

COUNSEL

DO THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST

GUIDELINES TO GODLINESS (1 COR. 16:13-14)

LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES—CONCLUSION

OUR LORD'S PRAYER IN JOHN 17

THE GREAT COMMISSION

HE'S HELPING ME NOW

A WORD OF CAUTION

HEZEKIAH (PART 5)

July—August 2007

Do the Work of an Evangelist!

“But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry” (2 Tim. 4:5 KJV).

Paul’s words to Timothy were given in serious circumstances. Paul himself saw his own life quickly drawing to a close. But there was much work to be done by the next generation and Timothy needed the exhortation to get on with the work and not shy away from its associated hardships.

Some suggest that Paul was urging Timothy to have an evangelistic character about his ministry, even if Timothy himself did not possess the gift of an evangelist. That could be a true understanding of Paul’s charge. H.C.G. Moule for example puts it this way: “Remember that you are called not to be the mere theorist of a system however true, or the mere guardian and celebrator of ordinances however sacred, but the evangelists, the message-bearer of the blessed Christ to living (and dying) human hearts;”¹ Or consider the words of Kenneth Wuest who commented, “The word [evangelist] is not preceded by the definite article. When that is the case, character, quality, or nature are stressed. The idea is, ‘Let your work be evangelistic in character. Always be a bringer of good news. Be ever reaching out for lost souls in your teaching and preaching.’”² In other words, all ministry should have an evangelistic character about it.

Another view of this charge is that Timothy needed to get on with the work to which he had been called, the work of evangelism. Evidently Timothy had other gifts as well as indicated by the various tasks assigned

to him by Paul. But it was the evangelists’ work he is exhorted to do in this verse. Evangelism is work. There is no getting around it. Yet it seems Christians are caught up in the spirit of the age that is ever seeking for relaxation and leisure. To be sure, we do need a measure of mental and physical rest. But that is not the main thing in life and even when taken, is taken with a view to rejuvenate for more work.

The need for the work of evangelists has not diminished since the time Paul wrote to Timothy. We need evangelists today. But what should be done to encourage this? Our first response might be to try and organize something. Perhaps an evangelistic organization to train? Perhaps a school? Perhaps funds should be amassed to build an impressive organization with well trained trainers to systematically mobilize a team of evangelists? These may or may not be good ideas, but they are not the first course of action. Interestingly enough the need for evangelists is not a new problem. The Lord Himself identified it in Luke 10:2, “*Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.*”

The Lord’s first command in light of the great need of the harvest is to pray for labourers. I wonder how many of us are prepared for such a ministry of persistent prayer for evangelists. It will not have the notice of the crowds. It will not appear spectacular. It may even seem like nothing is being done. But it will have the Lord’s commendation.

If you take time to examine a

work for the Lord that appears to be moving ahead with a measure of success, you will generally find that behind the scenes of such a work someone has been praying. Usually for decades. At the right time the Lord will raise up the workers necessary to carry on the work.

But we must not only pray for new workers to be sent by the Lord, we must pray for those who are already engaged in the work. Paul called for prayer support in his front line endeavours for the gospel. He asked believers to pray for many things. We find them in the epistles (Col. 4:2 for example). The support of prayer is vital for evangelistic work. Let us never minimize it or think it unnecessary. Circumstances that might limit us from other forms of service cannot keep us from praying. Consider this when faced with limiting circumstances.

In addition to prayer, there is the need for financial support. Paul was encouraged by the Philippians who so sacrificially and generously sent gifts to Paul to enable him to do the work to which he had been called. In this sense we become fellow labourers with the evangelist. Not all are called to go. An uncalled worker is a positive hindrance. But do we take seriously our own obligation in this matter? Are we living in wealth and ease while the work of the Lord suffers? Let us get on with the work. Do the work of an evangelist!

1. H.C.G. Moule, *The Second Epistle to Timothy* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1952), 136.

2. Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest’s Word Studies-The Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1973), 159.

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TIMELY TRUTHS FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD

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To present truth in words easy to be understood; to bring the Word of God to bear on the confusion of thought that exists in many places today regarding the Person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, His assembly, His purposes, His people, their privileges and responsibilities Godward and manward. To give a variety of ministry by edification, exhortation, and comfort (1 Cor. 14:3).

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THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD IN HIS CHOICE OF SERVANTS & MINISTRIES:

Down through the centuries, the Lord has been pleased to use a variety of people with different kinds of background and ability, and different methods of approach, in publicly preaching God's Word. The Holy Spirit has carefully matched the differing ability and character of each servant with the unique ministry of the Holy Spirit. We think of the early church, where men, castigated by the ecclesiastical world as *"uneducated and untrained men"* (Acts 4:13 NKJV), were used of God to spearhead that mighty movement of the Spirit in the formation of the church. God bypassed the intelligencia of the day, and chose to put the critical work of establishing the church in the hands of such men. Later of course, men of academic ability and analytical approach, such as the great apostle Paul, came into the picture, and he

was a great instrument in establishing doctrine for the church. But he was an exception rather than the rule. Paul himself despised the *"wisdom of this world"* and he said, *"Ye see your calling brethren, how that not many mighty wise men after the flesh, not many noble are called ... that no flesh should glory in His presence"* (1 Cor. 2:26-29). God

is absolutely sovereign in the choice of his servants, and in the choice of ministry that is given to each.

A CURRENT CONCERN:

The reason for this article is that one has a concern regarding the

introduction of consecutive, historical, grammatical, expository preaching in our assemblies to the exclusion of other important Spirit given ministries, and methods of approach. Now expository preaching has its place, but it is only one of many means used by the Spirit of God to expound the Word, and requires that the person doing it must have that particular gift. The "consecutive, historical, grammatical approach" advocated by some, must not be given priority over against other means, otherwise we would find ourselves taking the position that Rome took throughout the centuries—that the masses were not to read or analyze the Word of God, as they did not have the proper training in history or languages to do so. The result was a clerical system. One is afraid that in our educated society we could lapse back into an educated ministry, to the exclusion of Spirit-led men of God handling the word. Speaking personally, as an educated person myself, I am eternally indebted to men of God who had no formal education, who not only knew the Book, but they knew the God of the Book. One has also been exposed to a historical, grammatical approach

One is afraid that in our educated society we could lapse back into an educated ministry, to the exclusion of Spirit-led men of God handling the

which was, as one dear servant now with the Lord used to say, "as clear as moonlight and just about as cold."

AN ENLIGHTENING EXPERIENCE

In our early married life, we had the privilege of entertaining the late

E. W. Rogers—among the best of Bible expositors in UK—in our home during a week of meetings. I was overawed by Mr. Rogers who read directly from the original text when studying a passage, and I told him that I could now see that the secret to understanding Scripture was to take some advanced studies in the original languages. Mr. Rogers told me that he had thought this himself at one time, but that the Lord has shown him otherwise. He related how that he had enrolled in University for courses in Hebrew and Greek. The lecturer for the Hebrew

PROBLEMS RELATED TO EXCLUSIVE EMPHASIS ON EXPOSITORY MINISTRY

To concentrate exclusively on the expositional approach to the exclusion of all other means will generate significant problems:

1. The Holy Spirit is not able to address current needs and concerns in a timely manner, because the consecutive program prevents this from happening. We must allow the church to hear *“what the Spirit saith to the churches,”* without introducing the filter of our man-made programs.

original languages to decipher what the Holy Spirit was teaching.

3. If consecutive expository preaching is extended to all preaching meetings of the assembly, gospel preaching will disappear, except for a few crumbs thrown to the beggar at our gates, whilst we fare sumptuously within. This is a current problem where some assemblies have already abandoned their gospel meeting in favour of the consecutive, systematic, expository approach.

4. To be effective, ideally, the consecutive expositional method must have the same person doing the teaching, with one man commandeering the pulpit for months if not years, in the pursuit of this type of program. The result? Clerisy, where other preaching gifts given by the Spirit are stifled. Indeed, many of the icons quoted as being outstanding examples of the benefits of the consecutive, grammatical, historical method, were men who occupied a pulpit to the exclusion of other gifted ministers of the Word in their denomination. This is an error that our early brethren forsook, and for some it involved leaving such clerical posts in the denominations, to follow scriptural New Testament Church principles.

Consecutive expository ministry has value, but should be given in a context that does not interfere with other Spirit-given ministries.

course was a rabbi from the local synagogue, and he used the book of Psalms as his text book. Mr. Rogers told how that on one occasion the rabbi told the class that unless one understood Hebrew, one could not possibly get the sense of the Psalm under consideration. The following Lord’s Day, Mr. Rogers was preaching at a small rural assembly, and after the Breaking of Bread, this old farmer read the very Psalm that the rabbi had expounded that week, and to Mr. Roger’s surprise this old uneducated farmer got it right! Mr. Rogers said that he learned that day, that the Spirit of God can reveal His truth to the simplest of men, without access to history or languages. Not that we despise those who have such access, as they in turn have been a blessing to the church.

2. If a consecutive, historical, grammatical approach is taken to be the only means of discovering truth, we will fall into the same trap that the Church of Rome fostered, where the general public was not encouraged to read and study the Word of God as they were not qualified to do so; meaning that they did not have sufficient background in history or



A BALANCED APPROACH TO MINISTRY

In the Old Testament, Jehovah provided two avenues of communication for the people of God:

1) The ministry of the priests and Levites who *"read the Word and gave the sense thereof."*

This type of ministry was essentially consecutive and repetitive, corresponding to the systematic expository preaching of today. Consecutive expository ministry has value, but should be given in a context that does not interfere with other Spirit-given ministries. For example, the mid-week meeting could be used to pursue consecutive teaching using the conversational Bible reading approach, or a consecutive series approach, but leaving the Lord's Days open for a more direct Spirit-led gospel preaching and teaching. The author's home assembly has adopted this approach. A monthly, three hour long, Saturday morning Bible study uses a systematic approach, and the mid-week meeting also takes this approach on occasion.

2) The ministry of the prophets.

This ministry was completely unstructured and unscheduled, where God's spokesmen were introduced into crisis situations with a word from the Lord to the people of God. The ministry of the prophets was critical to the well-being of the nation, and was directed without discrimination to elders, priests and common people alike. Their message was also timely. There was nothing



There was nothing in the way of structures or programs that hindered their powerful messages to the people of God, and this corresponds to the need for the Spirit to address the assembly when words of comfort, consolation, exhortation and/or rebuke are required.

in the way of structures or programs that hindered their powerful messages to the people of God, and this corresponds to the need for the Spirit to address the assembly when words of comfort, consolation, exhortation and/or rebuke are required. We must never interfere with the communication of the Spirit's message to the people of God by virtue of our ministry programs.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Rev. 2:11).

SUMMARY

In conclusion, expository preaching has its place but we must not insist that this is followed by all peoples, and at all meetings of the church. The Holy Spirit has provided a complete range of ministries from the Word and we must not inhibit any expression of these ministries. Never let us forget that the risen exalted Lord holds the seven stars

(messengers) in His right hand—the place of authority and power—and we dare not wrest His control over his messengers to the church by imposing our own structures around the ministry. We appeal for balance in the preaching of the Word, and also for a deep evangelical emphasis in our meetings, and outreach as the age draws rapidly to its close.



William Burnett
Oakville, ON



He's Helping Me Now

"A very present help" (Ps. 46:1).

He's helping me now — this moment,
Though I may not see it or hear,
Perhaps by a friend far distant,
Perhaps by a stranger near;
Perhaps by a spoken message,
Perhaps by the printed word;
In ways that I know and know not
I have the help of the Lord.

He's keeping me now — this moment,
However I need it most,
Perhaps by a single angel,
Perhaps by a mighty host;
Perhaps by the chain that frets me,
Or the walls that shut me in:
In ways that I know and know not
He keeps me from harm and sin.

He's guiding me now — this moment,
In pathways easy or hard;
Perhaps by a door wide open,
Perhaps by a door fast barred;
Perhaps by a joy withholden,
Perhaps by a gladness given;
In ways that I know and know not
He's leading me up to Heaven.

He's using me now — this moment,
And whether I go or stand,
Perhaps by a plan accomplished,
Perhaps when He stays my hand;
Perhaps by a word in season,
Perhaps by a silent prayer;
In ways that I know and know not
His labour of love I share.

— Annie Johnson Flint



Letters to the Seven Churches — Conclusion

In this series of articles published over the last two years we have studied the letters to the seven churches of Asia Minor in a historical way. We had an introductory article and then one on each church. These articles were based on the understanding that the letters were written to real churches then existing, addressing the many and extremely varied problems they faced and the spiritual solutions proposed by the risen and glorified Lord Jesus for their welfare and progress. These we have related to various circumstances in local churches today and hopefully have learned something to benefit ourselves as individuals and churches corporately. I believe this to be the first and proper way to approach these letters though other approaches may be taken, for

example in comparing them with periods of history relating to church testimony through the ages and also of comparing the seven churches with other scriptures. While this is of course most interesting and salutary we run the risk while doing so of missing the real intent and purpose of the letters when written, delivered and read publicly to the churches. The reason for this final article in the series is to conclude our historical study and to share some of the other approaches lest it be said these other interesting methods of evaluating the letters were ignored. That was not the intention.

The Church Age

As we view the seven churches and their experiences in the historical setting we should note that they

are divided into two sections as far as their prophetic witness to church history is concerned, from the Day of Pentecost when the church universal was inaugurated until this present day. And what a history that is! The first section is a group of three churches – the first three – Ephesus, Smyrna and Pergamos. The second group of churches comprises Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea. The conditions described in the first group are purely historical and successive running from the apostolic age through to around 600AD. In the second group of four churches the conditions have run from 600AD until this present day. However, the conditions in these four may all also be seen concurrently in churches of this present age. Looked at more closely the periods of church history which are suggested by the churches are: Ephesus: the apostolic age (the first century AD); Smyrna: the years of Roman imperialism (the second and third centuries); Pergamos: the time of the Roman empire under Constantine and others (the third to sixth centuries); Thyatira: the Middle Ages (the seventh to the fifteenth centuries); Sardis: the Reformation period (the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries); Philadelphia: spiritual revival (the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries); Laodicea: the present period (the mid-twentieth to the twenty-first century, and until the Lord comes). The experience of the seven churches fits so well into the recognized history of the church over twenty-one centuries that this application cannot be ignored and is completely valid. There are many lessons to be learned and particularly so about our own day and our own churches as we see the rise of many strange religious cults and a

seemingly inexorable moving away from New Testament church principles so recently held dear and paid for at great cost by those who in the nineteenth century left the established churches of Christendom to meet simply as New Testament

threw 13. Their relationship with the seven churches may be described as follows. Ephesus: the parable of the Sower—where first love is choked by the deceitfulness of riches and other things; Smyrna: the Wheat and the Tares—where both grow together

ets); Sardis: verses 26-30 (the powers will be shaken); Philadelphia: verse 31 (the sound of the trumpet); Laodicea: verses 32-33 (He is near, even at the doors).

Conclusion

As has been said earlier, the above comparisons are interesting, reasonable and remarkable. Many other comparisons have been made with sections of scripture where seven statements are made or seven occurrences happen. Some of those are rather far-fetched and somewhat unreasonable. We must, however, consider before the Lord what the letters to the seven churches have to say to us and seek God's help to be overcomers in our service for Him. The tables on pages 10-11 show clearly some of the above relationships and are published with permission from *The Divine Revelation of the Future* authored by Allan Cundick and published by Merrivale Publications, 14 Merrivale Gardens, Woking, UK.

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There are many lessons to be learned and particularly so about our own day and our own churches as we see [a] ... moving away from New Testament church principles.

believers did two millennia earlier. A lack of enthusiasm for the gospel now pervades and individual devotion would appear to have reached a low point in many lives. We have much to consider and act upon.

Israel

There is also a remarkable similarity between the seven churches and the history of God's ancient and special people, Israel. The relationships may be as follows. Ephesus: the formation of the nation of Israel under Abraham and Jacob; Smyrna: Israel in slavery in Egypt for around 400 years; Pergamos: Israel wandering in the wilderness for 40 years; Thyatira: Israel as ruled by Ahab, Jezebel and other kings characterized by wickedness, idolatry and failure; Sardis: Israel in Babylonian captivity for 70 years; Philadelphia; a remnant returns to rebuild the temple and Jerusalem; Laodicea: Israel as a nation turns away from the God of their salvation.

The Kingdom Parables (Matthew 13)

These parables were spoken by the Lord and are recorded in Mat-

until separated at the harvest; Pergamos: the Mustard Seed—where growth in testimony was effected; Thyatira: the Leaven—where a little evil affected the whole; Sardis: the Hidden Treasure - and the preciousness of truth; Philadelphia: the Pearl of Great Price—speaking of faithfulness to God; Laodicea: the Drag Net—with the thought of good and bad together causing a mixture unacceptable to God.

Signs of the Coming and the End of the World (Matthew 24)

These statements were made by the Lord as He spoke with His disciples in the shadow of Herod's Temple whose destruction He graphically, yet graciously, foretold in Matthew 24, verses 1-2 and which then happened in the year 70AD when the Roman army razed it to the ground. It has been suggested that the relationships of His teaching in that chapter correspond with the seven churches as follows: Ephesus: verses 4-8 (deceit and troubles); Smyrna: verses 9-12 (affliction and death); Pergamos: verses 13-21 (enduring to the end); Thyatira: verses 22-25 (false Christs and false proph-



TABLE 2:1

THE LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

CHURCH AND FEATURE	REF.	FEATURES OF THE CITY	T H E L O R D ' S			CHALLENGE
			CHARACTER "He that..."	COMMENDATION "I know thy works..."	CONDEMNATION - blames	
EPHESUS decline	2:1 - 7 (7 verses)	'the queen of Asia' the rich idolatrous capital of Asia. It had: - a mighty temple - a magnificent theatre - a massive stadium	- holdeth the seven stars in his right hand - walketh in the midst of the seven golden lampstands	- and thy labour and thy patience which are evil - how thou hast tried them...and found them liars - how thou hast borne, and hast patience and hast laboured	thou hast left thy first love	I will give him to eat of the tree of life
SMYRNA persecution	2:8 - 11 (4 verses)	'the flower of Asia' prosperous, cultured, idol worshippers, bitterly opposed to the believers	- is the first and the last - became dead, and is alive	I know thy tribulation and poverty (but thou art rich) "I know thy works" omitted	NO CONDEMNATION	shall not be hurt of the second death
PERGAMOS compromise	2:12 - 17 (6 verses)	a centre of learning, culture and heathen idolatry including serpent worship. 'Parchment' derives from its name	- hath the sharp sword with two edges	- and where thou dwellest, [even] where Satan's seat is - and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith	thou hast them there that hold the doctrine of Balaam...and...of the Nicolaitanes	I will give to eat of the hidden manna...and a white stone
THYATIRA corruption	2:18 - 29 (12 verses)	smallest of the seven cities. famous for its manufacture of scarlet dye	- is the Son of God who hath His eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass	- and love, and service and faith, and thy patience - and thy last works to be more than the first	thou sufferest [that] woman Jezebel...to teach and to seduce my servants	I will give power over the nations...and he shall rule them with a rod of iron
SARDIS deadness	3:1 - 6 (6 verses)	a city of splendour and wealth surrounded by high cliffs. the inhabitants were overconfident of its safety - the cause of its downfall	- hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars	- thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments: and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy	thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead	shall be clothed in white raiment his name shall not be blotted out of the book of life
PHILADELPHIA weakness, but faithfulness	3:7 - 13 (7 verses)	the gateway to the high central plateau of Asia Minor. subject to earthquakes	- is holy - is true - openeth and no man shutteth	- thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word and hast not denied my name	NO CONDEMNATION	I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God and will write upon him the name of my God
LAODICEA lukewarmness	3:14 - 22 (9 verses)	prosperous, wealthy and self-sufficient. famous for its great medical school and manufacture of black wool cloth	- is the Amen - is the faithful and true witness - is the beginning of the creation of God	thou art neither cold nor hot NO COMMENDATION	thou sayest I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing: and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable	I will grant him to sit with me on my throne

TABLE 2:2 SOME SPIRITUAL AND HISTORICAL PARALLELS TO THE LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

CHURCH AND FEATURE	MEANING OF NAME	OLD TESTAMENT ISRAEL HISTORICALLY	NEW TESTAMENT PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM MT.13	'THE LITTLE APOCALYPSE' MT.24	THE CHURCH AGE FROM PENTECOST dates approx.
EPHESUS decline	desirable, greatly beloved	BIRTH OF THE NATION OF ISRAEL thy name [is] Jacob...but Israel shall be thy name (Gen.35:10) [the] word of [the] Lord to Israel... I [have] loved you (Mal.1:1)	THE SOWER the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful (v22) thou hast left thy first love...do the first works (Rev.2:4 & 5)	many shall come in my name...and shall deceive many (v5) ...which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars (Rev.2:2)	1st CENTURY THE APOSTOLIC AGE Ephesus was the only church to be planted by an apostle as far as is known
SMYRNA persecution	myrrh	ISRAEL IN BONDAGE they made their lives bitter with hard bondage (Ex.1:14) ye shall have tribulation ten days. (Rev.2:10)	THE WHEAT AND THE TARES bind them (= the tares) in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn (v30) ...which say they are Jews, and are not, but [are the] synagogue of Satan. I will give thee [a] crown of life (Rev.2:9 & 10)	then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you (v9) ...shall cast [some] of you into prison, that ye may be tried...be thou faithful unto death (Rev.2:10)	2nd & 3rd CENTURIES IMPERIAL ROME THE AGE OF MARTYRS The fierce persecution of believers in the Diocletian era was particularly intense
PERGAMOS compromise	twice married, or actual marriage	ISRAEL IN THE WILDERNESS manna...the bread which [the] Lord hath given you to eat (Ex.16:15) To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna (Rev.2:17)	THE MUSTARD SEED indeed is [the] least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is [the] greatest among herbs (v32) thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in [those] days wherein Antipas... my faithful martyr...was slain (Rev.2:13)	he that shall endure unto [the] end, the same shall be saved (v13) thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith (Rev.2:13)	AD 300 to 600 PAGAN ROME Under Constantine, persecution ceased, and there was a compromise between the State and Christianity
THYATIRA corruption	continual sacrifice	ISRAEL UNDER EVIL RULE Jezebel said... 'Arise take possession of [the] vineyard of Naboth...for Naboth is not alive, but dead' (1 Kg.21:15) And I will kill her children with death (Rev.2:23)	THE LEAVEN leaven...took [and] hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened (v33) he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto [the] end, to him will I give power over the nations (Rev.2:26)	for there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets (v24) Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants (Rev.2:20)	AD 600 to 1500 THE MIDDLE (DARK) AGES The rise of Papacy and the abominable persecutions and martyrdom under it
SARDIS deadness	a remnant, an escaped few	ISRAEL IN CAPTIVITY these [are the] children of the province that went up out of [the] captivity (Ezra 2:1) thou hast a few names...which have not defiled their garments. (Rev.3:4)	THE HIDDEN TREASURE treasure hid in [a] field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth (v44) thou hast a few names...which have not defiled their garments...they are worthy (Rev.3:4)	go not forth...believe [it] not (v26) be watchful...hold fast (Rev.3:2 & 3)	AD 1500 to 1800 THE REFORMATION Justification by faith taught under Martin Luther (b.1483) PROTESTANTISM What began as a work of God was spoiled by man
PHILADELPHIA weakness, but faithfulness	brotherly love	THE REMNANT RETURNED the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem (Ezra 3:1). Behold, I have set before you an open door. (Rev.3:8)	THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE one pearl of great price (v45) thou...hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name (Rev.3:8)	shall gather together his elect (v31) I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation (Rev.3:10)	AD 1800 to 1900 SPIRITUAL REAWAKENING A return to NT principles The Gospel preached
LAODICEA lukewarmness	the rights of the people	ISRAEL INDIFFERENT wherein have we despised thy name? (Mal.1:6) thou...knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked (Rev.3:17)	THE DRAG NET gathered the good (out "of every kind") into vessels, but cast the bad away (v48) because thou art lukewarm...I will spue thee out of my mouth (Rev.3:16) if any [man] hear my voice...I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me (Rev.3:20)	when ye shall see all these things, know that it (= 'he') is near, [even] at [the] doors (v33) if any [man] hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me (Rev.3:20)	AD 1900 to 2000 APATHY AND APOSTASY The rise of modern religious cults and the drifting away from NT principles

• The first three periods of the Church age are unique and successive. The Apostolic age, Imperial Rome and Pagan Rome have all come and gone. The next four periods are concurrent in the sense that Papal Rome, Protestantism, evangelism, apathy and indifference are all present today.



(1 Cor. 16:13-14) Guidelines to Godliness

“Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with love”

(1 Cor. 16:13-14)

When the Apostle Paul wrote 1 Corinthians, Corinth was the most important city in Greece. It was famous for its wealth, commerce, cosmopolitan atmosphere, and infamous for its abounding wickedness. Thus it was not unlike modern cities today such as New York, Los Angeles, Paris or London. Each of these cities offers wealth, education, and commerce, yet each is sinful and corrupt.

Because of two letters written by Paul, Corinth has been kept alive in the minds of millions of readers down through the centuries. Of all his letters, 1 Corinthians is the most complex and varied. It manifests the tremendous burden he bore with respect to the church of Jesus Christ and the many problems with which he was confronted. Only in Christ could the answer to these various difficulties be found, and as part of the Holy Spirit’s admoni-

tion through him, Paul slips in these five imperatives of 16:13-14, four of which ring out like the staccato authority of military command.

These exhortations represent clear and definite guidelines to godly living, and they are meant to be carried out in everyday life and living. However, it must be emphasized that these commands are addressed to Christians, and not until one has been “born again” can they become a force and power in one’s life as the already in-worked salvation is worked out (see Phil. 2:12).

Watch Ye

This first command simply means “be on your guard” or “keep awake.” We live in an age when it is absolutely imperative that we stay alert and keep a keen watch if we are to stay alive. For instance, consider the watchfulness required to fly a jet airliner, safely drive a powerful car, or even to cross our busy city streets. Even as life today is physically dangerous, it is also spiritually hazardous. Because of sin the world is estranged from God, it is ruled by Satan, it is sinful, corrupt, proud, and in rebellion against God. As a result, the world is under God’s wrath and lurching toward His righteous and awesome judgment.

As has been aptly expressed, the world is “enemy territory” and the Christian must ever be alert and watchful (see Eph. 6:12; 1 Pet. 4:7; 5:8).

Demas is an example of one who failed to be on his guard and watch (see Col. 4:12; Phmn. 24; 2 Tim. 4:10).

Stand Fast in the Faith

Here is the secret as to how the believer can be on his guard and stay awake. He is commanded to “stand fast” (see Gal. 5:1; Eph. 6:13-14; Phil. 1:27; 4:1).

Among living things there is nothing so enduring and steadfast as a tree, and in the Bible the godly man is likened to a tree (see Ps. 1:1-3). “The faith” does not refer to the faith whereby the convicted sinner lays hold of Christ for salvation, but to the revealed will of God as set forth in His written Word. And of whom does the written Word speak? The answer is CHRIST! Paul is commanding the Corinthian saints to literally stand fast in Christ. Everything about Christianity and the Christian life is bound up in Christ. In other words, if you have yielded to His claims on your soul, if you have submitted all to Him by the conviction of your mind, and have truly believed on Him with all your heart, then stay there.



Quit You Like Men

This expression is actually one word in the Greek text and means “to render brave or manly,” or “to show or behave one’s self like a man.” What Paul had in mind is manhood in Christ, and such man-

These exhortations represent clear and definite guidelines to godly living, and they are meant to be carried out in everyday life and living.

hood has no equal. We admire the splendid courage of those who manifest bravery on the battlefield, or rescue someone from drowning, or are able to “take it” on the athletic field. Basically, however, the apostle has in mind spiritual or moral courage, and this is courage at its highest and purest.

Henry Martyn (1781-1812), a brilliant Cambridge graduate, went to Persia as a missionary at the beginning of the 19th century. Seeking to present the Persian New Testament at the court of the Shah, he went alone midst fanatical Islam to

present the Book he knew would be most unwelcome. Surrounded by an angry crowd, they demanded that he say, “God is God and Mohammed is the prophet of God.” In silence the court awaited his answer. Then with clear, steadfast voice he cried, “God is God and Jesus is the Son of God.” This was moral courage indeed.

Paul manifested moral courage before his accusers in his defense before men like Felix, Festus, and King Agrippa (Acts 22-26), and so have many of God’s saints through the centuries, some sealing their testimony with their life’s blood.

Be Strong

The secret of being strong is twofold: (1) recognizing our inherent weakness (2 Cor. 12:10); and (2) Relying on our infinite Lord (Jn. 15:15).

Relying on Him involves growth, and a day-by-day appropriation of His strength and resources to meet every need which arises.

This strength and sufficiency is gained through reading God’s Word, praying and confessing Christ before men. These require self-discipline, and we will never be strong Christians unless we consistently put these things into practice in our daily lives.

Love

This final command is the capstone of all of them. Paul reminds

his readers that the foundation principle of a godly life is love (see 1 Cor. 13:8; 2 Cor. 5:14).

Dr. Frank E. Gaebel (1899-1983) has said of this verse:

“Without love, watchfulness may become just a narrow, selfish looking out for number one. Without love, standing fast in the faith may be nothing more than cold, doctrinal correctness. Without love, courage of conviction may be mere obstinate stubbornness. Without love, strength may be wasted and ineffectual.”

Dr. Robert E. Speer (1867-1947) greatly helped a Christian student whose faith was being sorely tried and shaken at Princeton University by giving him this challenge:

“If your faith is being shaken and God seems to be losing His reality for you, start praying this prayer: ‘Lord, help me to love Thee more.’”

The challenge was accepted and brought the student into a new intimacy with God and gave him a changed outlook on life.

May the prayer, as well as the song of our hearts be: “More love to Thee, O Christ, more love to Thee.”

Here, then, are five basic imperative precepts which if put into daily practice will lead to a life of godliness, which in turn will bring glory to the Lord and blessing to each one of us.

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Hezekiah Part 5

2 Chronicles 32:1-23

Four chapters in 2 Chronicles record the life of Hezekiah. From chapter 29:1 we learn that he reigned for 29 years and in 2 Kings 18:14 we discover that the events that we are thinking of now took place in his fourteenth year, so almost in the middle of his reign.

The events of those early years are fully described in 2 Chronicles 29-31 and conclude with this note of commendation, verse 20 and 21, Hezekiah *“wrought that which was good and right and truth before the LORD his God.”* But when we come into chapter 32 storm clouds are gathering.

The situation Hezekiah faced (vv.1-2)

The chapter begins, *“After these things, and the establishment thereof, Sennacherib king of Assyria came, and entered into Judah, and encamped against the fenced cities, and thought to win them for himself.”* The kingdom was established, spiritual goals had been attained, it was then Judah became the focal point of attack. History sadly witnesses that can happen in a local assembly. The work is prospering, souls are being saved, but then it becomes the object of the enemies attack.

The enemy here was *“Sennacherib king of Assyria”*, (v. 1), and we should observe that he wanted to win the cities for *“himself”*. We also have an adversary, Satan, who likewise would seek to *“have”* for himself each believer (Luke 22:31).

In this venture Sennacherib enjoyed some success for while verse 1 simply says he camped *“against*

the fenced cities”, both 2 Kings 18:13 and Isaiah 36:1 indicate that he took them, and here verse 2 says, *“Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem.”*

He now had his sights on the capital. How would Hezekiah respond?

We have seen that chapter 31 ends on a glowing note regarding Hezekiah’s obedience to God. In such days as now were upon him, will he obviously look to God and trust in Him?

We might have thought that, but in actual fact he didn’t. Although the record of 2 Chronicles passes over it, from 2 Kings 18:13-16 we learn that Hezekiah sought to appease Sennacherib by entering into a treaty with him and buying him off with silver and gold, even to the point of removing the gold from the temple doors and giving that to him. That’s not what we would have expected, but it is one thing to trust God in days of prosperity, quite another to rest upon Him in days of adversity. Hezekiah was, broadly speaking, a good and godly king but he wasn’t thereby immune from trial or testing, and that is something that every believer should expect, what Peter refers to in 1 Peter 1:7 as *“the trial of your faith”* and James 1:3 as *“the trying of your faith.”* Good and godly king though he was, Hezekiah was not beyond a fall, and neither is anyone of us. We do well to remember that, especially if a brother or sister, under pressure, acts contrary to what we might have expected.

Hezekiah’s attempts to buy off Sennacherib were unsuccessful. He was not interested in treaties, nor was he satisfied with treasures.

What he sought was the total subjugation of the people of God.

The enemy of God’s people is no different today. To try and compromise is the first step towards defeat, the instruction of Scripture is not to compromise but to *“Resist the devil and he will flee from you”* (Jas. 4:7).

From what follows in 2 Chronicles 32, although Sennacherib again turned his attention towards Jerusalem, it appears that Hezekiah had realized his mistake in seeking a compromise, and in the intervening period took steps to resist any subsequent attack against him.

The stand Hezekiah determined (vv. 3-8)

“He took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains which were without the city: and they did help him. So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land, saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water?” (vv. 3-4). The enemy wanted to get *“within”* the city, but Hezekiah first looked at the situation *“without”* and saw to it that there was nothing outside to help Sennacherib gain a foothold from which he could launch an attack. Also, Hezekiah gave attention to conditions within, strengthening the defences; making armaments, (v. 5), and appointing leaders (v. 6). As we make the spiritual application are we giving opportunity to the enemy to gain a foothold from *“without”* by which he might launch an attack upon us? Are there *“walls”* that need to be repaired, areas where our defences are down? Are the saints

being equipped with the armour of God (Eph. 6)? Is there effective leadership in the assembly? Added to this in verses 6-8, he gathered the people together *“and spake comfortably to them.”* At the end of verse 8 Hezekiah says, *“With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles.”* Note the contrast between *“with him”* and *“with us”*, and compare 1 John 4:4.

The scorn Hezekiah endured (vv. 9-19)

In verse 9 a deputation came to Jerusalem, from Sennacherib, to negotiate its surrender. Verses 10 to 16 give a summary of the message that was brought, one of the most arrogant and blasphemous speeches recorded in Scripture. As to its purpose, two things stand out: the attempt to discredit the leadership, suggested in verse 11 and 15; and an attempt to destroy faith, seen in verse 10, 11 and 14. Those are still objectives of the enemy of God's people today. Regarding leadership Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, *“We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake.”*

Regarding faith the writer says in Hebrews 10:35, *“Cast not away ... your confidence.”*

The narrative in 2 Chronicles omits details recorded in Isaiah 37 and 2 Kings 19—Hezekiah going into the temple and sending word to Isaiah requesting that he pray for the people; an attack being launched against the land of Assyria by the king of Ethiopia, causing the deputation to return to the king at Lachish. But lest Hezekiah should take any encouragement from this turn of



events they sent him a letter, (vv. 17-19). They took care that there should be no relaxation of the pressure they were placing upon him. The enemy does not easily give up.

The supplication Hezekiah made (v. 20)

“And for this cause Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven.” After the deputation left, 2 Kings 19:1 says Hezekiah *“rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD.”* Having now received this letter he again went into the house of the Lord (2 Kgs. 19:14) and prayed, and both occasions were answered very positively with a word from the Lord. God still hears and answers prayer. The promise of James 4:10 still stands: *“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up.”*

The salvation Hezekiah witnessed (vv. 21-22)

“And the LORD sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he was come into the house of his

god, they that came forth of his own bowels slew him there with the sword. Thus the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria” (see also 2 Kings 19:35). His army decimated, all thoughts of taking Jerusalem dashed, Sennacherib returned to Nineveh. He might have finished with Jerusalem, but God had not finished with him, and he died according to the word spoken by God (2 Kgs. 19:7).

There are many lessons that we might glean from this section of the narrative; God's Word can be trusted. God determines the duration of a man's life; He can use wicked men, the evil sons of Sennacherib, as instruments to fulfil His counsel.

The success Hezekiah enjoyed (v. 23)

“And many brought gifts unto the LORD to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah king of Judah: so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth.” In verse 1 the kingdom was established in verse 23 the king is magnified. But sadly, he failed to give the glory to God.

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Our Lord's Prayer in John 17

Of all the Savior's prayers referred to in the Gospels, only two are recorded in their entirety. One is the prayer in Gethsemane and the other is this one in John chapter seventeen. This one indeed is the true Lord's Prayer. And being intercessory in nature is often referred to as the High Priestly prayer. We need to approach meditating on it with unshod feet as we are here on Holy ground for it has the outpouring of the heart of the Son of God to His Father on His way to Calvary. He chose to speak these words in the hearing of His disciples but He did pray not only on their behalf, but on behalf of those who would believe on Him through the Word.

A. The Son addressing the Father

We have in the first five verses a beautiful example of holy communion as the Son lifts up His eyes to heaven to address the Father. The occasion was that the hour of His departing this world to go back to the Father, was come. This obviously coincided with the hour of His suffering, but we see Him here looking beyond the cross to the joy that was set before Him. (Heb. 12:2). And what greater joy could He have anticipated than to be back in glory by the Father's side? In light of the truth that the Son has glorified the Father here on earth, in all His ways, His words and His deeds, He asks to be glorified. It is only appropriate

that He does so at the very end of His earthly journey of rejection, humiliation and persecution.

Power over all flesh was given Him; for He was given power to raise the dead (Jn. 5:21), to execute judgment (Jn. 5:22, 27) and indeed as the Risen Redeemer all power was given unto Him in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18).

But our text here specifically speaks of power to give eternal life to those who believe on Him. The believers are often spoken of in John's Gospel as being the gift of the Father to the Son (Jn. 6:39, 10:29, 17:2, 6, 9, 11, 24). This should bring such great comfort to the hearts of the believers in Christ, as they see in that a guar-



antee of their eternal security. Would it be thought possible that the faithful Son could ever lose the Father's gift to Him (Jn. 10:27-28)? The truth is that it is such an impossibility as both Father and Son are together in charge of the safe keeping of the believers (Jn. 10:29-30).

One of many definitions of eternal life is given in verse three. Eternal life is seen as the saving knowledge of the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. Any faith system that claims to know the only true God, without acknowledgement of Jesus Christ, is just a mere delusion that would ultimately lead its followers into the blackness of darkness.

In verse four the Son brings to our attention how He has finished the works which the Father has given Him to do (see Jn. 5:36). His life's work now completed, the sacrificial work of atonement would shortly be announced as "*finished*" as well, (Jn. 19:30).

In His incarnation the Son, who never ceased to be God, had sinless humanity added to His deity. During His earthly journey He veiled His divine glory in the veil of His flesh. However, we could see how often His glory did shine through the veil

(Matt. 17:2). Now on His way back to heaven He requests that His humanity be glorified with that same glory which He had with the Father before the world was. Furthermore as we carefully read His words, "*Glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory*" we can clearly see equality with the Father. For these are not the words of a mere man, no matter how great. Therefore by faith we can now look up and see a Man sitting on the right hand of the majesty on high.

B. Manifesting the Father's name

The Eternal Son who was in the bosom of the Father for all eternity past was the only One who could declare Him (Jn. 1:18). Thus He was able to declare the Father's name to His own (vv. 6-8). A concept the righteous in Israel knew only vaguely. But now

He chose to speak these words in the hearing of His disciples but He did pray not only on their behalf, but on behalf of those who would believe on Him through the Word.

the sons, in this dispensation of grace, have the Spirit of God's Son sent forth into their hearts, crying, "*Abba Father*" (Gal. 4:6).

The Savior then recommends His own to the Father because they have received and kept the words of the Father given to them by the Son. They also have believed that Christ has received all things from the Father. Moreover they have believed that Christ has surely come out from the Father and that the Father has sent Him. By contrast He had said to the unbelieving Jews that they have not the word of the Father abiding in them. Neither did they

believe in whom the Father has sent (Jn. 5:37-38).

C. Prayer for safe keeping of the disciples

Now we come to the first intercessory prayer for His disciples (vv. 9-12). He clearly makes a distinction between them and the world. How we ought not only to be aware of our separation from the world but also to practically live it daily so that the Son may be glorified in us. The Lord prays not for the world but for those whom the Father has given OUT of the world. They have been given to the Son but they still belong to the Father, for there is a blessed combined ownership of them between Father and Son. The reason for this prayer was the imminent departure of the Son out of the world. While He was physically with them He kept

them in the Father's name. Now He is asking that the Father would keep them in His own name so that they may be one. The only exception to safe keeping was the son of perdition with the sole purpose of fulfilling the Scriptures.

D. The means of safe keeping

The next verses (13-19) introduce us to the means of the safe keeping of the disciples in the world. The joy of Christ, independent of circumstances, fulfilled in them would be their strength in a hostile world. The Father's words given to them would

be their sustenance even though the world would hate them for keeping those words. Once again the Lord emphasizes the separation from the world as a principle for life and a means of safe keeping of His followers, *"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world"* (vv. 14, 16). Our great High Priest asks that His own would be kept from evil in an evil world. Thus they will have to be His faithful witnesses where He would

The unity in the church here is patterned after the essential oneness of the Godhead.

be rejected and crucified. They are left in the world but they are not of it. They need not be conformed to it. Their sanctification or setting apart from the world as a system, is going to be achieved through the Word of God. This is the word of truth that abides in them to bring forth more fruit (Jn. 15:3, 5). The Lord reminds us that our mission in the world ought to be patterned after His own mission to a lost world. So in every way we must follow His great example which He has left us (v. 18, see Jn. 20:21). What a stupendous thought it is that the Lover of our souls and the Great Shepherd of the sheep should consecrate Himself for His people's welfare (v. 19). Should that not be humbling to us? And here we learn that the occupation of our Great High Priest as He appears be-

fore God for us is primarily to help our infirmities. Should that not capture our hearts, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ? And blessed be His name, this care crowns all the other means of safe keeping His people.

E. Prayer for unity and good testimony (vv. 20-23)

In verses 20 the Lord has the entire church from all ages of time in mind as He prays for their unity. All those that were to believe because of the preaching of the Apostles are here referred to. The unity in the church here is patterned after the essential oneness of the Godhead.

"That they all may be one, as Thou Father art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also might be one in us" (v. 21). The great blessing that would have accrued from this unity would have been a clear testimony to the world that once rejected Christ. The world may have then believed that the Father has indeed sent the Son. But alas, the church has failed to reflect the light of her Master to a dark world and ended up fragmented and divided. The Gracious Master, who received an added glory from the Father as a result of Calvary, was and is willing to share that glory with His bride, the church; that the world may believe that He was sent of the Father, who loves the believers with that same love that He has for the Son (v. 23).

F. Glory, knowledge and Love (vv. 24-26)

The final three verses in this prayer are so rich with glorious truths, that we cannot fathom such depths in a short article like this. We

will, however, glean a few thoughts from each of them.

In verse 24 we see the deep desire in the heart of the Son to have those that are the Father's gift to Him be with Him where He is. Was not this His precious promise given to the disciples in the upper room *"that where I am ye might be also"* (Jn. 14:3). Here, however, His desire is that they may behold His glory: the Glory which is given to Him by the Father who loved Him before the foundation of the world.

The perfect knowledge of the Father has characterized the Son for all eternity (see Jn. 10:15). That knowledge led Him to lay down His life for the sheep. By contrast, the world system has no knowledge of the Father. The believers on the other hand have this knowledge imparted to them by the Son. For they have believed His mission, received His words and had the Father's name continually declared to them.

The last request of the Savior in this prayer for His people is that the Father's love may abide in them as Christ Himself abides in them (see Jn. 15:9-10).

Yet it must be,
Thy love had not its rest
Were thy redeemed
not with thee fully blest;
That love that gives
not as the world but shares
All it possesses
with its loved co-heirs

—J. N. Darby

Dr. Boushra Mikhael
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The Great Commission

**“... For My sake and the Gospel’s”
(Mark 10:29).**

It is essential that we maintain a warm and active involvement in the gospel and its presentation to the present perishing world. We believe that herein lays the key to understanding many of the problems that have arisen in the history of Christian testimony and how we may best avoid the great snare of the enemy to cause us to lose the vision and urgency of the Great Commission.

There is a key to the success or failure as to any continuance of the many organizations that came into existence as channels of witness to the world. All true spiritual usefulness and power is decided by the maintenance of a personal living, loving, sacrificial involvement in the presentation of the gospel of the grace of God’s redemptive love in Jesus Christ.

Amidst the societies, associations and institutions that came into being, especially during the last 150 years, theological problems, methods of operations, financial profits and controls, and even worship became to many the central issue instead of the imperative of the great gospel commission.

Wherever these problems have occurred, and whenever the purpose for which the victorious Lord Jesus Christ has placed and left us in the world, whenever Christians have lost the vision of the wonderful Lamb of God, Who gave Himself in sacrifice to God for a perishing world, the Lord has necessarily passed them by. Why does this hap-

pen? Because the professing church has become inattentive to the fact that He alone is worthy of utmost devotion and first love. And if these former lampstands of divine light have persisted in selfish indulgence, God has allowed even their light of local testimony to be extinguished.

The pages of church history are strewn with the wreckage of churches and organizations that became irrelevant. Churches that at first shouted their loyalty to Christ (and many of them actually suffered much for Him) but when once they forgot that the Lord Jesus combined in a single phrase, “for My sake and the gospel” devotion to Himself and loyalty to His commission, they then lost their prime influence and sank down into stagnation and a spiritual death.

It is sobering to remind ourselves of this and that the cults that abound today are the price the church must pay for any diversion from her true calling and commission. These sects can be said to be the fruit of a decadent world church out of touch with God, out of touch with the true need of man and out of touch with the awful “lostness” of the world and age in which we live. Jesus Christ and His atoning death alone as presented in the gospel has the answer for the tragic state of man today.

If forgiveness of sins is to be preached to all, it is because all may share it! It is impossible that election can ever limit the value of the death of Christ or the power of the mighty name of the Lord Jesus Christ to save and bless!

The cults continue their downward march enfolding deluded

crowds along with them. Their paid emissaries who cannot evangelize but only proselytize, will infiltrate into the whole corrupt Christendom (Matt. 13:33).

What are we therefore to do? Lament, criticize and give up?

No! Let us arise and preach and teach Jesus Christ, Son of God and the Saviour of the world.

We may not all be evangelists, but let us arise and as instructed in 2 Timothy 4:5 “do the work of an evangelist.”

The means are at hand. Good literature abounds. Those whose eyes have been opened to see the spiritual conflict and the certain victory of Christ’s commission to preach liberty to the captives and total victory to the believer, know only two lines in the warfare, the front line and the supply line! We are either actively involved at the front or sacrificing to keep up the supplies!

Support in every way the burdened preaching of the gospel of grace reigning through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Who can estimate the preciousness of one soul saved?

The Son of God gave all He had to purchase men’s souls. It is His shed blood alone that puts away the guilt of the believer’s sins.

And it is given to us to reach men with this message before it is too late.

Today salvation’s door is open—tomorrow when that door is tightly shut it will be too late.

J. A. Short
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Jesus in the Midst

Three crosses stood!
A mocking crowd who taunt and jeer,
A few whom grace had taught to fear,
The priests and rulers filled with pride,
A dying thief on either side,
And Jesus in the midst.

A feeble few!
But owning only Christ as Lord,
And cleaving firmly to His word,
In simple faith the promise claim,
That those who gather in His name,
Have Jesus in the midst.

A heavenly scene!
Unnumbered hosts around the throne,
Own He is worthy He alone,
The centre of that heavenly throng,
The object of the ransoms song,
Is Jesus in the midst.

—Anonymous