

THE AUSTRALIAN ANABAPTIST

God's solid foundation stands firm. 2 Tim. 2-19

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Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel,
but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in
the house.

Matthew 5:15

From The Editor's Desk.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen. (2 Corinthians 13:14)

Let us consider that our: "...faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 14:17.) To this end we are also reminded in Scripture that for us: "...the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." (Romans 10:17)

It is important, indeed vital, to our spiritual health that we peruse the scripture in the same spirit or state of mind as the Bereans did (Acts 17:10-12). Every endeavour is made to ensure the scriptural standard of articles selected but that does not take away from us the need to exercise the precepts outlined in Acts 17:10-12 – I am always conscious of the fact that 'to err is human.' This month's articles will, it is hoped, be thought provoking and an encouragement to each of us to walk in God's ways, not our own.

The article on "**The Great Divorce – Faith and Works**", aptly describes how a great portion of professing Christians have gravitated to Works, it is probably easier to do "Works" then exercise "Faith" and follow the Lord's directions. This article intends to provide you with a balanced view of faith and works: "*Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. ¹⁸Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.*" (James 2:17-18)

I am confident that the name of John Bunyan will be familiar to us all, in particular because of his admirable books: "Pilgrim's Progress" and "The War for Mansoul" Recently access was obtained to the complete works of John Bunyan in three volumes, some of which contains material probably not widely known. In this issue an extract from Bunyan's work: "**Spiritual Poems**" has been published and it is intended to publish other extracts in forthcoming issues. The selected offering on this occasion is his poetic rendition of Matthew chapter 5. For those who have an appreciation for the use of rhyming patterns in scripture memorization, this may be a welcome innovation, although not a modern one because it was written in the late 1600's. Comparison with the actual wording in the King James translation will reassure you that the scriptural context has not been changed.

May the Lord bless you as you study His word.

JvL.

MINISTER'S CORNER.*Bro. F. Schrock***Make Me As One Of Thy Hired Servants.**

Jesus told a story, recorded in Luke 15:11-32, about a man and his two sons. The younger of these two sons decided he wanted more adventure and fun than his secure home environment had to offer. Consequently, he asked his father for his portion of the inheritance. The father, apparently recognising the young man's freedom of choice, divided the property between them. Upon this, the son gathered all his things together and went into a distant country. There he wasted his substance with selfish, ungodly living. Because of this, he is generally referred to as "the prodigal son".

When his money was gone, he found himself without friends also. After he was reduced to the point of homelessness, he managed to join himself to a certain citizen who let him feed his hogs. Evidently he was so hungry that he craved the husks he fed to the swine. There was no one who cared for him; he seemed to be a forgotten man. He finally came to himself and said: "How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father and say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants." Subsequently he made his way back to his father, who apparently was anxiously hoping for his return.

There are a number of important lessons in this account. Today we will focus on the son's attitude when he humbled himself and decided he was not worthy to be a son. He became willing to be a servant. In our unconverted state, all of us selfishly wasted our Father's resources, as Paul says in Titus 3:3: *For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.* Beyond that, it is well for us to turn into ourselves and prove our lives whether we are possibly now yet living selfishly.

The younger son had special privileges and rights as an heir. When he came to himself and saw how he had wasted all this, he recognised that he had forfeited his special rights. He apparently recognized the vanity of worldly pleasures. His only desire now was to have the peace and security

of being one of the father's servants. That would satisfy him. He evidently was willing to labour like one of his father's servants. Likewise, when we turn to the Lord in true repentance, we also surrender our earthly rights; we yearn for the security we can find only with the Father in heaven.

True unselfish living is born in us by coming to the same attitude the prodigal son experienced. We are not worthy of any good thing, we have no rights here on earth. Yet, despite this, we are blessed with grace and peace through Jesus Christ. A true vision of this makes one tender of heart and willing to serve. This grace is antidote for the judgemental, critical, and self-righteous attitudes.

The spirit of a servant makes us willing to deny ourselves and take up our cross daily, with courage. As we come to the Lord and follow Him in self-denial, there is a cross that follows. It can be persecution, rejection, or various kinds of unpleasant things that we face because we serve God. This cross is something that we face continually in our life. Our human nature would like to evade it or get rid of it once and for all. But each new day of grace the servant attitude accepts the incessant cross with courage, looking to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.

Some of us are not as gifted as others are whom we observe. Many of us need to put forth considerable effort to meet and visit with people, while it appears that with others it comes so easily. Many of us are not naturally good speakers or good writers; some of us have more of a tendency to be slothful or negligent than others have. One thing we all have in common, though, is that we are selfish by nature, and this nature is felt in different ways. May we remember that it matters not how gifted we are or are not, but how available we make ourselves by the way of self-denial. It takes our self-denial and continual effort to subdue this nature. Paul gave encouraging words to Timothy writing: "*Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.*" 1 Timothy 4:15-16.

Jesus describes the role of a servant in Luke 17:7-10: "*But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were*

commanded him? I trow (to trust, suppose or believe) not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."

Non-resistance, as it pertains to war, is still a commonly held doctrine in various "plain" churches, but the true spirit of humble non-resistant service to God and our fellowman is not so easily found. With this spirit we give up our rights to retaliate, to nurse grudges and malicious thoughts, to seek honour, to grumble, to look down smugly at those in error, or to feel we deserve a reward for good done. Yet there is not a happier condition in the world, no place more secure and restful, than in the will of the Father who accepted us in spite of our blind and selfish ways.

That "we are but stewards, everything belongs to God" is a common expression. There are some practical ways that indicate whether we have in this knowledge only or in substance. When we are to pay more to the government than we think should be the case, or even to the church or the school, do we murmur because we have to hand over so much of "the Lord's money"? When it is our lot to help with a certain need, such as at a work project or other non-compensatory service, do we take an interest in the work and give it the same diligent service we would on our own project? Or do we get to work late and feel justified in not being very diligent? We are at home in the flesh, and it should not surprise us if we struggle in these areas.

However, we have Jesus' example when He struggled with the suffering He faced. We notice that He focused on dealing with the humanness in within Himself- never was there any hint of complaining that He had to go through all this for a bunch of unthankful and sinful people. When we face our human tendencies, there is a vast difference between battling decisively and prayerfully against our weakness or on the other hand, complaining and murmuring. The one way entails recognition of our weakness and placing judgement on the same. In the other way, there is a certain support of self, an adoption of the middle ground for our flesh.

One wonders whether there are too many Christians who try to serve God by abstaining from certain evils and by doing some good works. But perhaps they are missing the all-important point of willing and joyful service to the Master. Jesus said: "*Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples.*" (John 15:8)

Oh! That we may find that vision of the spirit of a servant. Then giving and serving becomes a joy, done simply for the sake of devotion to the Master rather than because we have to or in the interest of temporal compensation. May we find that place where we decisively forsake the world and do not look back over our shoulder at the things we have left behind. Then our self-denial, cutting of the offending foot or hand, plucking out the eye (all very useful members), can be done with joy (Matthew 5:29-30). Then there is a willingness to take up the not so pleasant parts of our Christian life daily.

May we find joy in willingly giving ourselves in service to our fellowman, which is the main outlet for our service to God. For the material things and pleasure of this life will avail us nothing on that last Great Day. But that which was done in the interest of the kingdom and our fellowman will be treasure gathered in heaven.

Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: [36] Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. (Matthew 25:34-36)

**A child of God is the greatest free-man and the best servant,
Even as Christ was the best Servant, yet none so free;
And the greater portion any man has of His Spirit,
The freer disposition he has to serve everyone in love.**

SNIPPETS.

Composers/Writers of Hymns used in the Mennonite Church Hymnal

WHITTIER John Greenleaf.

Born: December 17, 1807, near Haverhill, Massachusetts.

Died: September 7, 1892, Hampton Falls, New Hampshire.

Buried: Union Cemetery, Amesbury, Massachusetts

At age 22, Whittier became editor of the *American Manufacturer* in Boston, Massachusetts. In 1830, he began editing the *Haverhill Gazette* and the *New England Weekly Review* (Hartford, Connecticut). In 1835, Whittier was elected to the Massachusetts legislature. From 1847 to 1859, he wrote for *The National Era* in Washington, DC.

Whittier was influential in the anti-slavery movement, and served as secretary of the American Anti-Slavery Society. When he moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, he edited the *Pennsylvania Freeman*. Mobs attacked him several times because of his views.

Whittier is known as America's "Quaker poet"; his works include *The Panorama, and Other Poems*, 1856. He also wrote almost 100 hymns.

Hymns: (Only Nos. 3 and 11 appear in the Church Hymnal.)

1. All as God Wills
2. All Things Are Thine
3. Dear Lord and Father of Mankind
4. God Giveth Quietness at Last
5. Green Earth Sends Its Incense Up, The
6. Harp at Nature's Advent Strung, The
7. Hast Thou, 'Midst Life's Empty Noises
8. I Ask Not Now for Gold to Gild
9. I Bow My Forehead to the Dust
10. I Know Not What the Future Hath
11. Immortal Love, Forever Full
12. It May Not Be Our Lot

THE GREAT DIVORCE – FAITH AND WORKS.

For centuries it has been going on. The controversy surges back and forth. In the great courts of doctrinal debate the papers are filed and the lawyers argue. But the divorce has not happened. Faith and Works are married, and always will be!

Strangely enough it is not the marriage partners who are trying to divorce each other. It is the theologians, pastors, and evangelists who file the claims of "incompatibility"...

Also strangely enough, it was in the backwoods of a third-world country listening to an earnest, well-meaning evangelist (in the more Biblical sense of an evangelist, that is, one who goes forth into the "highways and byways" and "knocks on doors", not the modern concept of a preacher who comes to hold a week of meetings in some plush church-house, and never steps out to talk personally with the people) sharing the life-changing news to another of his fellow countrymen that it hit me fresh that faith and works are inseparable. Before I had considered them as two separate entities working independently. But somehow it hit me anew- can they truly be divorced?

The young evangelist had used a metaphor of a boat having two oars. "If you have only faith and no works, or you have only works and no faith, you are like rowing a boat with only one oar", he explained to his listener, "and you will go in circles if you have only one." Certainly you will go in circles if you have only one! But...

Really, can a man have faith and not have works? Can we say a man is saved by faith, and that surrendering to the principle of repentance follows his conversion (when he understands beforehand that repentance was taught by Christ)? Or, that after his conversion he has to make more decisions concerning sanctification and a consecrated life (again, when he knows that 'without holiness no man shall see the LORD')?

Ever since the Protestant reformation, it seems that many of the Protestants have had an aversion to "good works". "Salvation by faith alone" has been the battle cry. "Our own righteousness is as filthy rags" is another favourite. In some settings it almost seems as if the phrase "good works" has become a sort of "dirty word" that you use only when necessary to say how little value they have. To do them smells of rank legalism and earning salvation.

For all the erroneous wanderings of the Roman Catholic Church into selling indulgences, confessions to the priest, penances, and such like, the Protestant reformation has hit the other ditch with a resounding splash. You are as likely to hear that one doesn't need to confess openly his sins (suggesting that to do so is some sort of legalistic earning of salvation), just to God alone; that to make restitution is self-righteousness since that God clears all sin upon faith in Him: "so just believe and be saved tonight. Don't worry about good works, they might come sooner or later, but they are not necessary. Salvation is by faith alone!" And in some cases the works do come: sometimes that is. And, sadly, "sometimes" is years down the road before men deal thoroughly with their sin and find deliverance from it. Because we have divorced faith and works.

When a man and woman get married (in first-time situations), in God's eyes they become one flesh until death. Faith has been married to works from eternity past and will be forever. The confusion can come in because there are "works" not of faith. But there is no "saving" (for lack of a better term) faith without works. If a man says that he believes that "super-unleaded" gasoline is a better buy for the dollar than "regular unleaded", but whenever he buys gas he buys "regular unleaded", he has not put his faith in it. He may say it, and have a mental assent (which isn't faith) but he has not put his faith in it! If a man says he thinks the Democrats have a better plan than the Republicans, but always votes Republican, he has not put his faith in it. And a man that says he believes in Jesus, but does not repent of his sins (the ones he has knowledge of) has not put his faith in Christ.

Of course, a man can have works that do not originate in faith in Christ. These works are not the works that have married faith. Just like there are many Marys in this world, but only one was the wife of Joseph, "father" of Jesus. And there are many works in this world, but only one is married to faith in Christ. And the same as if you invited Joseph to come live in your house, Mary would have come also, the same that if faith comes into your heart, works will come too.

As there are works without faith, there is also a type of "faith" without works. In reality I hate to call it faith. I think it would better be called a "mental assent". In simpler words we might say someone's mind agrees to a fact. When a person puts his trust in something, he acts upon that trust. We have faith in bridges when we drive across them. We can know a

bridge exists right in front of us that will get us across the river, but if we do not drive across it, we have not chosen to put our faith in that bridge. Those that "believe" in Christ with mental assent that He indeed is the Christ, but choose not to put their whole life into that knowledge, are like the man that believes a bridge will get him across a river, but refuses to drive across it. He believes with his mind, but he has not put his faith in the bridge. We can "believe" in Jesus with our mind, but not put our faith in Him. This is "faith" (notice the quotation marks) without works.

(Note- sometimes the word "believe" is used as "to give a mental assent to" and sometimes it is used as meaning to "trust, or put faith in". Whenever you hear or read the word, be sure you put the right definition to it!)

Once a man has eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge and evil (the law), there is no turning back. He knows what is right and wrong in a matter, and for the rest of his life he is accountable to it. Once a man knows that fornication is sin, he will have no peace with God until he deals with it in his heart. If he is living in fornication, there is no salvation for that man until in his heart he gives it up. Perhaps you say, "That is salvation by works". If a man believes in Jesus, and knows that Jesus considers fornication sin, he will surrender his heart to whom he believes in. If he does not surrender his heart, he has not put his faith in Christ. If he believes, he WILL act.

It is for this reason that it seems harder for a child raised in a Christian home to come to Christ than those who have not. Notice, that I use the word "seems". When one comes to Christ in faith, an unconditional surrender is necessary. A surrender of looking to ourself (or another) for life and help, to the life and help of Christ. Perhaps the word surrender sounds "worksy". But is it faith if a man comes to Christ saying, "I believe in You, but I'm going to continue in my own road"? Perhaps this is the reason for such a lack of genuine spirituality in churches- men adding Jesus to their own program. Like putting a bumper sticker that says "California bound" on your bumper, but still heading for Florida... For this, a child raised in Christian home who knows that (for example) the Bible teaches for a woman to have long hair and a man to have short hair will never, I repeat, NEVER, find peace with God until his/her heart surrenders to that (if it has been in rebellion to it) knowledge of good and evil. You can say, "They can be saved without that if they have faith." But if they have faith, and believe what the Bible says, they will ACT upon what they know. To say

they believe in Jesus, and then run right over what He says, is foolishness and mockery. To put our faith in Christ is to surrender our heart to whatever He says. For this reason those that know more are more accountable, and faith will mean more immediate works, nothing less than a complete surrender of our will to the will of God shall allow us to become God's son.

Anyone that knows much of any thing of Christ knows that Jesus had a real problem with the way we naturally go. One of His first sermons recorded in the gospels is a short one that contains a very important word. "Repent". Can we say we believe in Christ but not have repentance? Can we throw ourselves upon Him, and overlook what He has told us to do? Can we expect to find peace with Him when we know we are walking over His sayings? "If you love Me, keep My commandments" He tells us. And then we expect to come to Him for salvation and forgiveness without surrendering to Him and changing our ways (in our hearts)? Absolute nonsense! Sound "worksy"? Sounds like faith to me! I believe, therefore I do!

The thief on the cross was saved by faith. But had he been able to get down from that cross 3 seconds after his confession of that faith, the works would have started. In his heart, the works were started. Only a few big nails hindered him. I don't know what he would have done first- make restitution, reconcile with an enemy, go home and rejoice: but the good works would have started. Immediately! He had repented of them in his heart when he believed on Christ. Even though he had not outwardly changed anything, God knew his heart and the reconciliation was done. God knew that he truly believed, and given the opportunity, he would do, starting immediately!

If we had to wait until our knowledge was up to a certain level and the proof of our belief lived out until we could have assurance of salvation, we would have a tough time of it. God saw that Abraham believed in Him, and it was accounted to him for righteousness even though he had not left Ur nor offered Isaac as of yet. And God sees our hearts when we look to Him in faith. He saves us soon as the faith starts. And the works will start in our life immediately also. Those areas where we are in rebellion and know it are surrendered (immediately). Circumstances may keep us from "living it out", but in our hearts the works are done. We have left Ur and sacrificed Isaac already. Because we believed!

Faith without works isn't faith. Faith that does not surrender the heart to the knowledge of good and evil that it has (repentance) is not faith. Faith

that does not grow in more and more good fruits is not faith. Faith is married to good works!

I am convinced that in trying to make salvation so simple we have divorced it from good works at times. Yes it is true, "believe in Jesus and you shall be saved." Put so much of your trust in Him that you start doing what He has told you, and are committed to do what He will tell you. Trust Him "lock, stock, and barrel". Be so convinced of Him that you will believe what He has said, will do what He has said, and want to know more of what He said. Absolutely, thoroughly, totally, completely convinced that He is the Son of God, and has the message of God for mankind. And that He knows what He is talking about. Believe Him so thoroughly that you do what He says even though you don't understand the reason why He wants you to:

As the saying is: put all your eggs in one basket.
This is faith. I believe-Therefore I do...

Distinctive Worship Patterns (Part 4)

Scriptural Preaching.

Scriptural preaching has always been central to true Christian worship. Jesus taught much by preaching. The disciples "went every where preaching the word."

Preaching is God's method of declaring His Word to the lost. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Corinthians 1:21). By Scriptural preaching, accountability is passed from the preacher to the people (Ezekiel 33).

Preaching was a central part of synagogue worship. One historian noted that the forms of worship practiced by the church at Jerusalem were modeled after synagogue worship. This worship pattern was generally used for all New Testament churches.

Scriptural preaching was not an exclusive Mennonite practice. Preaching was once prominent in Protestant worship services. However, as radio and

television became available, worship patterns began to change in many churches. Films, skits, and puppet shows became the main attraction in many worship services. Unlike God's prescribed method of "the foolishness of preaching," these new methods have failed to convey truth.

The Anabaptists kept Scriptural preaching central by practicing a three-office, unsalaried ministry. Thus the responsibility of the plural ministry, known in history as the "bench," was a team effort. Fellow ministers shared a testimony after the message was delivered. This was an effort to keep preaching balanced and Scriptural.

Anabaptist preaching was also distinctive in that it was more subdued, avoiding fiery dramatics or entertaining humor. It sought to draw attention to the Word rather than focusing on the individual preaching the Word.

The Anabaptist pattern for preaching was to use the understanding gleaned from simple Bible passages, such as the Sermon on the Mount, to explain more difficult Scriptures. In contrast, some focused on difficult Bible passages and overlooked or twisted the plain, simple verses to fit foregone conclusions drawn from more difficult texts. These approaches resulted in beliefs and practices that were far apart.

How do we maintain Scriptural preaching'?

By keeping our preaching focused on the Word. We should limit the secular materials we use in our messages and rather focus on God's Word. Storytelling should also be limited in our preaching because it often detracts from the message of the Book. Preaching must focus on the Word rather than on the message bearer. Sermons should be preached with sobriety and should avoid drama and humor.

By preaching messages that declare the requirements of the Word and the consequences of disobedience. The Bible calls this prophesying.

By preaching expository messages that focus on a particular passage and context. These help us analyze passages more thoroughly.

May God give us wisdom, discretion, and a burden to properly handle His holy Word.

Nevin L. Martin Moravia, NY. Reprinted by permission from The Eastern Mennonite Testimony

SCRIPTURAL POEMS:

By: John Bunyan, 1628-1688. Licensed According to Order.

London: Printed for J. Blare, at the Looking Glass, on London Bridge, 1701.

Advertisement by the Editor of the 1849 Edition: Geo. Ofor.

This very interesting little volume of poems, we believe, has not been reprinted since the year 1701, nor has it ever been inserted in any edition or catalogue of Bunyan's works. This may have arisen from the author's having sold his entire copyright--a fact which prevented Charles Doe from publishing many other of Bunyan's treatises, when he projected his edition of the entire works, of which the first volume only was printed. With some other of Bunyan's rarest tracts, it escaped the researches of Wilson, who published the works in 1737, and also of Whitefield, Mason, and all other editors of Bunyan's works. Mr. Doe, in his very interesting pages called 'The Struggler, for the Preservation of Mr. John Bunyan's Labours,' gives a catalogue table of his books in the order in which they were published; but he had not discovered these poems, nor the Emblems, nor the Exhortation to Peace and Unity.

The volume from which this edition is printed consists of one hundred pages in crown octavo, with a very rude cut of Ruth and Boaz. It is of extreme rarity, if not unique, in a perfect state.

The imprint is—"London, for J. Blare, at the Looking Glass, on London Bridge, 1701." It forms part of the Editor's extensive collection of the original or early editions of Bunyan's tracts and treatises; the scarcity of which may be accounted for, from their having been printed on very bad paper, and worn out by use, being so generally and eagerly read by pious persons among the labouring classes of the community.

The style and substance of these scriptural poems are entirely Bunyan's. His veneration for the holy oracles appears through every page, by his close adherence to the text. He fully proves what he asserts in his address to the reader—

*'The WORD are for the most part all the same,
For I affected plainness more than fame.'*

However uncouth it may appear to use a plural verb after a singular noun, it really expresses his meaning, which is evidently, that portions of the WORD of God are rendered into poetry as nearly as possible, word for word with the original; and he immediately apologizes for this rudeness, in neglecting the rules of grammar, by stating his earnest plainness of speech, and his want of education in early life:

'Nor could'st thou hope to have it better done,
For I'm no poet, nor a poet's son,
But a mechanic, guided by no rule,
But what I gained in a grammar school
In my minority.'

How exactly does this agree with his account of himself in boyhood,--'It pleased God to put it into my parent's heart to put me to school, to learn both to read and write; though, to my shame I confess, I did soon lose that I learnt, even almost utterly.' These are Bunyan's own words.

Our surprise will be excited, not by little inaccuracies of style or departures from the rules of grammar, but at the talent of a poor mechanic, in so faithfully rendering scripture histories in such simple and striking language. As Mr. Burton says, in commending his *Gospel Truths Vindicated*,--'This man hath not the learning or wisdom of man, yet through grace he hath received the teaching of God, and the learning of the Spirit of Christ, which is the thing that makes a man both a Christian and a minister of the gospel (Isaiah 50:4). He was not chosen out of an earthly, but out of the heavenly University, and hath taken these three heavenly degrees—Union with Christ--The Anointing of the Spirit, and Experience of the Temptations of Satan; far better than all the University learning and degrees that can be had.' May Bunyan's desire be realized, and his verses prove to all our readers:-

'As delighting to thee in reading, as to me in writing.'

GEO. OFFOR..

Hackney, England. August 22, 1849

TO THE READER.

Whoe'er thou art that shall peruse this book,
 This may inform thee, when I undertook
 To write these lines, it was not my design
 To publish this imperfect work of mine:
 Composed only for diversion's sake.
 But being inclin'd to think thou may'st partake
 Some benefit thereby, I have thought fit,
 Imperfect as it is, to publish it.
 The subjects are a part of the contents,
 Both of the Old and the New Testaments;
 The word are for the most part all the same,
 For I affected plainness more than fame.
 Nor could'st thou hope to have it better done:
 For I'm no poet, nor a poet's son,
 But a mechanic, guided by no rule,
 But what I gained in a grammar school
 In my minority: I can't commend it,
 Such as it is into the world I send it,
 And should be glad to see some hand to mend it.
 Would but those men whose genius leads them to't,
 And who have time and parts wherewith to do't,
 Employ their pens in such a task as this,
 'Twould be a most delightsome exercise
 Of profit to themselves and others too:
 If what the learned Herbert says, holds true,
 A verse may find him, who a sermon flies,
 And turn delight into a sacrifice;
 Thus I conclude, and wish it as delighting
 To thee in reading as to me in writing.

JOHN BUNYAN.

**CHRIST'S SERMON ON THE MOUNT
MATTHEW, CHAP. V.**

And Jesus, seeing the multitudes, ascended
Up to a mount, where sitting, and attended
By his disciples, he began to preach;
And on this manner following did them teach.
Blessed are all such as are poor in spirit,
For they the heavenly kingdom do inherit.
Blessed are they that mourn; for in the stead
Thereof shall comfort be administered.
Blessed are they, whose meekness doth excel:
For on the earth their portion is to dwell.
Blessed are they, who after righteousness
Hunger and thirst; for they shall it possess.
Blessed are they, for they shall mercy find,
Who to do mercifully are inclin'd.
Blessed are all such as are pure in heart;
For God his presence shall to them impart.
Blessed are they that do make peace; for why?
They shall be call'd the sons of the Most High.
Blessed are they which suffer for the sake
Of righteousness: for they of heav'n partake.
Blessed are ye, when men shall falsely speak
All kind of ill against you for my sake,
And shall revile, and persecute you sore;
Rejoice, and be exceeding glad therefore:
For your reward in heav'n will be great:
For thus of old they did the prophets treat.
Ye are the salt o' th' earth; but wherewith must
The earth be season'd when the savour's lost?
It is from thenceforth good for nothing, but
To be cast out, and trodd'n under foot.

Ye are the light o' th' world; a city set
 Upon an hill cannot be hid; nor yet
 Do men a candle with a bushel cover,
 But set it where it lights the whole house over.
 So shine your light, your good works seen thereby
 Men may your heavenly Father glorify.
 Think not that to destroy the law I came,
 Or prophets; no, but to fulfil the same.
 For till the heav'n and earth shall pass away,
 One jot or tittle from the law, I say,
 Shall never pass, till all shall be complete.
 Whoso therefore presumes to violate,
 One of these least commands, and teacheth so,
 Shall in God's kingdom be accounted low.
 But he that doth, and teacheth them likewise,
 Shall in God's kingdom have great dignities.
 For I declare unto you, that unless
 You shall exceed the scribe and pharisees
 In righteousness; you shall on no condition,
 Into the heavenly kingdom gain admission.
 Ye've heard 'twas said of old, 'Thou shalt not kill.'
 And he incurs the judgment who shall spill
 His brother's blood: but I to you declare,
 That he that's wroth without a cause, shall bear
 The judgment. Likewise of the council he
 That sayeth 'racha' shall in danger be.
 But whosoe'er shall say, Thou fool, the same
 Shall be in danger of eternal flame.
 When therefore to the altar thou dost bring
 Thy gift, and there rememb'rest any thing
 Thy brother hath against thee: leave it there
 Before the altar, and come thou not near,
 Till thou hast first made reconciliation,
 Then may'st thou come and offer thine oblation.

Make an agreement with thine adversary
 Whilst thou art in the way, and do not tarry;
 Lest he at any time deliver thee
 Unto the judge, and by the judge thou be
 Unto the officer forthwith resign'd,
 And in imprisonment thou be confin'd;
 I do affirm thou shalt not be enlarg'd,
 Till thou the utmost farthing hast discharg'd.
 Ye've heard that they of old did testify,
 That men should not commit adultery:
 But I pronounce him an adulterer,
 Who views a woman to lust after her.
 And if thy right eye shall offensive be,
 Pluck thou it out and cast the same from thee;
 For it is better lose one, than that all
 Thy members should into hell torments fall.
 And if thy right hand doth offend, cut off it,
 And cast it from thee, for it will thee profit
 Much rather that one of thy members fell,
 Than that they should be all condemned to hell.
 It hath been said, whoso away shall force
 His wife, shall give her a bill of divorce:
 But whosoe'er shall put his wife away,
 Except for fornication's sake, I say,
 Makes her adult'ress, and who marries her,
 So put away, is an adulterer.
 Again: Ye've heard, Thou shalt not be forsworn,
 Was ancient doctrine, but thou shalt perform
 Unto the Lord thine oaths: But I declare,
 That thou shalt not at all presume to swear;
 Neither by heaven, for it is God's throne;
 Nor by the earth, for his foot stands thereon:
 Neither swear by Jerusalem, for why?
 It is the city of the King Most High:
 Nor swear thou by thine head, for thou canst make
 No hair thereof to be or white or black:
 But let yea, yea; nay, nay, in speech suffice,

For what is more from evil doth arise.
 Ye've heard, it hath been said; Eye for an eye,
 And tooth for tooth: But I do testify,
 That you shall not resist; but let him smite
 Thy left cheek also, who assaults thy right.
 And if that any by a lawsuit shall
 Demand thy coat, let them have cloak and all.
 And whosoe'er compelleth thee to go
 A mile, refuse not to go with him two.
 Give him that asketh, and from him that may
 Have need to borrow, turn not thou away.
 Ye've heard, 'twas said: That thou shalt love thy friend
 And hate thy foe: But let your love extend
 Unto your enemies: thus I declare,
 Bless them that curse, do good to them that bear
 Ill will, and for your persecutors pray,
 And them that do reproach you; that you may
 Be children of your Father that's in heaven;
 For he on good and bad alike hath given
 His sun to rise, and in like manner doth
 Send rain upon the just and unjust both
 For what is your reward, if you love them
 That love you? Do not publicans the same?
 And if your brethren only you salute,
 What more than they do ye? They also do't.
 I will therefore that you be perfect, ev'n
 As is your Father perfect that's in heaven.

Another Gospel

By: A. W. Pink 1886-1952

Satan is not an initiator but an imitator. God has an only begotten Son—the Lord Jesus, so has Satan—the son of Perdition" (2 Thessalonians 2:3). There is a Holy Trinity, and there is likewise a Trinity of Evil (Revelations 20:10). Do we read of the "children of God," so also we read of "the children of the wicked one" (Matthew 13:38). Does God work in the former both to will and to do of His good pleasure, then we are told that Satan is "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Ephesians 2:2). Is there a "mystery of godliness" (1 Timothy 3:16), so also is there a "mystery of iniquity" (2 Thessalonians 2:7). Are we told that God by His angels "seals" His servants in their foreheads (Revelations 7:3), so also we learn that Satan by his agents sets a mark in the foreheads of his devotees (Revelations 13:16). Are we told that "the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Corinthians 2:10), then Satan also provides his "deep things" (Revelations 2:24). Did Christ perform miracles, so also can Satan (2 Thessalonians 2:9). Is Christ seated upon a throne, so is Satan (Revelations 2:13). Has Christ a Church, then Satan has his "synagogue" (Revelations 2:9). Is Christ the Light of the world, then so is Satan himself "transformed into an angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14). Did Christ appoint "apostles," then Satan has his apostles, too (2 Corinthians 11:13). And this leads us to consider: **"The Gospel of Satan."**

Satan is the arch-counterfeiter. The Devil is now busy at work in the same field in which the Lord sowed the good seed. He is seeking to prevent the growth of the wheat by another plant, the tares, which closely resembles the wheat in appearance. In a word, by a process of imitation he is aiming to neutralize the Work of Christ. Therefore, as Christ has a Gospel, Satan has a gospel too; the latter being a counterfeit of the former. So closely does the gospel of Satan resemble that which it parodies, multitudes of the unsaved are deceived by it.

It is to this gospel of Satan the apostle refers when he says to the Galatians, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another, but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ" (Galatians 1:6-7). This false gospel was being heralded even in the days of the apostle, and a most awful curse was called down upon those who preached it.

The apostle continues, "But though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." By the help of God we shall now endeavour to expound, or rather, expose this false gospel.

The gospel of Satan is not a system of revolutionary principles, nor yet a program of anarchy. It does not promote strife and war, but aims at peace and unity. It seeks not to set the mother against her daughter nor the father against his son, but fosters the fraternal spirit whereby the human race is regarded as one great "brotherhood." It does not seek to drag down the natural man, but to improve and uplift him. It advocates education and cultivation and appeals to the "best that is within us." It aims to make this world such a comfortable and congenial habitat that Christ's absence from it will not be felt and God will not be needed. It endeavours to occupy man so much with this world that he has no time or inclination to think of the world to come. It propagates the principles of self-sacrifice, charity and benevolence, and teaches us to live for the good of others, and to be kind to all. It appeals strongly to the carnal mind and is popular with the masses, because it ignores the solemn facts that by nature man is a fallen creature, alienated from the life of God, and dead in trespasses and sins, and that his only hope lies in being born again.

In contradistinction to the Gospel of Christ, the gospel of Satan teaches salvation by works. It inculcates justification before God on the ground of human merits. Its sacramental phrase is "Be good and do good"; but it fails to recognize that in the flesh there dwelleth no good thing. It announces salvation character, which reverses the order of God's Word—character by, as the fruit of, salvation. Its various ramifications and organizations are manifold. Temperance, Reform Movements, "Christian Socialist Leagues," Ethical Culture Societies, "Peace Congresses" are all employed (perhaps unconsciously) in proclaiming this gospel of Satan—salvation by works. The pledge-card is substituted for Christ; social purity for individual regeneration, and politics and philosophy, for doctrine and godliness. The cultivation of the old man is considered more practical than the creation of a new man in Christ Jesus; whilst universal peace is looked for apart from the interposition and return of the Prince of Peace.

The apostles of Satan are not saloon-keepers and white-slave traffickers, but are for the most part ordained ministers. Thousands of those who occupy our modern pulpits are no longer engaged in presenting the funda-

mentals of the Christian Faith, but have turned aside from the Truth and have given heed unto fables. Instead of magnifying the enormity of sin and setting forth its eternal consequences, they minimize it by declaring that sin is merely ignorance or the absence of good. Instead of warning their hearers to "flee from the wrath to come" they make God a liar by declaring that He is too loving and merciful to send any of His own creatures to eternal torment. Instead of declaring that "without shedding of blood is no remission," they merely hold up Christ as the great Exemplar and exhort their hearers to follow in His steps." Of them it must be said, "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Romans 10:3). Their message may sound very plausible and their aim appear very praiseworthy, yet we read of them—"for such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves (imitating) into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore, it is no great thing [not to be wondered at] if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works" (2 Corinthians 11:13-15).

In addition to the fact that today hundreds of churches are without a leader who faithfully declares the whole counsel of God and presents His way of salvation, we also have to face the additional fact that the majority of people in these churches are very unlikely to learn the Truth themselves. The family altar, where a portion of God's Word was wont to be read daily is now, even in the homes of nominal Christians, largely a thing of the past. The Bible is not expounded in the pulpit and it is not read in the pew. The demands of this rushing age are so numerous, that multitudes have little time and still less inclination to make preparation for the meeting with God. Hence the majority, who are too indolent to search for themselves, are left at the mercy of those whom they pay to search for them; their trust by studying and social problems rather than the oracles of God.

In Proverbs 14:12 we read, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death." This "way" which ends in "death" is the Devil's Delusion—the gospel of Satan—a way of salvation by human attainment. It is a way which "seemeth right," that is to say, it is presented in such a plausible way that it appeals to the natural man: it is set forth in such a subtle and attractive manner, that it commends itself to the intelligence of its hearers. By virtue of the fact that it appropriates to itself

religious terminology, sometimes appeals to the Bible for its support (whenever this suits its purpose), holds up before men lofty ideals, and is proclaimed by those who have graduated from our theological institutions, countless multitudes are decoyed and deceived by it.

The success of an illegitimate coiner depends largely upon how closely the counterfeit resembles the genuine article. Heresy is not so much the total denial of the truth as a perversion of it. That is why half a lie is always more dangerous than a complete repudiation. Hence when the Father of Lies enters the pulpit it is not his custom to flatly deny the fundamental truths of Christianity, rather does he tacitly acknowledge them, and then proceed to give an erroneous interpretation and a false application. For example: he would not be so foolish as to boldly announce his disbelief in a personal God; he takes His existence for granted and then gives a false description of His character. He announces that God is the spiritual Father of all men, when the Scriptures plainly tell us that we are "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:26), and that "as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God" (John 1:12). Further, he declares that God is far too merciful to ever send any member of the human race to Hell, when God Himself has said, "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the Lake of Fire" (Revelations 20:15). Again; Satan would not be so foolish as to ignore the central figure of human history—the Lord Jesus Christ; on the contrary, his gospel acknowledges Him to be the best man that ever lived. Attention is drawn to His deeds of compassion and works of mercy, the beauty of His character and the sublimity of His teaching. His life is eulogized, but His vicarious death is ignored, the all-important atoning work of the cross is never mentioned, whilst His triumphant and bodily resurrection from the grave is regarded as one of the credulities of a superstitious age. It is a bloodless gospel, and presents a crossless Christ, who is received not as God manifest in the flesh, but merely as the Ideal Man.

In 2 Corinthians 4:3 we have a scripture which sheds much light upon our present theme. There we are told, "if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God should shine unto them." He blinds the minds of unbelievers through hiding the light of the Gospel of Christ, and he does this by substituting his own gospel. Appropriately he designated

"The Devil and Satan which deceiveth the whole world" (Revelations 12:9). In merely appealing to "the best that is within man," and in simply exhorting him to "lead a nobler life" there is afforded a general platform upon which those of every shade of opinion can unite and proclaim this common message.

Again we quote Proverbs 14:12—"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." It has been said with considerable truth that the way to Hell is paved with good intentions.

There will be many in the Lake of Fire who commenced life with good intentions, honest resolutions and exalted ideals—those who were just in their dealings, fair in their transactions and charitable in all their ways; men who prided themselves in their integrity but who sought to justify themselves before God by their own righteousness; men who were moral, merciful, but who never saw themselves as guilty, lost, hell-deserving sinners needing a Saviour. Such is the way which "seemeth right." Such is the way that commends itself to the carnal mind and recommends itself to multitudes of deluded ones today. The Devil's Delusion is that we can be saved by our own works, and justified by our own deeds; whereas, God tells us in His Word—"By grace are ye saved through faith...not of works lest any man should boast." And again, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us."

A few years ago the writer became acquainted with one who was a lay preacher and an enthusiastic "Christian worker." For over seven years this friend had been engaged in public preaching and religious activities, but from certain expressions and phrases he used, the writer doubted whether this friend was a "born again" man. When we began to question him, it was found that he was very imperfectly acquainted with the Scriptures and had only the vaguest conception of Christ's Work for sinners. For a time we sought to present the way of salvation in a simple and impersonal manner and to encourage our friend to study the Word for himself, in the hope that if he were still unsaved God would be pleased to reveal the Saviour he needed.

One night to our joy, the one who had been preaching the Gospel (?) for several years, confessed that he had found Christ only the previous night. He acknowledged (to use his own words) that he had been presenting "the Christ ideal" but not the Christ of the Cross. The writer believes there are thousands like this preacher who, perhaps, have been brought up in Sunday

School, taught about the birth, life, and teachings of Jesus Christ, who believe in the historicity of His person, who spasmodically endeavour to practice His precepts, and who think that that is all that is necessary for their salvation. Frequently, this class when they reach manhood go out into the world, encounter the attacks of atheists and infidels and are told that such a person as Jesus of Nazareth never lived. But the impressions of early days cannot be easily erased, and they remain steadfast in their declaration that they "believe in Jesus Christ." Yet, when their faith is examined, only too often it is found that though they believe many things about Jesus Christ they do not really believe in Him. They believe with the head that such a person lived (and, because they believe this imagine that therefore they are saved), but they have never thrown down the weapons of their warfare against Him, yielded themselves to Him, nor truly believed with their heart in Him.

The bare acceptance of an orthodox doctrine about the person of Christ without the heart being won by Him and the life devoted to Him, is another phase of that way "which seemeth right unto a man" but the end thereof are "the ways of death." A mere intellectual assent to the reality of Christ's person, and which goes no further, is another phase of the way that seemeth right unto a man" but of which the end thereof "are the ways of death," or, in other words, is another aspect of the gospel of Satan.

And now, where do you stand? Are you in the way which "seemeth right," but which ends in death; or, are you in the Narrow Way which leadeth unto life? Have you truly forsaken the Broad Road which leadeth to death? Has the love of Christ created in your heart a hatred and horror of all that is displeasing to Him? Are you desirous that He should "reign over" you? (Luke 19:14). Are you relying wholly on His righteousness and blood for your acceptance with God?

Those who are trusting to an outward form of godliness, such as baptism or "confirmation!" those who are religious because it is considered a mark of respectability; those who attend some Church or Chapel because it is the fashion to do so; and, those who unite with some Denomination because they suppose that such a step will enable them to become Christians, are in the way which "ends in death"—death spiritual and eternal. However pure our motives, however noble our intentions, however well-meaning our purposes, however sincere our endeavours, God will not acknowledge us as His sons, until we accept His Son.

A yet more specious form of Satan's gospel is to move preachers to present the atoning sacrifice of Christ and then tell their hearers that all God requires from them is to "believe" in His Son. Thereby thousands of impenitent souls are deluded into thinking they have been saved. But Christ said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). To "repent" is to hate sin, to sorrow over it, to turn from it. It is the result of the Spirit's making the heart contrite before God. None except a broken heart can savingly believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Again, thousands are deceived into supposing that they have "accepted Christ" as their "personal Saviour," who have not first received Him as their LORD. The Son of God did not come here to save His people in their sin, but "from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). To be saved from sins, is to be saved from ignoring and despising the authority of God, it is to abandon the course of self-will and self-pleasing, it is to "forsake our way (Isaiah 55:7). It is to surrender to God's authority, to yield to His dominion, to give ourselves over to be ruled by Him. The one has never taken Christ's "yoke" upon him, who is not truly and diligently seeking to please Him in all the details of life, and yet supposes that he is resting on the Finished Work of Christ" is deluded by the Devil.

In the seventh chapter of Matthew there are two scriptures which give us approximate results of Christ's Gospel and Satan's counterfeit.

First, in verses 13-14, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Second; in verses 22-23, "Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied [preached] in Thy name? and in Thy name cast out demons, and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity"

Yes, my reader, it is possible to work in the name of Christ, and even to preach in His name, and though the world knows us, the Church knows us, yet to be unknown to the Lord! How necessary is it then to find out where we really are; to examine ourselves and see whether we be in the faith; to measure ourselves by the Word of God and see if we are being deceived by our subtle Enemy; to find out whether we are building our house upon the sand, or whether it is erected on the Rock which is Jesus Christ. May the

Holy Spirit search our hearts, break our wills, slay our enmity against God, work in us a deep and true repentance, and direct our gaze to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

Courtesy of Eternal Life Ministries.

*There are many things to hinder the grace of waiting.
There is a great deal of tedious time and many crosses to meet with,
Such as the scorn and reproach of this world, and many other trials.
God seems also to do nothing less than to perform His promise;
But let us comfort ourselves that He waits to do them good that wait
upon Him.*

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