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OUR ONLY DEFENSE...

"GOD IS OUR REFUGE"

In spite of all that's being said about our gigantic defense preparations, the men who know the most about atomic power insist that there is not yet and never can be a defense against the atom bomb. This is simply because so much widespread destruction can be caused by such a comparatively small missile, that there is no way to seal off all the countless avenues through which the bomb could be delivered to its destination. If ten simultaneous attempts were made by sea, under the sea, by air or by smuggling, we could only hope to intercept a fraction of the attempts, and only one attack needs to get through. Thus the only prevention of atomic attack is to prevent war, and we can't stop war in the world until men have learned to obey God. To teach men at home and abroad to know God and to obey Him is our only and final defense.

Charles A. Wells
GOD AND MAN

Recently I re-read the Old Testament straight through, as one would read a novel. Not stopping to explore the interesting scenes along the way, but trying to catch the general theme of the Story of Man.

The first thing that struck me forcibly was God's great love for man. Now God as a God of Love is not the picture one usually gets when thinking of the Old Testament. It is rather God as a stern Judge, breaking out in wrath upon those who disobey His many commandments.

GOD'S LOVE

But I found that this Book was, like all the other best sellers, a Love Story—the Story of God's great Love for His crowning creation: Man.

As evidence of that tremendous love, God provided man with the finest of everything. He took great pains to teach man even what he should eat and drink (Lev. 11); He chose the richest places of the earth for him to dwell—the Garden of Eden and the Promised Land of Canaan, a land “flowing with milk and honey” (Num. 13: 23-27); God showed man what he should wear, exactly how to build the tabernacle and the temple, down to the last pomegranite on the pillars that stood before it (2 Chron. 3: 15-17); He provided guidance in the wilderness by smoke and fire (Ex. 40: 36-38); gave them manna from heaven (Num. 11: 7-9); water from the rock (Ex. 17: 5-6); protection from every creation: Man.

Most of the books of the Old Testament have to do with God's leading His chosen people, the Israelites, to the Promised Land, their turbulent stay in it, and their ejection from it because of their disgraceful disobedience. Genesis records, in a preliminary to the main story, a similar picture of God's preparing the Garden of Eden for Adam and Eve, their creation in it, and their ejection, also for wilful disobedience. And the almost similar story of the sons of men, as God let them loose in the land, only to be destroyed by the flood, also because of their disobedience.

So, the Old Testament resolves largely into the sad story of God's attempt to care for and live with His disobedient offspring.

OBEDIENCE

The second dominant theme that runs through the entire Old Testament is God's continual insistence on obedience. God is a Holy, Just, and Righteous God, who “cannot look upon Sin.” Disobedience, or sin, is so abhorrent to a Holy God that it brings everything within His Holy nature to bear upon that unholy thing, to cast it from Him. Just as it is the nature of Light to dispel Darkness, and Heat to dispel Cold, so it is God's very nature to cast out evil.

This nature of God, when confronted with man's bent to sin, resulted in some violent and terrible examples of God’s wrath.

GOD'S WRATH

But, violent and terrible as they seem to us, these examples of God’s wrath and His punishment for man’s sin were but another evidence of God's great love for man and His great hurt at man's unfaithfulness.

The Old Testament continually holds before us an attribute of God that modern man has largely forgotten: that God is a JEALOUS God.

Jehovah distinctly stated, as the FIRST Commandment, that man should have NO OTHER GOD before Him, Christ confirmed this by giving as the Christian's First Commandment: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.” (Mark 12: 30)

A JEALOUS GOD

The favorite expression used in the Old Testament of man's disobedience to God, is the illustration of an unfaithful wife. God considered Himself “Married” to His people Israel. Jerusalem was “His Bride.” On her He lavished everything: His passionate affection, His Promised Land, His wealth and service, His protection. For her He risked His good Name before the heathen, He ran the risk of hurts and disappointments, He “dandled her upon His knees.” (Isa. 66: 12)

He loved His "Bride" with a great and everlasting love, but Israel, like a "Foolish Woman," took of God's best and gave Him a deceitful heart in return. She "played the harlot" with many other lovers, even while all the time pretending to be only His. (Ezek. 16)

HARLOT

Finally, when her sins were found out and catalogued, Jerusalem openly and brazenly continued to play the harlot with her many other lovers, even to the point of bringing them openly into God's own House, though she continued to wear His Name and to live as His legal "mate."

"As a wife that committeth adultery, which taketh strangers instead of her husband!” (Ezek. 16: 32)

In modern America I have seen a few human triangles in which the sordid characters continued to live openly and unabashed in unholy adultery. The erring wife or husband, perhaps for reasons of security, pride or business advantages, continues legally as spouse of one while openly enjoying the affections of a third party. This is no less than hell on earth for all three but, more than all else, it is untold agony to the injured party to the marriage.

He continues to protect the wife with his good name, she enjoys the security and comfort of his home, to the world she is his legal wife and heir. Yet, in all the intimate relationships of married life, she is another's. No longer does she run to him for comfort and solace, the security and strength of a home, but to other lovers, who take advantage of her weakness.

This was exactly the situation and the role that God was forced to play in the "marriage" with His beloved "Bride," the chosen children of Israel.

Like most good husbands, He stood it as long as He could, in this case several centuries, hoping that something He might do or say would cause His unfaithful bride to repent and come back to Him in love and faithful obedience.

He sent His prophets: Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, etc., He tried threatening, He tried punishment, sending wars and pestilences and famines. He tried condoning and forgiving, but each time He blessed them they became more haughty and arrogant and more unfaithful.

At last, after centuries of heart-break, God felt forced to do what He had warned Israel He would do unless she repented of her wickedness. He cast her out. The wordly lovers with whom she had flirted came and carried her away into bondage, to Assyria and Babylon.
But God's love was still jealous and strong, so that a double portion of His wrath was retained for those heathen nations who dared to hurt "His Bride." (Ezek. 30, 32)

And His continuing love was further evidenced by leaving open to His chosen ones an opportunity to return, whenever they were willing to come back in repentance and obedience.

With this picture: of God's great love and man's great Sin; one sees with new eyes the individual pictures of the Old Testament. It is now clear that gathering a few sticks on the Sabbath, or burning a little incense on a hill top, or drinking a little too much wine, was not man's sin that touched off the wrath of God. It was the base unfaithfulness of Israel to her bridegroom, of which all these were but tell-tale evidences, that brought God's wrath upon her.

In the Promised Land, when Israel was perplexed, instead of going to God with their problems, they sought in groves and from astrologers and witchcraft, for the needed answer. When in danger from enemy nations, instead of turning to God for protection, they depended on their own proud armies or ran in terror to Egypt or Syria or some other nearby nation, for help.

This is what broke God's heart, How He delighted when one of His leaders did bring the nation's problems to Him for a solution! What pride He took in showing Israel how He, with but few hundred men under Gideon, could subdue a multitude! (Judges 7: 1-25) How He thrilled at the opportunity of saving His people with nothing stronger than hymns of praise, when they trusted Him instead of armed might! (II Chron. 20: 5-27)

This yearning for trust and loyalty explains also how God could seemingly overlook the black sins of David and call him a man after His own heart! For David, though his hands were red with blood, a killer in war, a polymagist, a murderer, an adulterer; David always put God first in his affections. He had a deep and sincere awe and reverence for God. So deep was this reverence that, though in deadly peril at Saul's own hand, when Saul was brought within arm's reach of him, David "could not stretch forth his hand against God's anointed." (I Sam. 24: 1-10)

It was not that David loved or feared Saul, nor that Saul was a king. None of these things would have stayed his hand; but that Saul was "God's anointed." So that, when a young man came running to tell him of Saul's death, which meant the end of his enemy and David's own ascension to the throne, David ordered the young man slain, because he had "stretched forth his hand against God's anointed." (II Sam. 1: 1-16)

"Unfaithful Bride!" What an ignominious title for the people whom God had given the best! His Nation, His Protection, His care and provision, His Promised Land, His great Love!

THE NEW TESTAMENT

With this background, the New Testament becomes the story of Christ's attempt to get man to "make up" with God. This could only be done by His first bearing the fury of God's outraged love, upon His own body. This He gladly and lovingly took at Calvary. The only other requirement was that man now accept the Reconciliation this paid for, confess his sin of unfaithfulness, and come Home to God, whose arms were outstretched still.

Of course there is the ever present condition, often overlooked by present-day Christians, the same condition of a happy "marriage" relationship—this time with the Son—that was present from the beginning: Faithfulness. Not obedience to a code of laws, but faithfulness to the principle of giving our first and only love to our "husband."

But look ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6: 33)

GOD THE SAME

Though man's idea of God changes, God Himself does not change. He is, as Jesus: "the same yesterday, and today, and forever." (Heb. 13: 8) He still loves His chosen Bride with a passionate and furious love. He still lavishes His all upon her, and He still demands her true affection, loyalty and faithfulness to Him, and He still pours out His wrath, though tempered by Christ's grace and mercy, upon those who are unfaithful brides.

HARLOTS AGAIN

Man doesn't change much either, except when born again through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Today, God's chosen people, His Church, the Bride of Christ, is in danger of God's renewed wrath, as she openly flirts with her many lovers in the World.

With many, though legally claiming the security, name, and blessing of the Church, there is little intimate companionship— the "duties of marriage"— between them and Jesus. When they need advice and counsel, instead of going to Jesus, they consult a lawyer; when they get sick, instead of coming to Jesus for His healing touch, they run to a doctor; when in need of funds, instead of laying their needs before their own Master and Lord, who promised to supply "all your needs" (Phil. 4: 19), they run to banker or expert on finance; when in fear, they consult a psychiatrist; when in trouble, a psychologist; when in danger, instead of snuggling up against His protecting arm, they call for police or army or allies, for protection.

How would you feel if the wife of your bosom continued to live legally as your wife, yet took all her needs, all her intimacies, all her real loyalties, to another? Is it any wonder that Christ wept over Jerusalem, that He weeps over America, the Church today—His unfaithful Bride?

OUR FATHER

Christ taught us in the New Testament to pray, "Our Father," and we often pride ourselves on the fact that we have been adopted into God's family as sons. Yet, in reality, God does not usually play the part of Father in our lives. Rather is He relegated to the unimportant, though cherished relationship, of an old doddering, almost senile, Grandfather—too out-of-date to be a factor of importance in our lives, too insipid to be of much help or protection, too childish to furnish us with sufficient wisdom for life's journey, still an object of our complacent and tender affection, one who should be content with a weekly visit from His "young folks," and a weekly token gift from our fat purses.

We do not bring to Him our problems or accept as true His answers to them. We rely on doctors for our health, lawyers for advice, bankers for our money, schools and colleges and scientists for our wisdom, and armies, allies and bombs for our protection. Thus we play again the drama continually portrayed throughout God's Holy Word.

The New Testament version has to do with man's being brought to the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, his rebellious and disobedient life within it, and his unceremonious ousting from it, when the Son of Man shall come again for His Bride.

It, like the Old Testament, also shows the reward of a few joyous ones whom the Bridegroom will find faithful, when He comes.

I see more clearly now that God and His Son Jesus are not so much concerned about a few drinks, a cigarette, a cuss word, as He is about our central allegiance, Are we His, or is our heart secretly given to Another? It matters not who that other is — whether Self, Pride, Wealth, Power, or the Devil himself—are we basically true to Christ or untrue?

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." (II Cor. 13: 5)

Friends, God desperately loves you, but He expects also true love in return. Our loyalty or unfaithfulness can be detected by our actions and our words.

Are you a true Bride?

"Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage." (Matt. 22: 4)

"And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord." (Hos. 2: 19-20)
How To Get More Faith?

"And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith. And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you." (Luke 17: 5-6)

The Christian life is a fight of faith. Salvation, Healing, the Holy Spirit—all of God's promised blessings are attained by faith. Jesus said:

"According to your faith be it unto you." (Matt. 9:29)

In the passage from Luke, quoted above, Jesus stated that faith as a grain of mustard seed could pluck up a sycamine tree and plant it in the sea. In Matt. 13: 31-32, He likened the Kingdom of Heaven unto a grain of mustard seed which, though the least of all seeds, grows up to become the "greatest of herbs." These two passages indicate that faith can grow, and Paul so states:

"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly." (II Thess. 1: 3)

How can we increase our faith, cause our faith to grow, get more faith? Jesus gives us the key in Matt. 7: 7-11:

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

"Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good gifts to them that ask him?"

ASK

There are, then, three ways to get faith. First, ASK for it. In Mark 11: 22 we are urged to have faith in God or have the faith of God. James says,

"Ye have not, because ye ask not." (Jas. 4: 2)

Faith is also one of the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit which Paul urges us to covet earnestly. To have this kind of faith — the gift of Faith — we must first ask, seek and receive the Holy Spirit who gives the gifts of the Spirit severally as he will. (I Cor. 12: 9-11)

If we are sick, instead of praying for God to heal us, it may profit us more to pray for the faith necessary to RECEIVE our healing. For He cannot heal us without faith. And He has already done all that is necessary for our healing. It is now our responsibility to RECEIVE healing. Jesus paid for our healing in the atonement at the same time He paid the price for our salvation. He shed His blood for the remission of our sins and His body was beaten and broken for our healing.

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (I Pet. 2: 24)

If I learned on good authority that a rich relative had died and left a sum of money in the bank for me, I would not go around asking people for money. I would ask someone for a checkbook which would enable me to draw out and use the money which was deposited in my name.

Healing, as Salvation, was paid for by our Lord Jesus, 1900 years ago, and is on deposit in our name in the bank of Heaven. It is available when we come in faith to claim it. Faith is the "checkbook" by which we can appropriate healing and the other good gifts of God.

SEEK

The second step in getting faith is to SEEK it. Many of God's gifts are given to us through our cooperation or partnership with Him. There is usually something for us to do to unlock the storehouses of Heaven.

The first place we should seek faith is in the Holy Word.

"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17)

There is no greater gold mine of faith anywhere than in the promises of God to heal, and in the many accounts of miracle healings at the hands of God's prophets. Healings are recorded throughout the Old Testament and the New.

Abimelech and his people were healed at Abraham's prayer. (Gen. 20: 17-18) Miriam was healed of leprosy when Moses prayed for her. (Num. 12: 10-14)

God brought back to life the widow's son at the hands of Elijah (I Kings 17: 17-24); He raised up another boy from the dead at the hand of Elisha (II Kings 4: 18-37); and healed Naaman of his leprosy when he obeyed Elisha's command. (II Kings 5: 1-14)

Fifteen years were added to Hezekiah's life in answer to his prayer. (II Kings 20: 1-11) God delivered the three children of Israel from the fiery furnace (Dan. 3: 19-27); Daniel from the lion's den (Dan. 6: 16-23); and Jonah from the belly of the whale (Jon. 2: 1-10) by His miraculous power.

Christ's three and one-half years of ministry were a continuous stream of miracles: healing the sick, raising the dead, stilling the storm, feeding the 5,000.

Faith is merely confidence that God will do what He has promised to do. He has promised many times in His word to heal the sick, cast out demons, provide for our needs, protect us from danger, and guide in the right way.

Feed on these wonderful promises and your faith will "grow exceedingly" as did the faith of the Thessalonians.

"I am the Lord that healeth thee." (Ex. 15:26)

"I will take sickness away from the midst of thee." (Ex. 23:25)

"Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." (Matt. 8:17)

"And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." (Mark 16:18)

"...My God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:19)

"There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." (Ps. 91:10-12)

"Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." (Isa. 30:21)

Another way to seek faith is to go where the power of God is being manifested and see miracles actually take place today. The faith of the Samaritans was stirred up when they obeyed a woman's urge to:

"Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" (John 5:29)

Ten years ago I had no faith in modern day healings or miracles. I had been taught, as most "orthodox" Christians have, that miracles and healings passed away with Christ and the disciples, in the first century.

But I went where Divine Healing was taught and where prayer was offered for the sick. I became personally acquainted with a number of people whom God had miraculously healed after the best doctors had given them up to die. Not many weeks ago I saw a woman healed instantly of an affliction with which she had doctorred and
suffered for 40 years, when hands were laid on her in the name of the Lord Jesus. Most of us are like Thomas we have to SEE before we can believe. Well, thank God there are places today where you can see healings and miracles, if you will take the trouble to go honestly seeking faith.

A few months ago I shook hands with 9-year-old Ronald Coyne, looked into his eye which has no eyeball, watched his good eye being covered and taped, then handed him my social security card and heard him read correctly my name, address and security number, though he had never seen me before.

Unbelievable? Yes, except by the miraculous power of God. Unexplainable, yet I saw and heard it as I have described. These actual experiences are great faith builders. Many scoffers refuse to go where Divine Healing is preached and where the sick are being healed, blinding their eyes and ears to the truth of God's miracle working power which is "the same, yesterday, today and forever." (Heb. 13: 8)

Jesus said to some questioners in His day:

"Come and see." (John 1: 39)

KNOCK

The third step in getting faith or having our faith increased, is to KNOCK. Do something to prove we have some faith.

"Faith, if it has not works, is dead." (Jas. 2: 17)

When the ten lepers came to Jesus beseeching Him to heal them, He said:

"Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed." (Luke 17: 14)

They were required to demonstrate their faith by action. It would be useless to go show themselves to the priests unless they were healed, as that was the Mosaic law's requirement to be released from "quarantine" and be pronounced clean—to go and be examined by the priests. When Jesus spoke, they still had their leprosy. Instead of continuing to beg Him for healing, they must get up and go their way. And AS THEY WENT, they were cleansed. That is faith in action.

A similar act of faith was required of the nobleman who begged Jesus to come down and heal his son: "Go thy way; thy son liveth." (John 4: 50)

Another instance where Jesus required faith in action was where He healed a blind man blind from birth

"When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, ent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing." (John 9: 6-7)

This man had to brave the questions and the jibes of scoffers along the way as he found his way to the pool of Siloam.

(Turn to page 12)
"And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." (Isa. 58: 11)

"A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away; because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up with it, and choked it.

"And other fell on good ground, and sprung up, and bare fruit: one hundred fold, another thirty fold, another fifty fold: but others fell upon stony ground, where they had not much earth: and straightway springing up because they had no deepness of earth, wither away when the sun shined upon them. And others fell among thorns, which sprung up and choked them: but others fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, one hundred fold: another thirty fold, another fifty fold." (Matthew 13: 1-23)

Jesus was using parables to explain the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

"Those by the wayside are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and the word hath no root, but hearkeneth in a short season and is fallen away." (Luke 8: 13)

"And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

"Those that were sowing the seed were the disciples of the Lord. And when Jesus had said these things, he sent out his disciples to turned them into two hundred pairs, to Going into the corn country, they sowed the seed of the word of God. And that which fell among thorns: and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. And that which fell among stony ground were they, which, when they heard the word, received it, and one forth another fell on good ground, and it brought forth fruit, one hundred, thirty, and fiftyfold." (Luke 8: 4-15)

In this parable Jesus indicates that three-fourths of our preaching, witnessing, testifying, will be fruitless; but that one fourth of the listeners will be in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

"We are God's Garden. He is the absentee owner, we the tenant. We belong to Him. And He has paid a big price for us. "Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price." (I Cor. 6: 19-20)

The price paid was the atoning death of His Son, Jesus.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3: 16)

"Raising a good crop in our hearts and lives is a partnership affair between us and God; just as the growing of a crop of cotton or corn is a partnership deal between the owner of a farm and the tenant who works it. To grow a crop we must have good soil, good seed, cultivation, sunshine and rain. Sometimes the tenant furnishes only the work of cultivating and harvesting the crop; while the land owner furnishes the land and the seed, and God furnishes the sunshine and the rain. Yet the tenant often brings "I raised such and such a crop," forgetting God's necessary contribution to the harvest.

"Cultivation of our heart's crop is by prayer. The sunshine is God's love and grace, the water, His Holy Spirit.

"No crop can be grown without seed. Nothing will take its place, not cultivation, nor sunshine or rain. Many Christians try to grow a fruitful Christian without sowing the seed, the Holy Word of God.

"Nothing will take the place of the Word of God—not Prayer, nor Worship, nor good Works; as nothing can be raised until the proper seed is planted, and Jesus says the seed is the Word.

"The seed is the word of God." (Luke 8: 11)

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." (I Peter 2: 2)

"After the Word is planted in the human heart it must be tilled with prayer. Many Christians fail in thus cultivating their Christian crop and allow the thorns, the "cares and riches and pleasures of this life" to choke out their spiritual life.

"Sometimes a very small seed will produce a very large crop. Jesus said: "The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest of herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." (Matt. 13: 31-32)

"He also said: "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove: and nothing shall be impossible unto you." (Matt. 17: 20)

"Oftentimes just one small verse from God's Word, when planted in an honest and good heart, will grow up into a large tree that will crowd out fear and unbelief and bring forth a crop of abundant blessings.

"Recently I read the testimony of a lady who had been dying of tuberculous. She had been given only a few months to live by her physician and was being cared for by her mother. As she was lying in bed she read this verse: "Who by his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness." (I Peter 2: 24)

"Meditating on this verse she rejoiced and thanked God that, because of Jesus' atoning death, her sins were blotted out and she was prepared to die. Then she felt led to read the verse again and noticed the last phrase: "By whose stripes ye were healed." Meditating on this sentence she saw a meaning she never before had heard: by Jesus' stripes ye WERE healed! She called excitedly to her mother to bring her clothes, as she was getting up.

"It says here I WAS healed. If I WAS healed I'm not staying in bed any longer; I'm getting up. Bring me my clothes!"

"Her mother remonstrated with her and tried to get the girl to stay in bed, but the daughter insisted on dressing and getting up, standing on the promise of healing in this one line. She rejoiced, praised the Lord and danced all over the house, thanking God for His healing. The seed brought forth fruit and in three months she was perfectly well.

"Seed always brings forth fruit after its kind.

"And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed, after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself after his kind: and God saw that it was good." (Gen. 1: 12)

"No one can plant cottonseed and expect to harvest a crop of potatoes. Neither will seed wheat yield a crop of corn.

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6: 7)

"The kind of a crop we grow in our Christian life will depend, then, on the kind of Seed we sow in our hearts. And we can largely determine the crop by our selection of Seed.

"God's Holy Word is the Christian's "Seed Catalogue." In it are listed all the Seeds necessary for a happy and fruitful life. In this "Seed Catalogue" are listed many kinds and varieties of "Seeds." Some Christians sow only one or two kinds of seed in their hearts and therefore raise only one or two crops.

"Some churches sow only the seed that will produce Salvation, and they reap only that crop: Saved souls. Other churches sow other good seeds and reap many other good crops for their Master and Owner.

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1108 E. First Street, Austin, Texas

Singing, Prayer and Preaching —— 7:30 P.M. Daily
Private Prayer and Counselling — 1:00 to 5:00 Daily
Bring Your Problems—Spiritual, Mental, Physical, Financial

GOD ANSWERS PRAYERS

The House of Prayer is not “another church.” It will have no “members,” no Sunday morning service, no collections, no debts, no one will be asked for money, except God. The work will be carried on in absolute trust that the Lord through His children will provide everything needed.

The House of Prayer is opened to help deepen the spiritual life of all Christians, to strengthen their faith, and to minister to all who believe that GOD ANSWERS PRAYER.

Prayer will be offered daily for a great revival to sweep America to her knees in repentance that God may give us and the world, Peace.

Christianity is bigger than any denomination, wider than any race or nation, deeper than any creed, and higher than any earthly wisdom. Christ has the answer to every problem, whether personal or international. We can obey Him and live, or disobey Him and perish.

A Church divided against itself will fall. Our greatest division isn’t between denominations... it is between Christ and the World. A Church half Christian and half pagan cannot endure.

In the House of Prayer, ALL that Christ preached will be preached; ALL that He taught will be taught... no more, no less.

"MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL PEOPLE." — Isa. 56:7.

Everyone is welcome regardless of denomination, race or creed

— AT THE —

HOUSE OF PRAYER
FOR ALL PEOPLE
1108 E. First Street
Austin, Texas

BOX 2156, CAPITOL STATION
PHONE 2-8877
MR. AND MRS. J. A. DENNIS
Catalogue—the Word of God.
The first crop we will want to raise will be a crop of Salvation. No soul is saved unless a Salvation Seed is planted in his or her heart. There is an excellent line of Salvation Seed in the Catalogue.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3: 16)

If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” (Rom. 10: 9)

The next crop we should try to raise is a crop of Faith. And again the Catalogue carries an excellent line of “Faith Seed.”

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” (Heb. 11: 1)

“Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Rom. 10: 17)

“I will hasten my word to perform it.” (Jer. 1: 12)

“And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah’s womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; “And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.” (Rom. 4: 19-21)

Another needed crop is the crop of Guidance. One of the best seeds for this help is found in Isa. 30: 21:

“And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.”

A crop that many Christians have never heard of is God’s provision for our every need. An amazing line of Provision Seeds are listed in God’s Catalogue.

“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” (3 John 2)

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall shall witnesses unto me.” (Acts 1: 8)

“And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” (Luke 24: 49)

“Blessed are ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.” (Ex. 15: 26)

“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” (3 John 2)

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and these things shall be added unto you.” (Matt. 6: 33)

“If and when I come, I will not preach any denomination, any doctrine, any creed, but Jesus Christ. Therefore I will preach Salvation for the sinner, Healing for the sick, the Holy Ghost for the believer. I will preach Repentance, Prayer, Faith, Holiness, Tithing, Brotherhood, Love, Peace, all in the mighty Name of Jesus.”

—J. A. Dennis

I WILL COME....

The Lord has directed me to free myself from any organization, any denomination, any business, any schedule, that would keep me from going anywhere at any time, at His bidding. This I have done. I am now ready, as the Lord leads, to speak in YOUR church or YOUR town, on Sunday or for a week, wherever I may serve Him and His people.

If and when I come, I will not preach any denomination, any doctrine, any creed, but Jesus Christ. Therefore I will preach Salvation for the sinner, Healing for the sick, the Holy Ghost for the believer. I will preach Repentance, Prayer, Faith, Holiness, Tithing, Brotherhood, Love, Peace, all in the mighty Name of Jesus.
PREACH THE WORD

"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." (Eph. 5: 6)

A minister friend has said that he has been shown, through prophecy, that men and women in these days would be engulfed in confusion. This seems to have come to pass.

Men and women are confused because some ministers are confused. Men today are preaching, not one doctrine, but many; not one religion, but many; not one Christ, but many different interpretations of Christ.

Some are preaching that their present bodies are immortal, that they will never die, or their bodies will not suffer corruption. Some are preaching that there is no God but Jesus, that to pray to God is like praying to an idol. Some are preaching that, regardless of what sin a Christian commits, he will be saved, he is eternally God's child if born again. Some are preaching that God has given them a "new revelation" about dress and jewelry and pride that annuls and renders void the New Testament teachings on the subject.

Some are preaching that Russia is going to invade America, some that she is going to invade Palestine, some that Jesus is coming soon to catch away His Bride, the Church, before the tribulation begins. Some are preaching that there is to be no Rapture of the Church, that Jesus has already come, and dwells inside the believer. Some are preaching that there is no Hell, that everyone will be saved.

Many, though not all, of these strange and confusing teachings are coming from men who profess to be in "this new move of God" that some call "a New Revelation," some "This Revival," some "Latter Rain," etc.

But all come from men or women who profess to hear direct from God, words not taught in His Word.

Many folks are elated to learn that God speaks to His people today through prophecy and messages in tongues with interpretations. But some seem to overlook one fundamental, un-changing Truth: God does not speak, today or any other day, contrary to His Word. Whether it seems to be prophecy or a message in tongues or a vision or a "voice" or ANY OTHER word from Heaven—GOD DOES NOT SPEAK, today or any other day, CONTRARY TO HIS WRITTEN WORD!

God, as Jesus Christ, is "the same yesterday, and today, and forever." (Heb. 13: 8)

"If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the Holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." (Rev. 22: 18-19)

Some of the ministers who are preaching these things, I know and love. They are earnest, sincere, praying men. Some of their followers, I also know and love. They, too, are earnest, sincere seekers after God's truth. But they are swayed this way and that by their personal regard and affection for their leaders, rather than a solid grounding on the Word of God.

The ministers who are preaching these strange, conflicting and confusing ideas are for the most part men and women who believe that God speaks directly to THEM, and they are placing more importance upon these "messages" than on God's Holy Word. They say, "God revealed to me," "God showed me," "God told me," etc.

I, too, have had "messages" I thought came from God. Some of them I am sure did; but others—of which I was just as sure at the time—afterwards turned out to be not of God at all. How can these things be?

Man is a delicate, mysterious instrument, made up of body, mind and spirit; more delicately tuned than any musical instrument or radio. Sometimes one on a radio you tune in on one station and get another mixed in with it. Often it is difficult to cut out one station from another.

So with man. We think we are in tune with God, that the voice we hear is His Voice. Yet, frequently, we have two stations instead of one. The other voice is Self, or the Devil.

Then how can we trust these voices, or any guidance?

There is one infallible test: God NEVER SPEAKS CONTRARY TO HIS WORD.

"I am the Lord, I change not." (Mal. 3: 6)

I believe in prophecy because it is taught in God's Holy Word. But I do not believe that everything that comes forth in a church or tent meeting under the name of prophecy, is PROPHECY!

Neither do I believe that everyone who has been prayed over and told, "You have the gift of prophecy," is a prophet or has the gift of Prophecy.

God's prophets do not live as the world lives, they do not get these messages as lightly or as easily as changing a dress or reciting a poem. Prophecy cannot come without much prayer and much humble obedience to God's Word.

But you may say that it is written, "In the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy." (Acts 2: 17)

Yes, and it is also written:

"For there shall arise false Christ, and false prophets, and shew great signs and wonders: insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." (Matt. 24: 24)

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." (II Tim. 3: 13)

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (I John 4: 1)

How are we to try the spirits? What standard or what gauge shall we apply to them? You may quote:

"The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Rom. 8: 16)

That is true, but your spirit can be misled regarding teachings, the same as it can be misled in hearing "messages" or "voices" or "prophecies."

The ONE SURE TEST is the Word of God! I say, and I would like for the whole world to hear: Any man, woman or child that claims to have a "new Revelation of God," a "message" or a "prophecy," which is contrary to God's Holy Word is a false prophet and his "message" is not from Heaven. He has gotten another sation mixed up with station G-O-D.

Yes, you who claim to be God's prophets and yet are preaching doctrines contrary to God's Word, "I am afraid of you." (Gal. 4: 11)

You can quote Scriptures that seem to back up your teachings. But you ignore other Scriptures that refute your arguments. And the Scriptures must be harmonized or "dovetailed" into one another, which cannot be fully done except by the Holy Spirit. But when a teaching or "revelation" is absolutely contrary to many plain Scriptures on the subject or when they claim to supersede or out-mode the Bible, then you have gone too far, you have fallen into error, you had better get away with God, cry out for mercy and light, and keep quiet until God really speaks.

What about some of these confusing doctrines? They would be ludicrous if not for the tragic reality that men and women are swallowing them, hook, line and sinker.

We will not have time in this article to discuss all the errors mentioned above, but will take up some of them.

I have heard one man and heard of another preaching that their present bodies are immortal, that they will never die. They have some Scripture that seems to bear out their claim.
I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever.” (John 6: 51)

But they overlook these plain Scriptures:

“So also is the resurrection of the dead; It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

“Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.” (1 Cor. 15: 42-44, 50-53)

NO GOD BUT JESUS?

The good folks believing in this doctrine are commonly known as “Oneness,” believing that Jesus is the only God. Jesus is Lord and Christ and God (John 20: 28) but to believe that God is not a real and separate Person, is to refute practically all of Christ’s words on the subject:

“The Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works.” (John 14: 10)

“For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak.” (John 12: 49)

“And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I know that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.” (John 11: 41-42)

“Father glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.” (John 12: 28)

“Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.” (John 20: 17)

A “NEW REVELATION”?

There has been a lot of scoffing and laughter about the “old fogey” teachings of “Old bachelor” Paul concerning women’s dress and behaviour. Most Christians ignore Paul’s instructions, but most so-called “Full Gospel” folks have adhered to it, leaving their hair un-bobbed and their lip and nails unpainted.

But now some of these “Full Gospel” folks think they have heard God’s voice in a “New Revelation” which repeals Paul’s standards and allows them to indulge, with God’s blessings, all the vanities that they inherited from mother Eve.

If they want to go the way of the world and the flesh, as their more “modern” sisters have done, that is their privilege; but please don’t try to justify such worldliness under the guise of a “New Revelation” that denies the Word of God and outmoded Paul and Peter.

For, to the surprise of many Christians, Peter — Christ’s Number One Apostle — had about as much to say, and along the same line, as Paul, about women’s dress and behaviour.

“Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear, Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel:

“But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands.

‘Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.” (I Peter 3: 1-6)

Hear also Paul:

“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but which becometh women working at home, let them manifest by good works.” (Titus 2: 5)

What these “Liberated” (?) women of “this present move” do not see (being blinded and led astray by false teachers) is that they are merely doing what all other worldly Christians have done — satisfied the pride in their hearts — and tried to “justify” themselves by an “annulment” of God’s Word; whereas their proud sisters in other denominations merely ignored God’s Word, to satisfy their vanity.

“These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever. For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped the pollution of the world through the knowledge of the Lord, and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.” (II Peter 2: 17-20)

I repeat: Any “prophet” who claims a “new Revelation” which would annul or is contrary to ANY of God’s Word is a FALSE PROPHET and his “prophesy” a FALSE PROPHECY.

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you.” (II Peter 2: 1-3)
to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” (Matt. 10: 28)

"For if God spared not the angels that sinned; but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment unto the coming of the judgment to be punished." (II Pet. 2: 4, 9)

I tell you, it is a serious business to preach, teach or believe something contrary to the Holy Word of God. That has been the Devil's chief weapon since he deceived Adam and Eve, to get men to doubt God's Word or to substitute something for it, or to change it.

You are saved by Jesus Christ. And Jesus is the Word made flesh. (John 1: 14) It is our one sure guide.

"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psalm 119: 105)

All the assurances we have—of Salvation, Healing, Holy Spirit, Eternal Life—are in His Word. If we change it, add to or subtract from it, twist it, ignore it, or disobey it, then we lose our assurance of God's promised gifts.

Paul saw that these delusions and confusions would come and warned his followers against them.

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of your instruction, and to the impartation of the Holy Ghost, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." (Acts 20: 28-32)

"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all godly work." (II Tim. 3: 14-17)

"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." (II Tim. 4: 1-5)
How To Get More Faith

[From page 5]

That was showing his faith by his actions. A good definition of faith has been recently given by Sherwood Eddy:

"Faith is not trying to believe something regardless of the evidence; Faith is daring to DO something, regardless of the consequences."

Many people say they have faith, they think they have faith to be healed, but their actions belie their words; they are deceiving themselves in thinking they have faith.

Some will phone or write someone to pray for them, thinking this is an evidence of faith. Sometimes it is. But sometimes it is no more than a bid for sympathy, or a half-hearted attempt to show faith, when they are in reality afraid to step out and OBEY God's Word in regard to their healing. The Word doesn't say to phone or write someone to pray for you. It plainly commands YOU to do something about your case.

"Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him; anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." (Jas. 5: 14-17)

It takes courage to call for someone with faith to come and anoint you with oil and pray over you. It is much easier to sit quietly at home and ask someone to "say a prayer for me." No daring and no faith is required for that.

On the other hand many drive or fly or go by train a thousand miles or more to have hands laid on them by a man of God with faith in God's healing power, and many of them have their faith (as proven by their bold action) rewarded by God's healing.

Another evidence of faith in action is doing what you would do if you KNEW my prayer was answered, as God promised it would be?" The answer to that question and whether you dare to do it or not, is a good indication of your faith or your lack of it.

"PREPARE YE VICTUALS"

For several years before opening the House of Prayer in Austin we had felt led to open such a place where all of God's Word, free from any denominational creed or doctrine, could be preached every night to all who might come, regardless of their denomination, race or creed. Where faith could be preached and where sick folks might come for prayer.

But when we actually began to do this thing, we found many obstacles in our way.

**Peter and John Again In Jail**

(News as it might have been if there had been newspapers 1900 years ago).

Peter and John and a group of their followers were again imprisoned yesterday, having violated the warning given by the San Hedrin Council last week against preaching that Jesus, their executed leader, was alive.

During the night a mysterious jail-break was executed. Officers investigating the escape this morning, found the jail doors locked and guards at every entrance, but the prison empty.

The escapees were later found preaching in the temple. When questioned by the San Hedrin Council Peter defiantly stated that they would obey God rather than any court order and refused to quit preaching this strange new doctrine.

The council was considering a death sentence for these two radicals when Lawyer Gamaliel came to their defense and urged the court to release the men on the ground that, since they claimed to be directed by God that the court would appear in the position of fighting against God, and if left alone their movement would soon die out.

After another warning to cease their preaching, the prisoners were beaten and released.

The Jerusalem Herald, June 4, A. D. 30.

We had little money, no organization, no group, no church to back us, and we were committed to asking only God for our needs.

For a time it seemed impossible to rent a suitable building at a price we felt able to pay. We searched for weeks, tramping the streets, reading the ads, looking, looking. Then Joshua 1: 11 burned itself into my heart:

"Prepare ye victuals; for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the Lord your God giveth you to possess it."

"This Jordan" was out of banks at that time. If and when the children of Israel crossed the river, the land was full of mountains, giants and walled cities. It looked hopeless. Yet Joshua commanded them to prepare victuals — lunches to carry on their march — they were going over! Preparing the victuals was the evidence of their faith in God's promise to give them the land. I began to ask myself "What are my victuals in this venture of faith? What would I do if I KNEW the Lord would furnish us a building tomorrow?" That made it easy. The answer was: I would prepare the necessary equipment for the building.

Immediately I called my wife to get ready we were going to town and buy a used piano. We found a good one at a fair price and I paid for it. The dealer asked where he should deliver it, and I asked him if he could keep it until I knew where we were to be located. He agreed.

Next we ordered sufficient chairs to fill the building. We had already ordered song books. We prepared an announcement for the daily paper, and we prepared copy for the first issue of the present Texas Herald, which would announce the opening of the House of Prayer.

When these preparations were complete, a suitable building was available at a fair rental, with no lease required. We moved in, built a platform and a pulpit, installed lights, and opened up the House of Prayer with exactly $5.00 to our name.

We dared to prove our faith by our actions, "regardless of the consequences," and God honored this evidence of faith and blessed us greatly.

What are your "victuals" that you need to prepare, in anticipation of God's answering your prayer?

"According to your faith be it unto you." (Matt. 9: 29)

"Folks don't grow old by years, but by fears."