

Unrighteousness, darkness, unbelievers, Belial, infidelity, idolatry and uncleanness exist everywhere, but unless they enter into and come forth from the heart, the child of God is not defiled by living in a world and church where they are. "There is nothing unclean in itself, but to him that esteemeth it to be unclean, it is unclean" said Paul. Christ said "nothing without a man entering into him could defile him" but the things which come forth from within his own heart, as lust, adultery, fornication, thefts, blasphemy, an evil eye, hatred, etc., defile. Hence "Keep thy heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life."

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12 -- THE GREAT CAUSE OF SEPARATION

The people, rulers, Pharisees and officers were disputing whether Christ were "the Prophet" or "the Christ?" Should He come out of Galilee or Bethlehem, where David was? Some said, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Others, "Search and see, for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." Some asked, "When Messias cometh will He do more miracles than this man doeth?" John the Baptist asked, "Art Thou He that should come or look we for Another?" John the Divine said, "So there was a division among the people because of HIM" (John 7:43). Some rejected Him. Others said they would follow Him whithersoever He went. The Jews

said, "He is mad," "a Samaritan and hath a devil." "How can a devil open the eyes of the blind?" queried another. He is ever the occasion of cleavage.

Whence is it that doctrine, polity, ritual and ordinance-disagreement, are the occasions of separation in the Church, and not the Person of Christ? Devotion to Christ is seldom directly the cause of division. Let Him appear on any scene and men would instinctively take sides "for or against Him." "His attraction and repulsion compel it." "He that is not with us is against us." "Come after Me," "follow Me," "receive Me," "be My disciple," constantly fell from His lips. Separation short of deathless passion for Christ side-steps the real issue. "For Me or against Me?" Aligned with Me or the Anti-Christ? All other issues are comprehended in these two. He sets men at variance with father, mother, son, daughter, mother-in-law, and daughter-in-law. To love Him oft makes enemies of earthly loved ones and proves the ties of grace greater than those of nature.

Doctor Burrell writes: "To be a Christian is simply to LET Christ have His way. Less than this is to follow Him afar off, which means, sooner or later, to arrive at a complete denial of His jurisdiction over us." There is no middle course. Two great personalities bid for our submission, that they might work their wills unhindered through us. A young friend offered Christ the back seat in His life. But He must have the front seat. "No man can serve two Masters." We hate Anti-Christ and love Christ or vice a versa. Cumulative antagonism to Christ, precedes the unpardonable sin: "He hath a devil." Church or creed matters little, if against Christ! What a shock to complacency for causes of division less than deathless passion for Christ, when God shall judge the world "By that man whom He hath ordained" (Acts 17:31)! "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world" (John'. 4:17).

Pilate felt Christ's repulsion and attraction, washed his hands before His enemies, and called them to recognize it: "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ" (Matthew 27:22)? Feeling His repulsion they said: "Let Him be crucified." "His blood be upon us and our children." "We will not have this man to rule over us." Feeling His attraction Joseph said, "'Truly this was the Son of God" (Mat. 27:54). How childish to make a theory, doctrine, mode of baptism, form of government, peculiarity of dress, creedal statement, tongue manifestation, or anything short of Christ, the cause of division!

Personality is the great cause of division! "Who is on the Lord's side? Choose God or Baal." "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." When Christianity is not synonymous with Christ we must cling to Him for salvation, protection and direction.

Separation is amiss if self-righteousness, covetousness, unbelief and sin remain. Pharisee means separatist. Yet they were of their father the devil, "and the lusts of your father ye will do." Separatists but servants of Satan! Separated but destitute of the only thing that saves: "for if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." Proselytizing others but in the way of death. Custodians of God's Law, yet it abode not in them. Not like others but destitute of God's love: "I know you that ye have not the love of God in you." Claiming great knowledge of God they had no vision of God: "For you have never seen His shape." Separate, but hating Christ. Disciples of Moses, yet going about to kill Jesus of whom Moses wrote, and who said, "Thou shalt not kill." Claiming God as their Father and hating His Son! Abraham was their ancestor, bit Him whose day Abraham rejoiced to see, they rejected. Zeal for separation, but Whom God sent, they received not. "If another shall come in his own name, (the Anti-Christ) him ye will receive" (John 12:43).

Love Christ Or Anathema Maranatha

What a comprehensive statement! How solemnly suggestive! What a rebuke to the causes of separation through the history of the Church! How silent about the issues on which men divide the organized Church! Organized ecclesiastical systems dealing in authoritative theology, which one must understand or be lost, Church name, organization, incorporation, form of government and ritual came later. Love for a Person or the Anathema, Maranatha. The Church is not cleft because one group loved Christ more than another. But we disagree on doctrine, creed, polity, form of baptism, free will or predestination, etc., etc., "There was a division because of Him." Those who love Him are in His Church, and those who love Him not are outside. To love Him is to be fundamental and keep His commandments. To love Him not, is to keep not His commandments.

After all causes of separation, God further separates schismatics unto His Son's lordship. "There was a division because of HIM!" Our choice of Christ is carried forward to the judgment day and fixes eternal destiny. There kindness to others in His name is shown to have been done to Christ, and when the kindly ministrations were refused, the refusal was to Christ. Rightness with Him is demonstrated by Christlike treatment to "the least of these, my brethren."

He is a greater cause of division than doctrinal disagreement. The carnal mind possesses the rejecters of His will. "Division, envy and strife"--the fruit of carnality--is the Epistle way of saying "There was a division because of Him." Where He dwells-"our peace"--there can be no strife and division. Paul said "We have the mind of Christ." The greater, Jesus, excludes the lesser, "carnality, strife and division." Out of Him all is

discord. Disagreement on doctrine divides not like surrender to Him. Those who love or hate Him, accept or reject Him, believe or disbelieve on Him, walk with or contrary to Him, will be conscious of division, within or without the churches. "There was a division among the people because of Him."

Paul says love Christ, or "Anathema, Maranatha" (1 Cor. 16:22). Everything else is minor, Love for Christ never divides a Christian Church. He is the cleavage point (or Person) in Scriptural separation. There is one valid cause for unfellowship; devotion to Christ.

The Pharisees had orthodoxy, tradition, fasting, tithing, almsgiving, zeal for proselytes but irrevocable hardness of heart: "This people that know not the law are accursed" they said scornfully of the poor.

John the Baptist in Machaeras, must choose Christ continuously: "Tell John Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in Me." Doctrinal adjustment and submission for a crisis blessing is easier than submission continuously for Divine control.

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13 -- JOHN WESLEY ON SEPARATION

"To separate ourselves from a body of living Christians with whom we were before united, is a grievous breach of the law of love. It is the nature of love to unite us together, and the greater the love, the stricter the union. And while this continues in its strength, nothing can divide those whom love has united. It is only when our love grows cold that we can think of separating from our brethren; and this is certainly the case with those who willingly separate from their Christian brethren. The pretenses for separation may be innumerable, but want of love is the real cause; otherwise, they would still hold the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. It is, therefore, contrary to all those commands of God wherein brotherly love is enjoined; to that of St. Paul: "Let brotherly love continue;" to that of St. John, "My beloved children, love one another;" and especially to that of our blessed Master, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you." Yea, "by this," said He, "shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another." And as such a separation is evil in itself, being a breach of brotherly love, so it brings forth evil fruit; it is naturally productive of the most mischievous consequences. It opens a door to all unkind tempers both in ourselves and others. It leads directly to a whole train of evil surmisings, to severe and uncharitable judging of each other. It gives occasion to offense, to anger and resentment, perhaps in ourselves as well as in our brethren, which if not presently stopped, may

issue in bitterness, malice and settled hatred; creating a present hell wherever they are found as a prelude to hell eternal.

"But the ill consequences of even this species of schism do not terminate in the heart. Evil tempers can not long remain within before they are productive of outward fruit. 'Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.' As he whose heart is full of love openeth his mouth with wisdom, and in his lips there is the law of kindness, so he whose heart is full of prejudice, anger, suspicion, or any unkind temper, will surely open his mouth in a manner corresponding with the disposition of his mind. And hence will arise, if not lying and slandering (which yet will hardly be avoided), bitter words, tale-bearing, backbiting and evil-speaking of every kind.

"From evil words, from tale-bearing, backbiting and evil-speaking, how many evil works will naturally flow. Anger, jealousy, wrong tempers, of every kind, do not vent themselves merely in words, but push men continually to all kinds of ungodly and unrighteous actions. A plentiful harvest of all the works of unrighteousness may be expected to spring from this source; whereby in the end thousands of souls, and not a few of those who once walked in the light of God's countenance, may be turned from the way of peace and finally drowned in everlasting perdition. Well might our blessed Lord say, 'Woe unto the world because of offenses; yet, it must needs be that offenses will come;' yea, abundance of them will of necessity arise when a breach of this sort is made in any religious community; while they that leave it endeavor to justify themselves by censoring those from whom they separated; and these, on the other hand, retort the charge and strive to lay the blame on them. But how mightily does all this altercation grieve the Holy Spirit of God! How does it hinder his mild and gentle operations in souls, both of the one and the other. Heresies and schisms (in the Scriptural sense of those words), will, sooner or later, be the consequence; parties will be formed on one and the other side, whereby the love of many will wax cold. The hunger and thirst after righteousness, after either the favor or the full image of God, together with the longing desires wherewith so many were filled, of promoting the work of God in the souls of their brethren will grow languid, and as offenses increase, will gradually die away. As the 'fruit of the Spirit' withers away, 'the works of the flesh' will again prevail, to the utter destruction of first the power and then the very form of religion.

"These consequences are not imaginary; are not built on mere conjecture, but on plain matter of fact. This has been the case again and again within the last thirty or forty years; these have been the fruits which we have seen over and over to be the consequence of such a separation.

"I have spoken the more explicitly upon this head because it is so little understood; because so many of those who profess much religion--nay, and really enjoy a measure of it--have not the least conception of this matter, neither imagine such a separation to be a sin at all. They leave a Christian society with as much concern as they go out of one room into another. They give occasion to all this complicated mischief and wipe their mouths and say they have done no evil, whereas they are justly chargeable before God and man, both with an action that is evil in itself and with all the evil consequences which may be expected to follow to themselves, to their brethren and to the world.

"I entreat you, therefore, my brethren, all that fear God and have a desire to please Him; all that wish to have a conscience void of offense toward God and man, think not so slightly of this matter but consider it calmly. Do not rashly tear asunder the sacred ties which unite you to any Christian society. This indeed is not of so much consequence to you who are only a nominal Christian, for you are not vitally united with any of the members of Christ. Though you are called a Christian, you are not really a member of any Christian Church. But if you are a living member, if you live the life that is hid with Christ in God, then take care how you rend the body of Christ, by separating from your brethren. It is a thing evil in itself. It is a sore evil in its consequences. Oh, have pity upon yourself! Have pity upon your brethren! Have pity even upon the world of the ungodly! Do not lay more stumbling blocks in the way of those for whom Christ died."

In speaking of the Methodist revival he says, "It may throw considerable light upon the nature of this work to mention one circumstance, more, attending the present revival of religion, which I apprehend is quite peculiar to it. I do not remember to have seen, heard, or read anything parallel. It can not be denied that there have been several considerable revivals of religion in England since the Reformation. But the generality of the English nation were little profited thereby, because they that were the subjects of those revivals, preachers as well as people, soon separated from the established Church and formed themselves into a distinct sect. So did the Presbyterians first; afterwards the Independents, the Anabaptists and the Quakers. And after this was done, they did scarcely any good except to their own little body. As they choose to separate from the Church, so the people remaining within separated from them and generally contracted prejudice against them. But these were immensely the greatest number; so that by that unhappy separation the hope of a general reformation was totally cut off. It is not so in the present revival of religion. (That is among the original Methodists who remained in the Episcopal Church). The Methodists (so termed) know their calling. They weighed the matter at first, and upon deliberation determined to continue in the Church. Since that time they have not wanted temptations of every kind to alter their resolution. They have heard abundance said upon the subject,

perhaps all that can be said. They have read the writings of the most eminent pleaders for separation both in the past and present century. They have spent several days in a conference upon this very question: 'Is it expedient (supposing, not granting, that it is lawful), to separate from the Established Church?' But still they could see no sufficient cause to depart from their resolution. So that their fixed purpose is, let the clergy use them well, or ill, by the grace of God, to endure all things to hold on their even course, and to continue in the Church maugre [in spite of] men or devils, unless God permits them to be thrust out."

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14 -- VITAL CONSIDERATIONS

All have sinned and need the common redemption. None are inherently superior. Limitations, foibles, frailties, imperfections, infirmities and mistakes each have. Christ saves to the uttermost, but "evermore" (Hebrews 7:25 Margin). However powerful the inceptive work of God in the soul, or wonderful any subsequent work, it is "being saved" progressively. Christ saves by His sacrifice for, His work in us, and His present intercession: "Seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." God's children are in the enemy's territory, beset with temptations and infirmities and need a "Great High Priest." This dispensation excels the former in that a better sacrifice has been made, better promises given and a better High Priest is always available. If one sinned in the former dispensation the day after the day of atonement, he must wait a year with defiled conscience until the next day of atonement. But Christ is ever interceding, ever pleading His sacrifice, ever available, ever accessible, ever inviting, ever the propitiation for our sins. Churches cannot control His intercession; it is in the presence of God for all saints. Heaven is the scene of it. No Church has preferred stock in it. To point to Him is the utmost any Church can do.

It is for "all saints everywhere;" and not cornered, bound, nor limited by any Church: for it we look away from earthly and human systems, altars of brass, wood and stone, to Christ our living altar. (Hebrews 13:10-15). Our Advocate's present work is a necessity to all. "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins" (I John 2:2). John said, "Sin not," (2:1), but recognizing the possibility, if not strong probability, of mishaps to God's children during probation, he wrote this encouraging word about His provision for their inadvertencies.

"He hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Eph. 1:6). "Your faith and hope should be in God." "Commended to God and to the word of His grace," not to the brethren or Church, the early Church walked in the comfort of the Holy Ghost. Fellowship was not minimized but "trust in the

Lord Jehovah" was all vital because contingencies constantly arose which forced them to "cleave to the Lord on whom they had believed."

Paul had only the "first fruits of the Spirit," Peter wrote of a grace to be revealed when Christ returns--glorification--John said believers should confess their sins to God, and James added their faults one to another: and though Christ came under none of these injunctions yet He could "do nothing of Himself." Boasting of superiority by any is out of the question. Salvation, sanctification, the walk and preservation of the believer, are all by faith--a confession we are helpless and Christ must do all--so boasting in the frail institutions of men is ruled out absolutely. Isaiah said, "God will stain the pride of all glory," and Moses, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Doctrines, experiences, healing, manifestations, churches, movements or leaders, must not usurp His place: "He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord."

New Churches fall easily into Rome's error: salvation is a science committed unto them. But the Bible read or preached begets faith that saves: "Receive with meekness the engrafted Word which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21). We are begotten by "the Word of truth" which "is perfect converting the soul." "He sent forth His Word and healed them." "The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16).

Thank God for Bibles! World, bewildered by the recreant Church, search the Word! Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word! A Christian follows Christ and the Church only as it follows Him. Formal Church, abandoned and condemned by the schismatics, Christ is, a specialist on hopeless cases. The dry bones can live. Pharisee, He will take away the heart if stone. "The truth will stand by its own strength, while that which is false will fall by its own weight."

Not security in the old, separation to a new, bondage static or shifted--for what is left in the old soon appears in the new--but Christ breaking bondage everywhere, is our hope. Why flee Popery in one ism and submit to it in another? It is worse where freedom is claimed from it. The little clique can be as domineering as the great hierarchy. Everywhere one meets a new Galatianism: "Except ye follow us ye cannot be saved" being modern for, "Except ye keep the law of Moses, ye cannot be saved." Pitiful Christ, shatter our bondage everywhere and make us "free indeed!"

Spirituality estimated by standing with systems would unChrist Christ. Representatives of the system said, "Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil," but God said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him" (Matthew 17:5). Forsaken by the disciples, but the Father remained: "For I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me" (John

8:16). So Paul: "Only Luke is with me." Again, "no man stood with me," "notwithstanding the Lord stood by me."

The right hand of fellowship was given by the early Church to those whom they recognized God had called unto His fellowship and theirs: "That ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (I John 1:3). The simple ceremony, extending the right hand of fellowship, was not the way into the fellowship of the Church but the token it recognized those whom God had called unto it. It was the outward confirmation of His inward call. It was not in the power of the Church to receive into their fellowship any whom God had not called, nor to reject any whom He had.

When facts contradict our theories, we must abandon the theories. Church, doctrine, or experience, divorced from Christ, lose interest. Then what grips not us grips not others. Paul practiced and preached Christian liberty: "I have made myself free from all that I might serve all." Liberty to serve all! Costly liberty! Bishop Henderson wrote "it is communicate or be excommunicated." A sign reads: "This orchard has absolutely no dealings with the one across the road." How familiar! We had met it before in revival work. "No dealings" would have been strong, "absolutely no dealings" is the nth degree of exclusiveness.

The new wine dwells in hearts. Old skins are burst by it, Jesus said. Old systems can not receive it. They say the old is better. It must be put into new skins. That does not mean a new denomination, but a new vision. It dwells in persons who tell it everywhere. That alarms leaders, breaks their power over the people. The sufficiency of Christ and the responsibility of each to Him is beyond the vision of the false shepherd: his love is numerical, not Christlike. He has no scruples about sheep stealing. He does God service by it; misrepresentation, insinuation, denunciation, where he plans depredations are natural, though he must play ostrich with the defects of his own Church: immorality is as deplorable as formality. But the marauders are not limited to the smaller groups, larger ones prey on them. UnChristlike methods produce not Christlike character.

Some Things Overlooked

To interpret "Come out and be ye separate" (2 Cor. 6:14-17). to mean leave one church and join another as a condition of salvation forgets: Christ's method of victory: "I live by the Father" (John 6:57). R. V. says "because of the Father." His life was drawn neither from adjustment to abstractions nor to any of the many parties of His day. We must find salvation and life through a Person: "So he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me."

Logic: The mother's love clings to the wayward child. God says though she may forget, yet will He remember. A woman was fined \$75.00 for driving away from an auto wreck and the injured victim. How suggestive of the duty of the strong toward the spiritually injured! Salt must be in contact with the meat it preserves. Light shines in the dark: e.g. [for example], Christ among the people who sat in great darkness. Philip went near the eunuch's chariot and offered him no rationalistic propositions, or "the only Church," but Jesus; and he went on his way rejoicing.

Legalism: Only the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, "by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world," saves. "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, (if not what God ordained, certainly not what man devises), but a new creature" (Gal. 6:15). "Peace be on them", Paul said, who walk by the cross: but the law works wrath, not peace. (Gal. 6:16).

Christ's attitude: He commended the faith of the Roman centurion, the Syrophoenician woman, and the kindly act of the Samaritan to the victim of the robbers, despite the bitter hostility of the Jews to everything Samaritan, Roman or foreign. He praised the gratitude of the healed Samaritan leper in contrast with the base ingratitude of the nine others, doubtless Jews. He rebukes prejudice three ways as He goes through despised Samaria: in disciples, Jews, and Samaritans.* [*Had He not made this prejudice rebuking trip He could not be the Christ we know and love.] Societies founded on race Or religious prejudice and promoting hatred have no relation to Him though they may ape the externals of Christianity. "He that hateth his brother is a murderer." Cain offered religious sacrifices but was a stranger to brotherly love. Christ "tasted death for every man" and a course which cuts off love for all men cannot be of Him. He is the propitiation for the sins of the world.

His custom: "He went into the synagogue and stood up to read." Christ "ever taught in the synagogue and in the Temple." Peter, angel-released from prison, was commanded: "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life" (Acts 5:19-20)! From the synagogue, Christ comes forth to enter Simon's house. He preached in the synagogues of Galilee and Palestine. "He went into the synagogue as His custom was"-- a safe precedent-for helpful contact with the people.

The condition of fellowship: It is not "two or more fellows in the same ship" but "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another" (1 John 1:7). The light of the world shines not exclusively for any one denominational world.

Christ's teaching to the disciples: they were told to hear the Pharisees in Moses seat and to observe all they teach, but to beware of their practice: "For they say, and do not."

The cross: when Christ was crucified the veil of the Temple was rent: later His words of prophesy of its destruction were fulfilled by the Romans, and temples, altars of brass, wood and stone, are abolished, and Christ our living altar (Heb. 13:10-15), by a sacrifice of Himself, is the way to God: by Him is access anywhere to the throne of grace, and help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:14-16). The holy place no longer is entered by the blood of bulls but by the blood of Christ. The Temple veil was rent when Christ died and the priests were jobless. If that Temple, forty-six years in construction, was abolished, it is evident lesser temples can not limit Him, though hearts may acceptably worship Him in them. Within or without the temples, the only way to God is the "new and living way" He hath consecrated for us by His blood.

Christ's post-ascension message: "Hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches" (Rev. 2:11). No dealings with churches because of their corruption is foreign to Christ: "I [Jesus] have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches" (Rev. 22:16). One was located where Satan's seat was, all were remiss in something, and yet Christ goes to them by His Spirit. When He no longer has audience within the Laodicean Church, He stands outside knocking at the door of individual hearts, entering those who open the door like nature rushes into vacuum: separation from the Church is not essential to His entrance. "If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto Him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. 3:20). The Laodicean Church is typical of self-complacent churches which say they are rich and have need of nothing: but even they are called to repentance and counseled to buy the pure gold or he will spue them out of His mouth.

John the Baptist's commission was not to break up the Temple or synagogues; the people should turn to God, and "believe on Him that should come after him." Stern law preacher that he was, he never intimated separation as a condition of faith. History shows the elect serving God in apostatizing churches until thrust out, and even then, like Wesley, returning to shine.

Christ's love: "Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of the water by the Word" (Eph. 5:27). -- Not by separation. Them that are His, within or without, He died to sanctify.

The ministry of the prophets: "show my people their sins and the house of Jacob their transgressions," necessitated contact. "If My people

.... humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from Heaven, and forgive their sins and will heal their land" (2 Chron. 7:14). Most sins are pardonable. Samuel regarded his attitude with great solemnity towards the disobedient: "God forbid I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you." Is hasty separation from lapsed churches sin against the Lord?

Jesus did not call the other disciples out from His society because Judas was about to betray Him. He lets Judas, under the Divine plan of judgment according to type, go to his own place, and the disciples to theirs. He bore with Peter and all were deficient in some sense.

Paul's heart-cry: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" because God's faithfulness had called them to the fellowship of His Son; and Paul was an example of holding steady under the pressure: "I endure all things for the elect's sake."

Sectarianism is contrary to the "Chief Corner Stone: Other foundation can no man lay than is laid." Christ committed His work to a Person: "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given Me" (John 17:11). This is beyond the sectarianist's vision of unity.

Paul said "by faith ye stand" and that when the Corinthians' faith was increased they would labor according to his rule, "not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand" but preach where Christ was not named. (2 Cor. 10:16). All honor to the council of an Ohio city which refused to sell land to an opposition party, upon which to build a disgruntled church a square from the one they left.

In Matthew 10:5-6 Christ said "Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Kindly is His attitude to the lost within the churches. "Preach the Gospel to every creature." Church people are creatures, and if they are utterly ungodly, He justifies such which believe in Jesus. (Romans 4:5).

The Holy Spirit is the Helper, called alongside one in distress to help him out of his difficulty. (John 14:16, Greek). He is eager to help all who will receive it and never leaves them while there is hope.

Unhistorical

Not long ago the Calvinistic Methodist Churches of Wales and the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, were powerfully revived. Samuel Keen, Alfred Cookman, Charles G. Finney, John Inskip, John Thompson, E. I. D.

Pepper, and, earlier, John Wesley, John Fletcher, George Whitefield and Charles Wesley, saw powerful revivals in the Episcopal, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches. The dying hour will manifest God's displeasure if their course was wrong. Wesley, of the Church of England, said, "The best of all God is with us." Fletcher, of the same Church, said, "Love, love, love, God is love." Samuel Keen, prominent Methodist, said that then he was just making a wonderful discovery; that the full salvation he had preached was infinitely fuller than he had dreamed. The seraph of Methodism, Cookman, said "I am sweeping through the gates, washed in the blood of the Lamb."

Opportunity for service: A man left his church and prayed it might be straightened out; but God straightened him out. He returned with other families he had influenced to leave and asked forgiveness and the opportunity to live Christ. What a time of rejoicing, when the prodigals returned!

Violates His Command: "Thou shalt not forswear thyself." Should Christ come to town many could not venture out of the corral to hear Him preach. Loyalty to sect has been fore-sworn.

New Law

"If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." There is no merit in separation from a Church: To make salvation dependent on it, or to seek salvation by the old law God abolished, is to bring back the curse Christ bore for us. "For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" "For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor" (Gal. 2:18). "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law." "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse" -- as are many! The law of God saves not: certainly not man's. "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law" (Gal. 3:21).

God's purpose in this dispensation, is "to take out a people for His name." He finds them in churches and in the world.

The application given is ungrammatical. The antecedents of "Come out and be ye separate" are not modern churches: they were unknown when Paul wrote the Corinthians. Separate from what? Unbelievers, the unrighteous, darkness, Belial, idolaters and infidels. Have no complicity in common purpose with such wherever they are.

Corinth was a city of voluptuaries. Immorality, idolatry and impurity abounded. Votaries of the temples of lasciviousness and lust gratified the base desires of the Corinthians. Some of them had been rescued from a life of bestiality, licentiousness, sensuality and evil concupiscence. Paul tells

such to avoid their former practices. "Such were some of you." Paul did not say the obedient were to "come out" but of the guilty of incest: "Put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

It victimizes the susceptible:--for God only, and not any Church, is the source of saving faith:--"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8). "Not of works lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:9).

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15 -- THE MASTER'S METHOD

Christ came to people whose every act, word, and life was religious. How could He show them something higher? What method would He follow? How would He show the curse of a system which hides the loving Father-God? He offers Himself: "Come unto Me that ye might have life." "No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (John 14:8). Their religion is lifeless. Like produces like: "That which is born of the flesh (its religious activities) is flesh; that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." "The flesh profits nothing." Devotion to God has no substitute.

"(Christ) was the True Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9). Think of this! "Every man!" Sectarian traditions have nothing to do with the enlightenment. "Christ is the Lord of the conscience and hath left it free from the commandments of men."

"But as many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." Receive a Person, not a system, theory, ordinance, nor syllogism--all known by their fruit--and become the sons of God, not slaves of parties. The only authority any Church has over the "flock of God" is, to feed it, give it right example, encourage its faith and help its joy.

"And of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace" (John 1:16). The fullness of a Person! Government, History, Art, Sculpture, Music, Painting, Learning, exist because of great personalities, but spirituality because of Jesus. He brought "life and immortality to life through the Gospel." Christ is the express image of God, His Revealer to man: "The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John 1:18). -- Not metaphysical definitions of God, but a Father. Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God. To see Christ is to see God. Christ showed a kindly Father-God to be believed, loved, obeyed, worshipped and served, instead of the endless questions of Rabbinical casuistry which tormented, and kept the soul bound to the priests.

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:14-15). Old systems fail, new movements quickly concrete into new form, and Christ is all we have left. Many who can not pronounce religious shibboleths nor parade with religious brigades, yet find freedom from condemnation and peace by believing on Christ. (John 3:16-17).

"He that cometh from above is above all." He includes every fundamental but intellectual faith in every fundamental does not include Him. He is above all form, theory, argument, dogma, doctrine, systems, churches, movements, interpretations, that "In all things He might have the preeminence." For He is the chief Shepherd." "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life." The beautiful ritual, dear traditions, our standards, the awe for the place we think sacred, the orthodox views for which we contend, the courageous zeal, the solemn trust committed to us, our doctrinal testimony, avail nothing, unless we have the Son. "And he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." "For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the God-head bodily. And ye are complete in Him" (Col. 2:9-10).

Temple activities left the woman of Sychar out, but Christ emancipated her; "Whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him." He told her of plural husbands. But in His light she saw all her sins, which quickly vanished through His forgiving love.

To those who would earn eternal life, He said: "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you." Given! Received! Without working! Just as he had freely given the multitude bread. Understanding Him literally they ask, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God?" Man working to do God's works? Tremendous egotism! "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom God hath sent." Faith receives the bread from heaven. "He that cometh to me shall never hunger; he that believeth on Me shall never thirst." "All the Father giveth to Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." "Everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life."

In Luther's day Christ was lost in the darkness of error. Our supposed light is often the old rationalistic darkness renamed and blocks the way to God as effectually as the old systems.

One modern seer said, "We seem to be entering new Dark Ages of spiritual night;" another, that "the Church as a spiritual factor, is rapidly becoming a passing institution, the new generation caring little for it." A new reign of persecution is easily forecast: the remnant-elect never

escapes the antagonism which follows piety: the cross is ever offensive. Christ was not able to promote His kingdom without opposition, culminating in His death. "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you" (John 15:18). His chief apostle found bonds and afflictions in every city. (Acts 20:23).

Rufus M. Jones said: "It is a useless labor to try to prove that Christ founded a Church and established an ecclesiastical system that was equipped with infallible authority to transmit the truth and to mediate salvation. It is equally impossible to trace back to the Galilean Master the vast theological system that later was supposed to be a necessity for human salvation. But there can be no serious question that, as St. John says, 'Grace and truth came by Christ Jesus.' A new and joyous discovery of God was made through Him. It was not a definition of Him, not a new metaphysical account of the Absolute, but a wholly new experience of God as a loving, forgiving Father. Those who caught this idea were profoundly transformed by it."

Rest sought by regulations, Christ offered as a gift. Many of the regulations were about the Sabbath. When Jesus said, "Come to Me and I will give you rest," "At that time Jesus went on the Sabbath day through the corn His disciples began to pluck the ears of corn and to eat." The Pharisees murmured: "This Man can not be of God for He keepeth not the Sabbath." The Lord of the Sabbath! Shocking was His teaching and example! Rest, a gift, by faith, through grace without Sabbath regulations! So little did they affect it that Jesus possessed rest and offered it while He was positively violating their Sabbath regulations. Paul said to observe days was to be fallen from grace, among which he mentions the Sabbath. There is no rest by keeping the day a certain way. It is a gift from the Lord of the Sabbath day! Not by or through the day. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Through Him is the "forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye would not be justified by the law of Moses."

We come to God through a Person: afterwards we are taught by Him and may learn doctrine, innocently use ordinances, and appreciate all days, but without the thought of any merit in them: that is in Christ's death only.

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16 -- SEPARATION VERSUS CONTACT

Christ was separate from all complicity with sinners yet in constant contact with them. He went about doing good, seeking that which was lost--a missionary to the lost sheep of the house of Israel--or ministering to a foreign nobleman's son, Syrophenician's daughter, or despised Samaritan

woman. National, traditional or religious barriers deterred Him not. At the pool on the Sabbath, against Rabbinical casuistry, He healed a cripple. To the consternation of Simon His Pharisee-host He forgave a woman and commends her ablution of His feet with tears. Another, whom they wanted to stone to death, He rescues and forgives. "He must needs go through Samaria" and minister liberty to one whom His nation held in contempt and His disciples feared.

The Jews cast a man out of the synagogue. God's Eternal Son seeks the outcast. Rejected by men he is accepted by God. Without the system, but in Christ! Repudiated by men, dear to God! Excommunicated by men, he finds communion with God. They had the machinery; he had the Lord. Without thought of merit in the rejection, I have read that no one is fully accepted by God until he is wholly rejected by men. Christ had unbroken communion with God, but antagonism and rejection by men. He knows the penalty of deep devotion to a Person. That was His method of life.

"For whom the heart of man shuts out,
Straightway the heart of God takes in,
And fences them all round about with silence
Mid the world's loud din."

He speaks the dead brother back to life and restores the only son from the bier to his heart-broken mother; anon He is within the chamber to speak softly to the little dead girl: "Talitha Cumi."

Follow Him into the Temple! He cleanses it of those who defiled it. Forth from the synagogue He enters Simon's house.

Over Palestine He trudges seeking "that which was lost"--"about my Father's business"--on the street, by the wayside, mountainside, hill, or on the plateau: by the lakeside or within the boat, speaking to the people gracious words of pardon, peace and healing. He calls the disciples by the seaside, Matthew from the receipt of custom, Nicodemus at night, Nathaniel from under a tree and Zacchaeus to come down from another--rich, poor, high, low, cultured, ignorant, sick, well, Pharisee and publican, Ruler and plebeian (a common person), self-righteous and fallen, the King and the beggar--He sought helpful contact with all classes. His disciples are as like Him as things equal are identical.

Brief rest recuperated strength to go forth anew to minister. Cromwell was shown statuary, in silver, of the twelve apostles. Gruffly he asked, "Who are these fellows? The twelve apostles, sire." He replied "Very well, melt them and let them again go about doing good." Utility the test. Unlikeness to Christ in nature and work is our great handicap.

Perfection of love for God ever includes the lowly, as Carlyle said: "Gaze steadily unto your own candle light and the sun itself will be invisible." "The mind of the bigot is like the pupil of the eye, the more light you pour upon it the more it contracts." (Holmes). The annunciation angels sang of the "good tidings of great joy to all people." Christ's vision--- helpful contact--gripped Paul; hence he was eager to "make all men see" the fellowship of the mystery--Greeks, Barbarians, wise and unwise--and "ready to preach the Gospel to you that are at Rome also" and felt himself a "debtor to all men."

The physician at the patient's side, the Good Shepherd, living with, seeking after when astray, and dying for the sheep, are typical of Christ's compassion for the ill and lost. The false shepherd whose own the sheep are not, who cares not for the sheep but their fleece, who has nothing but monetary love, when the wolf comes, fleeth.

God commands to restore the fallen, comfort the "little-minded," "support the weak," "lift up the hands which hang down" and "the feeble knees," restore those overtaken by fault and captive by Satan, convert the sinner from the error of his way and induce the departed wife to return to her husband (or remain unmarried). The Father in Israel is to admonish, the mother to nurse, the elders are to tenderly watch over the younger, the strong are to bear the burdens of the weak, and every member of the body of Christ is to feel community of suffering when one member suffers, all of which is violated by merciless and ruthless separation.

Mother love suffers keenest when the child is ill or exposed to danger. Christ pleads for the unfruitful tree, that fertilization, cultivation, pruning and spraying may make it yield abundant fruit. The branch which bears some fruit is pruned and positive and superlative fruit--more fruit much fruit--result. The Jews are repeatedly called to return to God: though a fruitless tree, "cut it down" is the last resort of omniscient wisdom. Impatient separation cuts the tree down first.

The bruised reed which Christ braces, and the smoking flax, which by patient love He fans into a flame, show the right attitude to and treatment of the lapsed. The outcasts--the remnant of Israel--are to return to Palestine, the offending brother is forgiven seventy times seven and ten thousand talents forgiven him who owed it. The lost coin is diligently searched after until found, the strayed sheep is sought on the rugged mountain, placed on the strong shoulders of the Shepherd and returned to the fold; the returning penitent prodigal is welcomed: swiftly the loving Father runs to meet him. Royal is the welcome. Embraces, kisses, shoes and a ring of acceptance seal the welcome, and music, feasting and dancing, celebrate it.

God treats the lapsed of Israel, when they return, as if they had never sinned--"I will be to you as though I had never cast you off"--and do better for you than at your beginnings, restoring the lost years the cankerworm has eaten.

Henry Ford can teach the Church a lesson. He never discharges a man unless he is incapable. He is taken from department to department and tried in job after job until his niche is found. How like the Lord's unspeakably patient dealing with me! The Church errs when it transfers the discipline of the lapsed from Christ interceding in heaven to the Church on earth. The early Church required four years to elapse before they fully restored the lapsed to fellowship. They might have at once looked to their High Priest, Christ, and been forgiven. But some will say, "That makes light of sin." It certainly makes much of that all-sufficient propitiatory blood which cleanses from all confessed and abandoned sin the moment the eyes are lifted in faith to the interceding Christ, at God's right hand. "If you fail, shout victory" says one. Because Jesus is the propitiation for our sins and to think of time, tears, sorrow, remorse or anything else as necessary to heal the wound would reflect upon the all-sufficiency of Christ. Of course presumptuous sin because of this would bring its just rebuke.

This is the dispensation of grace. Christ will have mercy, not sacrifice. Even the many teachers who fall at the time of the end, "to try them, to purify them and to make them white" find mercy. Samuel feared he would sin against the Lord if he refused to pray for lapsed Israel. Times have changed. Prophets fear to labor among lapsed churches. Satan changes his tactics, presses the lapsed to give up all, to shipwreck the faith: "ye shall surely die" he whispers to whom Christ says "they shall never perish," although severe chastisement and premature death may be imposed in sovereign wisdom for certain sins: but even this drastic measure, as Paul says, is big with mercy: "That the spirit may be saved in the day of Christ Jesus," when the works are burned up and the soul saved "as by fire."

The Holy Spirit whispers, "Do not give up, look up; see Who is interceding." Christ's love is not affected by our mishaps or slowness in progress: "Having loved His own He loved them to the end." He will accomplish what He set out to do: "Guarantee to deliver you on the day of Christ without charge." Not without reproof. His Word is given the man of God for that. He paid the sin charge of those whom He called in faithfulness, and He will deliver them on "the day of the Lord: Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." And, "that the (everlasting) love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them." For such He prays; of His prayers He says: "Thou hearest Me always."

In spite of our frailties, foibles, transgressions and infirmities, He will prove to be the Finisher, as well as the Author, of our faith. "In Him we have redemption" the "forgiveness of sins:" by His cross He forgave us "all trespasses."

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17 -- THE ALL-ESSENTIAL REMEDY

"Behold my hands and my feet" (Luke 24:29).

The chief distinction of Jesus was that He was born to die on a cross: "Without shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins." His incarnation, birth, great personality and all the events of His incomparable life wait for the cross. He ransoms us not as the Son of Man, Son of God, Healer, Miracle Worker, Philanthropist feeding the hungry, or sympathizing and bearing the burdens of the sorrowing: "He made peace by the blood of His cross." He is the Prince of peace but not "our peace" until "He purged our sins" by the Divine sacrifice. Like the master-worker applies his own skill to the difficult task, men, angels, nor any of the heavenly host, could not redeem: "By Himself He purged our sins." The moral influence of His incomparable personality falls short of the "Atonement in His blood." His life was a great light to those who sat in darkness, but not the force which saves. Before Paul says, "we shall be saved by His life," he is careful to say, "Being reconciled by His death." The life He lives at the right hand of the throne on High applies the death He died. The blood flowing in His veins saved not, but when flowing from them! His Virgin birth, Deity, and spotless life are absolutely necessary to the value of His sacrifice, but valueless in redemption without it. His miracles fulfilled prophesy, but saved not the soul. As one said: "Mere miracles which only cure the flesh, even His miracles, are not enough." The miracle worker must die: "Hereby perceive we the love of God because He laid down His life for us."

Christ gave the Father's words, manifested His Father's name, glorified Him, finished His work, but never said, "It is finished" until His expiring breath on the cross. "He gave Himself for our sins," and showed the depths of God's love, His devotion to His will, and the depth of our sin, when a sacrifice so Divine must make propitiation.

Christ was with the Father in glory from all eternity, incarnate, virgin born, and lived an incomparable life. He spoke as never man spake--poetry, beatitudes, parables and prose,--gave incomparable ethical and moral precepts and the Rule Golden; He did works of mercy, charity and benevolence with unequalled generosity: but after all this "He by the grace of God tasted death for every man." Luther said, "let no one expect to accomplish anything for God who has not risked everything for Him." "Men

that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," only can "preach Christ crucified in a crucified style." Without experience of the cross it will be preached as a dry intellectualism. Here Paul started: "I am crucified with Christ." He experienced the cross. The Wonderful Christ Jesus, off the cross is no Saviour. Dying as a martyr would not do. He bears away sins as a sacrifice. Jesus draws men, not as a good man, or great teacher, but "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am He" (John 8:28).

The sign of signs God gives the world is: "Destroy this body, and in three days will raise it up." "The thrill of thrills, in an age that seeks thrills, is when Christ is beheld giving Himself "a ransom for many."

After all the stirring events of His busy life He said "The Son of Man must go up to Jerusalem and be rejected and crucified by the elders and chief priests." The transfiguration was resplendent in glory, but not the source of emancipation. After that, He speaks of the inevitable cross. Peter made a brilliant confession of faith in His Divinity--"Thou art the Son of God"--but He must go beyond that: Peter wanted to rest on His divinity and keep Him from the cross. Christ rebukes him, placing him in apposition to Satan. To redeem, the Divine Man must die! Satan's utmost wisdom is directed to hide Christ's death, The message of the cross, Paul's constant theme, must not be limited to a day in Easter.

The Holy Spirit applies the atonement. He went to the cross in sympathy with the Father and Son's sufferings: "Through the eternal Spirit" Christ offered Himself to God.

Christ was an incomparable pray-er. God heard Him always. His prayer strengthened Him to make atonement. "We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." Socrates said, "perhaps God can forgive sins, but I do not see how." We can see, through the divine sacrifice, what Socrates could not: "The love that can die for us can easily forgive us." God held not back His Son. He freely gives the forgiveness His death purchased. "Led as a lamb to the slaughter," He saves "His people from their sins," thirty three years after He was named Jesus. (Mat. 1:21).

The cross is prominent in the transfiguration. Moses, of the law, and Elias of the prophets, are there. Glory surrounds the mount. Christ's garments shine with an unearthly whiteness. His face is illuminated like the sun. A bright cloud overshadows the mount. God's voice is heard. The disciples are sore afraid. Christ quiets their fears. Before the cloud and the voice, the disciples were intoxicated with the glory of the scene. Peter wanted to remain on the Mount and to keep Moses and the Law, Elias and the prophets, in the picture: to mix Law and Grace. But they won't mix: Law says "do." Grace says "done." But God says, "Hear Him" my beloved Son,

not the law and the prophets. The climax of the scene is given: Moses and Elias pass out, Jesus remains. There is a new order, "Grace." "Hear Him;" for the Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Christ Jesus." Moses gave the Law, the prophets preached it. On the Mount, the Law and the prophets, Moses and Elias, speak to Christ. But of what? The Law? Nay. The prophets? Nay. Of John the Baptist? Nay. Their work is well done. The law is fulfilled in Christ. His love penetrates the heart more than the most terrific message of the prophets. The least in His new kingdom of love is greater than John the Baptist, the greatest born of women in former dispensations. John said, "Bring forth;" Jesus said, "I bring you;" John baptized unto repentance, Jesus taught belief first, and then be baptized as a fruit and not a condition of faith. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." The Law stones the adulteress; Christ said to her, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more" (John 8:11). The Law says, "be hold thy sins." Grace says, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world" (John 1:29).

On the Mount Moses and Elias spake of the new order--"of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem"--His decease, tasting death for every man, giving His life a ransom for many, shedding His blood for the remission of sins -- because the Law could define sin, but not deliver from it; the prophets could terribly rebuke sin, threaten the law's penalty for it, but they saw afar the Deliverer.

Moses and Elias appeared with Christ and the disciples "in glory" on the Mount: but they spake not of it, not of the Law, not of the prophets, but of Christ's Cross: then they quietly pass out. Mark says "They see no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves" (Mark 9:8). The Law is done away, fulfilled in Christ: Grace breaks sin's dominion. Christ in His decease, by the sacrifice of Himself, condemned sin in the flesh. They saw "Jesus only with themselves!" He is enough. The law is abolished, the prophecies fail--are fulfilled--"the Son abideth ever."

The Mount of Transfiguration, resplendent in "glory" redeems not, but the "gory" Mount Calvary, to which it points. Camping with the Law on a Mount ever so high saves not. The glory diverts not Christ from the more serious business. Before the Transfiguration He said, "The Son of Man must be killed and raised the third day." After, through his great compassion, He delivers the demoniac-boy. He came "to minister" but His paramount work was, "to give His life a ransom for many."

Peter said: "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God." Jesus said His Father taught Peter that. This fundamental is insufficient apart from the cross. Christ must go to Jerusalem, and "suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day" (Matt. 16:21). The "many things" Christ suffers, persecution,

stoning, temptation, hunger, betrayal, trial, scourging, thorn crowning, fainting en route to the cross, all prior to Calvary, ransom not.

Peter, Fundamentalist on His Divinity, is blind to the cross: "This shall not be unto thee." Jesus is indignant. He will not be diverted from the Father's business. He delights in the Father's will whatever the cost. "Peter, thou art an offense unto Me; for thou savorest not the things which be of God"--redemption by Divine sacrifice--"but of those that be of men"--salvation without blood. Peter showed faith in the Virgin Birth and divinity of Christ, or all fundamentals apart from the death of the Virgin Born, an insufficient faith. Satan fears the cross: he uses a disciple inflated by Divine revelation, and Christ's benediction, to hinder it. But Christ's determination prevails.

Review: Incarnation, Virgin Birth, Deity, Divinity, Sonship, incomparable teaching, unprecedented miracles, healing, philanthropy, transfiguration, all else is insufficient. He must go to Golgotha. The good shepherd must "give His life for the sheep": Christ saw this from eternity past and early in His human life. His first public utterance: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

Once, as He journeyed with His disciples, the cross cast its dark shadow. Stepping forward briskly, He prayed in convulsive agony. The disciples were amazed. Hugh Black thinks this another Gethsemane. Christ was at the cross-roads. Should He go to Nazareth and live in peace with the loved ones, or take the road which led to Jerusalem, conflict and death? God's will was the cross. Forward, with unshaken courage, He goes! "I delight to do thy will, Oh, my God! The cup which my Father has given me, shall I not drink it?"

At the supper table He saw the familiar shadow and cried, "Verily I say unto you, one of you shall betray me." Another shadow brought prayer that the cup might pass from Him. Some think in Gethsemane, He was so borne down with agony, sweating blood, that He prayed He might not die before the cross. This is very probable in the light of prophecy, Psalms and the Gospels. He was to be "lifted up from the earth." Satan repeatedly tried to kill Him before Calvary: by storm at sea, by throwing Him over the cliff, by the agony of Gethsemane, by scourging which "marred Him so that He did not look like a human," and by the stoning, and the mob spirit: but He passed through all and came to His Father's appointed hour.

When Mary anointed Him and Judas said it ought to be sold for the poor, Jesus saw the cross: "Me ye have not always with you. Against the day of my burying hath she kept this."

When Greeks seek Him, He sees the cross--the corn falling into the ground and dying to bring forth much fruit--"The hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorified" (John 12:23). -- The hour for which He came into the world! Appointed for Him and for us; for Him, the way to His Father's throne from which He was in exile; for us, the greatest hour in history.

An Egyptian-night-like shadow wrung from Him: "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour." He said "Father, glorify thy name." On He goes with irrevocable purpose. Just beyond He sees the hour for which He came so far and waited so long: "yet a little while I am with you and I go to the Father." -- Go by a road of agony, but go! The disciples forsake Him. He treads the wine press alone. It is the only way to judge and cast out the prince of this world, to conquer demons, "triumphing over them by the cross;" and the way to His Father: for "flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of God." Even His flesh God appointed to death and shall any flesh glory in His sight?

Paul did not glory in the wooden cross, but the reconciliation Christ made on it. It is easy to cherish "The Old Rugged Cross" as an emblem. Conformity to Christ's suffering, the power and sweetness of the cross, how little our easy-going Christianity knows! It humbles man's pride, and shows the utter depth of his depravity, when nothing else could break it. What fathomless love thought of the cross! How great He loved who died upon it! How appalling man's hardness of heart when nothing else could break it! Samuel Davis said, "It was not the pole the Israelites looked to; it was the serpent hanging on it. It is not, "as Moses lifted up the pole," but "the serpent' on the pole." So it is not the cross we look to, but to Christ tasting death on it "for every man."

The Roman Catholics have more crosses than any: gold, silver, ivory, marble, black and bronze, all powerless emblems. Jesus dying in our stead, not the emblem; His death, not what He died on, saves. During the Reformation one was asked to cherish a crucifix. He refused. Christ who died on the cross he revered. He was led to the stake and burned! Satan will furnish emblems: but the death of Christ exposes him openly (Col. 2:14-15). Christ endured the cross, and despised the shame, "that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him" (2 Cor. 5:15).

"Love One Another"

What meaning is in the light of the cross! -- how we should welcome the cross! "As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, our power to console others by Christ abounds." And "as death works in us," life works in

others. The cross measures Christ's love and ours: "If He so loved us, we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren."

Christ's cross is foretold, minutely its sufferings are depicted in the 22nd Psalm. He treads the winepress alone. Lamb-like before the shearers, He is dumb, opening not His mouth. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows. He was stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. "But He was wounded for our transgressions," "He was "bruised for our iniquities," and "with His stripes we are healed." "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him," to "put Him to grief," and to "make His soul an offering for sin." (Isaiah 53).

The last messenger of the Law, saw the cross: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Not behold the sins which He takes away! In that direction is despair. But behold the love and the goodness of God which leads to repentance.

Paul preached "Christ crucified, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:23-24): to some a stumbling block, to others foolishness, but to the called, the wisdom and power of God. Weak and unsightly though the cross may seem, the weakness of God is stronger than men and the foolishness of God is wiser than men. The works of men seem beautiful compared to the unsightly cross, yet the cross is full of saving merit, and man's works are worthless: "None of them can at all redeem his brother." The cross is the final wisdom of God in redemption; all else, conscience, law, nature, having failed to redeem. It shows the depth of sin and divine love. It does not appease wrath but proves God's love. How terrible is sin! How futile are man's efforts to deal with it when the cross is the ultimate of God's wisdom in redemption! The wisdom of the schools Paul would not use lest the cross be voided. Only the cross revolutionizes life. It crucifies us unto the world and the world unto us.

To oppose it, neglect it, or substitute for it, is Satan's aim. He bewitched the Galatians to add circumcision, the Law of Moses, asceticism and the observance of days to its sufficiency. Every scheme, plan, work, or device that seeks salvation apart from Christ's death is cursed by God.

The cross gives peace; "He is our peace." "He made peace by the blood of the cross." "Ye were reconciled to God by the death of His Son:" Here is rock, impregnable, immovable, solid as the rock of ages and eternal as God. Peace flows only from the cross. Our heart cries for peace. "Behold my hands and feet!" Peace comes from them.

The world and churches abound in intolerance. The cross can break the middle walls of partition: all who drink from its fountain, flow together.

Race prejudice flees from it. Forgiveness flows from it. There He forgave "all trespasses." "Father, forgive them" rings from it for His murderers.

Sanctification flows from Calvary; there, God, "by one offering, forever perfected them that are sanctified:" there "Christ also suffered without the gate that He might sanctify the people with His blood."

Beautiful courtesy, honor, thoughtfulness, fathomless love, flow from the cross. On it, despite its anguish, Christ thought of His mother and tenderly committed her to the care of the apostle of love. On the way to it He was self-forgetful, telling the women who wept for Him to weep for themselves and their children.

It is the only way of life: "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, Christ lives in me. And the life I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me." The cross is practical redemption, comprehends all our needs: "He is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30). "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not also with Him freely give us all things?"

All forms of suffering pale compared to crucifixion: beheading, the stake, the firing squad, drowning, poison, hanging, electrocution, would be a positive pleasure compared to crucifixion. He was badly marred by the scourge: Isaiah said that "He did not look like a human." His back was terribly lacerated; the flesh was cut open in every direction. The soldiers wanted to kill Him as a pretender-king, and to avoid long duty guarding at the cross. He lost so much blood, strong man that He was, He fainted and fell en route to Calvary. Simon the Cyrenian must carry the cross for Him. The terrible scourging is evident from the six hours He was on the cross. The victims of crucifixion lingered sometimes in inexpressible agony for days. Even Pilate marvelled that He died so soon. The awful suffering of the scourge, hastened the end.

Crucifixion's sufferings are indescribable. Spiking the hands and feet alone brought terrible pain--above, below, and all around the wounds--lifting up the cross with its writhing victim and rudely dropping it on the ground, or rocks, bringing the weight of the body on the agonized wounds, dislocating joints and bones, intensified the agony. "A bone of Him was not broken," but "All my bones are out of joint." The body weight would increase with the pain every moment. Uninjured hands could not be held aloft six hours without support. The wounds swelled about the rusty spikes, and blood poison quickly developed; the body contorted in pain and writhed convulsively, trying to free itself, only to increase the anguish. Yet "He opened not His mouth." How can we murmur at trifles? Profuse perspiration covered His body: "I am poured out like water." He suffered

from burning thirst, parched tongue, throbbing brow, splitting headache, tortured mind, broken heart, and a merciless tropical sun poured intense heat upon Him. His modesty is shocked by the mob gaping on His disrobed body. What He endured while God was making His soul an offering for our sins! Can we be unmoved by such love? Can we refrain from weeping at such goodness of God seeking to lead us to repentance? Not least of His sufferings was the turning away of the Father: He could understand why the disciples fled, the mob pitied not, and that His mother was not permitted to minister to His wounds, and why the angels did not leap from glory to His succor, but "My God, My God, why hast THOU forsaken Me?"

A final word: "Behold my hands and my feet" He spoke to disciples terrified by a promised manifestation of Himself, fulfilled in His glorified body. His method of quieting fear is the cross. In the immediate context He said, "Peace be unto you." "Behold my hands and feet!" Peace flows from them. As Luther suggests, Christ said, "See it comes from my work for you on the cross which the scars in my hands and feet attest." For this so-called "eleventh hour" as for every hour, there is but one Gospel, the Gospel of the cross. It is enough for every man and every need. For power to live, preach and work, we must return to the cross, not back to Wesley, or Pentecost only as it empowers to preach the cross, or even back to "Christ" unless we add with Paul, "and Him crucified."

Summary

Not the "glory" Mount of Transfiguration but the "Gory" Mount Calvary!

Not the beautiful chestnut brown hair but from the indescribable agony of Calvary's sufferings, "His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow" (Rev. 1:13-14).

Not the triumphant entry into Jerusalem but the shameful ejection from it, outside the gate "that He might sanctify the people with His blood" (Heb. 13: 12).

Not the Magnificat of Mary--at His incarnation, but her wail at His death indicates redemption completed.

Not her song but her moan.

Not her exultant joy but her grief-convulsed countenance.

Not her soul exultantly magnifying the Lord because of the Incarnation but when the sword pierces her soul that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed.

Not the babe in the manger, but by the Man on the cross!

Not Christ human and Divine alone, but Christ crucified!

Not His virgin birth, deity, divinity alone, but His death!!

Not the blood flowing IN His veins -- His life, but FROM them -- His death.

Not by His life but by His death.

Not as a martyr but as a sacrifice for sin.

Not His example but His atonement.

Not by the blood sweat but by the blood shed. Not the Son of Man spiked to the cross and lying flat upon the ground but "lifted up from the earth" and writhing upon the cross.

Not Mary's exultation and praise at the Incarnation, but her grief contorted countenance as she returns from Calvary upon the arm of John: not her joy, but her suffering indicate redemption.

Not Christ wounded in the circumcision, but Christ killed.

Not when stoned or scourged so that He did not resemble a human, but when His visage was marred more than any man's.

Not His countenance shining as the sun in transfiguration glory but deeply furrowed by the agony of the tree. Not the halo but the deep gullies from the contortive agony of Golgotha.

Not His betrayal, arrest, trial and scourging or even the thorn crowning, but His condemnation and penalty, "dying" on the tree.

The power and splendor of His Second Advent saves not the Jews out of the "time of Jacobs trouble" but as they "look on Him Whom they pierced," Calvary's Lamb, their hearts break, the goodness of God leads them to repentance and all the Jewish tribes of the earth mourn because of Him, as a mother mourns for her only son, and a nation shall be born in a day.

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THE END