

# ***THE PRESENT TRUTH***

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## **Belief and Unbelief--Confused Ideas of Salvation**

Said the apostle Paul, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? . . . And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:9-11). The absence of devotion, piety, and sanctification of the outer man comes through denying Jesus Christ our righteousness. The love of God needs to be constantly cultivated. . . .

While one class pervert the doctrine of justification by faith and neglect to comply with the conditions laid down in the Word of God--"If ye love Me, keep My commandments"-- there is fully as great an error on the part of those who claim to believe and obey the commandments of God but who place themselves in opposition to the precious rays of light--new to them--reflected from the cross of Calvary. The first class do not see the wondrous things in the law of God for all who are doers of His Word. The others cavil over trivialities and neglect the weightier matters, mercy and the love of God.

Many have lost very much in that they have not opened the eyes of their understanding to discern the wondrous things in the law of God. On the one hand, religionists generally have divorced the law and the gospel, while we have, on the other hand, almost done the same from another standpoint. We have not held up before the people the righteousness of Christ and the full significance of His great plan of redemption. We have left out Christ and His matchless love, brought in theories and reasonings, and preached argumentative discourses.

Unconverted men have stood in the pulpits sermonizing. Their own hearts have never experienced, through a living, clinging, trusting faith, the sweet evidence of the forgiveness of their sins. How, then, can they preach the love, the sympathy, the forgiveness of God for all sins? How can they say, "Look and live"? Looking at the cross of Calvary, you will have a desire to bear the cross. A world's Redeemer hung upon the cross of Calvary. Behold the Saviour of the world, in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Can any look and behold the sacrifice of God's dear Son, and their hearts not be melted and broken, ready to surrender to God heart and soul?

Let this point be fully settled in every mind: If we accept Christ as a Redeemer, we must accept Him as a Ruler. We cannot have the assurance and perfect confiding trust in Christ as our Saviour until we acknowledge Him as our King and are obedient to His commandments. Thus we evidence our allegiance to God. We have then the genuine ring in our faith, for it is a working faith. It works by love. Speak it from your heart: "Lord, I believe Thou hast died to redeem my soul. If Thou hast placed such a value upon the soul as to give Thy life for mine, I will respond. I give my life and all its possibilities, in all my weakness, into Thy keeping."

The will must be brought into complete harmony with the will of God. When this is done, no ray of light that shines into the heart and chambers of the mind will be resisted. The soul will not be barricaded with prejudice, calling light darkness and darkness light. The light from heaven is welcomed, as light filling all the chambers of the soul. This is making melody to God.

How much do we believe from the heart? Draw nigh to God, and God will draw nigh to you. This means to be much with the Lord in prayer. When those who have educated themselves in skepticism and have cherished unbelief, weaving questioning doubts into their experience, are under conviction of the Spirit of God, they see it to be their personal duty to confess their unbelief. They open their hearts to accept the light sent them and throw themselves by faith over the line from sin to righteousness, from doubt to faith. They consecrate themselves unreservedly to God, to follow His light in the place of the sparks of their own kindling. As they maintain their consecration, they will see increased light and the light will continue to grow brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

The unbelief which is cherished in the soul has a bewitching power. The seeds of doubt that they have been sowing will produce their harvest but they must continue to dig up every root of unbelief. When these poisonous plants are pulled up, they cease to grow for want of nourishment in word and action. The soul must have the precious plants of faith and love put in the soil of the heart and enthroned there.

Can we not understand that the most costly thing in the world is sin? It is at the expense of purity of conscience, at the cost of losing the favor of God and separating the soul from Him, and at last losing heaven. The sin of grieving the Holy Spirit of God and walking contrary to Him has cost many a one the loss of his soul.

Who can measure the responsibilities of the influence of every human agent whom our Redeemer has purchased at the sacrifice of His own life? What a scene will be presented when the judgment shall sit and the books shall be opened to testify the salvation or the loss

of all souls! It will require the unerring decision of One who has lived in humanity, loved humanity, given His life for humanity, to make the final appropriation of the rewards to the loyal righteous, and the punishment of the disobedient, the disloyal, and unrighteous. The Son of God is entrusted with the complete measurement of every individual's action and responsibility. To those who have been partakers of other men's sins and have acted against God's decision, it will be a most awfully solemn scene. {Faith and Works Pg 15-18}

Jesus looked upon the world in its fallen state with infinite pity. He took humanity upon himself that he might touch and elevate humanity. He came to seek and to save that which was lost. He reached to the very depth of human misery and woe, to take man as he found him, a being tainted with corruption, degraded with vice, depraved by sin, and united with Satan in apostasy, and elevate him to a seat upon his throne. But it was written of him that "he shall not fail nor be discouraged," [ISA. 42:4.] and he went forth in the path of self-denial and self-sacrifice, giving us an example that we should follow in his steps. We should work as did Jesus, departing from our own pleasure, turning away from Satan's bribes, despising ease, and abhorring selfishness, that we may seek and save that which is lost, bringing souls from darkness into light, into the sunshine of God's love. We have been commissioned to go forth and preach the gospel to every creature. We are to bring to the lost the tidings that Christ can forgive sin, can renew the nature, can clothe the soul in the garments of his righteousness, bring the sinner to his right mind, and teach him and fit him up to be a laborer together with God.

The converted soul lives in Christ. His darkness passes away, and a new and heavenly light shines into his soul. "He that winneth souls is wise." [PROV. 11:30.] "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever." [DAN. 12:3.] What is done through the co-operation of men with God is a work that shall never perish, but endure through the eternal ages. He that makes God his wisdom, that grows up into the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus, will stand before kings, before the so-called great men of the world, and show forth the praises of Him who hath called him out of darkness into his marvelous light. Science and literature cannot bring into the darkened mind of men the light which the glorious gospel of the Son of God can bring. The Son of God alone can do the great work of illuminating the soul. No wonder Paul exclaims, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." [ROM. 1: 16.] The gospel of Christ becomes personality in those who believe, and makes them living epistles, known and read of all men. In this way the leaven of godliness passes into the multitude. The heavenly intelligences are able to discern the true elements of greatness in character; for only goodness is esteemed as efficiency with God. {Review and Herald, Dec. 15, 1891 }

Satan was permitted to tempt the too confident Peter, as he had been permitted to tempt Job; but when that work was done, he had to retire. Had Satan been suffered to have his way, there would have been no hope for Peter. He would have made complete shipwreck of faith. But the enemy dare not go one hair's-breadth beyond his appointed sphere. There is no power in the whole satanic force that can disable the soul that trusts, in simple confidence, in the wisdom that comes from God. {Youth Instructor, December 15, 1898 }

Each one has his own battles to fight, his own Christian experience to gain, independent in some respects from any other soul; and God has lessons for each to gain for himself that no other one can gain for him. . . . Our heavenly Father measures and weighs every trial before He permits it to come upon the believer. He considers the circumstances and the strength of the one who is to stand under the proving and test of God, and He never permits the temptations to be greater than the capacity of resistance. If the soul is overborne, the person overpowered, this can never be charged to God, as failing to give strength in grace, but the one tempted was not vigilant and prayerful and did not appropriate by faith the provisions God had abundantly in store for him. Christ never failed a believer in his hour of combat. The believer must claim the promise and meet the foe in the name of the Lord, and he will not know anything like failure. {2 Mind Character and Personality Pg.473—Our High Calling Pg.323 }

Without the Spirit of God a knowledge of His word is of no avail. The theory of truth, unaccompanied by the Holy Spirit, cannot quicken the soul or sanctify the heart. One may be familiar with the commands and promises of the Bible; but unless the Spirit of God sets the truth home, the character will not be transformed. Without the enlightenment of the Spirit, men will not be able to distinguish truth from error, and they will fall under the masterful temptations of Satan. {Christ Object Lesson, Pg.408 }

The class represented by the foolish virgins are not hypocrites. They have a regard for the truth, they have advocated the truth, they are attracted to those who believe the truth; but they have not yielded themselves to the Holy Spirit's working. They have not fallen upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and permitted their old nature to be broken up. This class are represented also by the stony-ground hearers. They receive the word with readiness, but they fail of assimilating its principles. Its influence is not abiding. The Spirit works upon man's heart, according to his desire and consent implanting in him a new nature; but the class represented by the foolish virgins have been content with a superficial work. They do not know God. They have not studied His character; they have not held communion with Him; therefore they do not know how to trust, how to look and live. Their service to God degenerates into a form. {Ibid 408 }

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