

STRAIGHTWAY

"And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him" [Mark 1:18].

CHRISTIAN PURITIES FELLOWSHIP

The Witness Outreach

Foundations Bible College

P.O. Box 1166

Dunn, NC 28335

VOLUME 24

JUNE 1996

NUMBER 5

A PLEA FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT

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It appears from a more in-depth study of church history that every generation has entered into heresy at the very point that it overemphasized one side of a biblical paradox to the neglect of the other side. I know of no false teaching that did not arise from the lack of balance in paradoxes, dichotomies, and hypostatic unions. Do not allow these theological terms to hinder you from reading the rest of this article. Man is at least a dichotomy: body and soul; Jesus was a hypostatic union of God and man; and, Jesus taught many paradoxes, "if you save your life, you will lose it; if you lose your life for my name's sake, you will save it."

The Problem of the Paradox

I am well aware of the fact that the Greek philosophers and the modern neo-orthodox theologians capitalized on the paradox for their own destruction, doctrinally, before God and the Holy Scriptures. Their failure was to contemplate the paradox in the only

state natural man can speak; the state of immanence. When things are as they are in a human state of philosophical immanence, the paradox could only be a lie, a contradiction.

However, as Christians, we believe in both immanence and transcendence: God is both immanent and transcendent; the Holy Scriptures is God's revelation through immanence and transcendence. In the reasonings of man, a paradox is a contradiction; in the revealed Word of God, a paradox is an accountability to two seemingly opposite identities which are indeed held in harmony in one entity.

The Power of the Paradox

This problem has appeared all the way down through church history. The Arian and Athanasian confrontation, identified with the Nicene Councils (325 A.D., etc.), was greatly concerned with the hypostatic union of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is an old story now: whether Jesus Christ was of "like" substance with the Father, or of

“one” substance with the Father. This entire distinction was over one “iota” in the Greek language; the difference between **homoi** and **homo** (“like” versus “one”). We are indeed grateful that the final decision of the Council, dogmatically asserted that Jesus was of “one” substance with God the Father. The past theologian thought of this and used the word “hypostatic” for the full identity with Jesus as very God and Perfect Man.

In earlier American Church History, the unitarians and the universalists brought heresy when they overemphasized the Fatherhood of God to the neglect of the deity of the Lord Jesus in relation to the redemption and Brotherhood of Christians. They desired the truth of the Holy Spirit from both the Father and Son. Our trinitarian monotheism is a paradox (Augustine) in order to convey the proper balance of “three Persons in One Substance” (three **persona** in one **substantia**).

Absolutes and Paradoxes

The Bible reveals absolutes to reveal absolute truth; the Bible, sometimes, uses common sense to reveal common sense truth (“Go to

the ant thou sluggard, and learn his ways...”)). But the Bible also has the urgency and power to use the paradox, the dichotomy, or the hypostatic union to reveal truth that is both infinite and finite, heaven and earth, immanent and transcendent in its accountabilities to the truth. They are not contradictions; the paradox is true when God reveals it. The paradox is needed for some truths.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon, in his word of **Faith and Regeneration** said:

Brethren, be willing to see both sides of the shield of truth. Rise above the babyhood which cannot believe two doctrines until it sees the connecting link. Have you not two eyes, man? Must you needs put one of them out in order to see clearly?

Why These Problems?

We have said these things in this article to make a plea for the Holy Spirit in our ministries. As a separatist, fundamentalist, I have noticed that too many of us are simply afraid or reluctant to really set forth the truth of the Holy Spirit, the doctrine of Pneumatology. The Charismatic intimidates us; the fear of mysticism hinders us; the fear of wildfire withdraws us; the lack of consecration leaves us without the power of the Holy Spirit; the Gifts of the Spirit alarms us; and, we do not see the biblical distinction between being **born** of the Holy Spirit and being **filled** with the Holy Spirit. Why are we like this brethren? No, I am not a neo-pentecostalist or a Charismatic; I have probably more against them than any other fundamentalist. Although I

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Published 10 months of the year

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Foundations Bible College
P.O. Box 1166
Dunn, NC 28335

Annual Subscription

USA - \$4.00

Foreign - \$5.00

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was born into pentecostalism; but I was born again out of it.

In our own time, the neo-evangelicals have used "Accommodation" as the basic principle underlying all of God's revelation to man. This means that God speaks to us in a form that is suited to the capacity of the hearer, like a father addressing a small child or a teacher with a young pupil. In this, "God chooses to submit his truth to the limiting power of being reduced to a humanly comprehensible level rather than preserve it pure in heaven" (F.L. Battle, "God was Accommodating Himself to Human Capacity"; **New Dictionary of Theology**; Intervarsity Press; Downers Grove, Illinois, p. 3). The real problem here is not being able to understand God's use of the true paradox; when God makes a genuine translation of heavenly truth into earthly truth, He has used a paradox.

Reason, Faith, and the Paradox

Reason is a form of knowledge, a valid form of knowledge, "Through faith we understand..." (Hebrews 11:3a). God's use of the paradox is also valid, and is the only way we know of for God to bring together higher transcendent truth to immanent truth.

The Devil, through the erroneous teachings of the Holy Spirit, has used the Charismatics to set forth an emphasis on the Holy Spirit that must cause fundamentalists to wake up and realize how important is the Holy Spirit for the End Time. It must be a needed truth; the biblical teachings on the Holy Spirit. We, as individuals, and as a church, are in urgent need of the power of the Holy Spirit in the matter of evangelism, and the need of

the infillings of the Holy Spirit, and desperately so, for consecration and power. It takes mighty men of God for these mighty days.

Evangelistic methods have been taught in full course since the days of Dwight L. Moody; and the church methods for revival and growth has been taught with equal course since the days of Charles G. Finney. In the case of Moody's day, R.A. Torrey gave a great emphasis upon the need of the Holy Spirit in the Northfield Conferences. Probably the methods of church revival as espoused by Finney were of less effect because of some of his theology; but where are we now in evangelism and revivalism? We are in need of the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of humble vessels. Without this truth a fundamentalist is nothing!

Our Plea in the Paradox

There are many passages in the Bible revealing our need of the Holy Spirit. Jesus, Himself, during Passion Week, gave three workings of the Holy Spirit for the sinner, and three for the believer. In the former, the sinner needs the Holy Spirit that He might reprove (convict) the "world" of sin, righteousness, and judgment. This trilogy was needed so that the sinner might have sin revealed, at the root, as the sin of unbelief in Jesus; righteousness because the sinner needed the righteousness of Christ which he could receive because Jesus was returning to heaven from the Sacrifice for sin; and, of judgment because Satan had now already been judged by the death of Jesus. Brethren, are these things happening, in the power of the Holy Spirit to our converts?

For the Christian believer, the

Holy Spirit would lead and guide us into all the truth by access to the Bible; through the Holy Scriptures the Holy Spirit would reveal prophecy; and the Holy Spirit came to glorify the Lord Jesus in our lives. Brethren, is this happening to you and me as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ?

An Answer for Us With the Charismatic

Jesus gave us an answer for the days of the Charismatics. This is revealed to his “sons.” “If a son shall ask bread,..a fish,..or an egg, we are assured our Father would not give us a stone,..a serpent,..or a scorpion, instead. It is evident that some are indeed getting stones, serpents, and scorpions in our time. Jesus prophesied that such would happen. The wonderful thing about this passage, Jesus was speaking of these requests in the light of our need of the Holy Spirit: “how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” (Luke 11:11-13). The Holy Spirit is needed in our feeding upon the Bread of Life; the Holy Spirit is needed in the fishing for souls; and, the Holy Spirit in the birth of souls, the eggs. The egg is a type of the New Birth; the egg brings the chicken. Brethren, do you believe that we have given enough emphasis upon the Holy Spirit in our lives with the bread, the fish, and the egg?

Born and Filled With the Spirit

It is unfortunate that so many Christians misunderstand the doctrine and the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit did not come to magnify Himself, but rather the Lord Jesus. The Holy Spirit came to give us natural and spiritual life: in the

former, He commences with our very conception to natural life; in the latter, He also commences our New Birth into spiritual life. In Genesis, chapter one, He first moves upon the natural chaotic waters; in Genesis, chapter two, the Holy Spirit is seen in God’s spiritual breathing into the dust of the ground for us to become a living soul. We are all born of the Holy Spirit, both naturally and spiritually, both physically and spiritually.

But we must be baptized in the Holy Spirit in regeneration. We are also to be filled, after life is given, with the Holy Spirit; there are to be many infillings, anointings, by many sheddings forth of the power of the Holy Spirit. There is one New Birth; there are many outpourings of the Holy Spirit upon our lives. We must not be afraid of these truths; we must pray for the work of the Holy Spirit in our Christian lives.

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;.. (Ephesians 5:18), was said to Christians.

Brethren, we must see our daily need of the power of the Holy Spirit in our Christian lives, our Christian ministries, our Christian homes, and our Christian Churches. Without God’s power we only labor with the institutional machinery of a program of administration. The institution is not worth giving our lives for it; the honoring and proclaiming our Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, is worth it.

Two Major Questions

There are several questions which have been asked me across my years. They are: what is a Christian?; and

what is a spiritual Christian? In the former, a Christian is one who has a right relationship with Jesus Christ; in the latter, one who also has a right relationship with the Holy Spirit. Both of these bring about a spiritual Christian. A third double-question is implied: how may I be filled with the Holy Spirit and be a spiritual Christian? The answer: give honor to and exalt the name of the Lord Jesus, and the Holy Spirit will fill and anoint the spiritual life. This, in turn, brings the true spirituality needed for a clean and consistent Christian life. We add not other human or legal way in which this wonder may attend our Christian life.

Revivalism and Evangelism

It is to be feared, in our time, that we are practicing the methodology of evangelism as the first priority of the church. We believe the New Testament teaches us that revivalism is the first necessity for evangelism. We are over-emphasizing the evangelist, and under-estimating the work of the Holy Spirit. The church needs Spirit-filled Christians to be evangelists. It is not to be only understood how Moody and Finney did it; the main burden is the need of the Holy Spirit. In reality, God is the evangelist, the soul-winner and the soul-saver; we are His spiritual instruments only used in a simple and humble manner. The definition of Christianity has completely changed in the twentieth century in most places of the world. There remains a need for a spiritual reformation, a spiritual renaissance, a spiritual revolution, if you please, for us to return to the New Testament definitive doctrine of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus. Well, the best word is

“revival;” but we are using the word “awakening.” True evangelism grows out of revivalism; and revivalism is the result of the work of the Gospel in repentance, restitution, and restoration to our “first love” for Christ. In revivalism, it is the Christian getting right, back in fellowship and communion with Christ and another Christian; in evangelism it is a sinner getting right with Christ and joining the communion of the saints. We are not seeing this in the world, dear brethren. Please note where such a biblical and spiritual movement of God is being made manifest in our time. In the Foundations Ministries we have been seeking God for this since 1983 while doing many other good things for the glory of Christ. We have not seen a revival, yet, we see some souls saved, we believe. Yet, souls saved without the Holy Spirit brings souls without the infillings of the Holy Spirit into our lives, if they are saved at all.

Ecclesiastical and Personal Separation

It is becoming clearer and clearer that ecclesiastical separation is getting further away from personal separation. We believe that consistent ecclesiastical separation comes as a result of personal separation. One of the reasons why some fundamentalists have changed in their separatist’s position with personalities and platforms formerly opposed, lies within the fact that their personal separation unto the Lord Jesus had never been resolved in their hearts, or it has been broken a long time. Biblical separation is first rooted in a separation **unto** the Lord Jesus, and as a result of this there is a separation

from the apostate and apostasy. Also, **unto** Christ, **against** the apostasy, must both be held true **throughout** the lifetime of the individual. Many, in this last category are fleeing the battlefield because of battle fatigue, expediency, and the lack of a sanctified spirit on the battlefield. There seems to be as great a hatred, on some parts of the battlefield, against the brethren as there is for the apostates.

No doubt it is possible to give the appearance of separation with the ecclesiastical apostasy while living without a personal separation unto the glory of the Lord Jesus. The Holy Spirit has a good spirit; He desires to empower and touch our spirit with our brethren and others seeking Christ. I have endeavored to never believe or

pursue a **rumor**; but in all dealings with the brethren I have desired to speak and deal with them directly (Matthew 18:15-22), in the priority of saving a friend in his fellowship. But these are hard days, and everyone of us need the Holy Spirit to give us wisdom and discernment with each other. It definitely takes character to see character in another; character must not be estimated by the perfection of the individual but by Truth of the Spirit in the spirit of the truth in their lives.

O that God would reveal to us both the biblical teachings of the Holy Spirit and our personal need of the Holy Spirit in our lives. There must be something to this truth because there are so many counterfeits claiming the Holy Spirit in our time.

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A TREATISE ON REVIVAL (PART ONE)

Former days in Church History brought forth weightier writings than we are reading from the pens of professing scholars today. The typical titles evident in our times are “How To Be A Christian Without Really Trying”; “Simple Ways To Study Greek”; “Planting A Church In Six Easy Steps”; and the frolicsome list continues. But in the days surrounding our country’s two Awakenings both the preaching and the writing of its leaders were selectively marked by the word “treatise.” Noah Webster, Father of American Education and part of the Second Great Awakening, gives the definition of “treatise” in his first dictionary (1828) as “a tract; a written composition on a particular subject, in which the principles of it are discussed or explained. A treatise is of an indefinite length; but it implies more form and method than an essay, and less fullness or copiousness than a system.” These earlier writers would honorably “treat” a subject matter at hand.

One such “treatise” that was marked in the providence of God was penned by the eminent pastor Jonathan Edwards, the title being “A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections.” It was written in 1743, in the middle of the First Great Awakening (1740-45). This Treatise presented a biblical appraisal of the revivals which were sweeping the New England colonies at that time. One of Mr. Edwards’ contemporaries, and sympathizer of the Great Awakening, stated

**In its style it is the least correct
of any of the works of Mr.**

Edwards, published in his life-time; but, as a work exhibiting genuine Christianity in distinction from all its counterfeits, it possesses such singular excellence, that were the books on earth destined to be a destruction so nearly universal, that only one beside the Bible could be saved; the church of Christ, if aiming to preserve the volume of the greatest value to man, that which would best unfold to a bereaved posterity the real nature of true religion, would unquestionably select for preservation, the ‘Treatise on the Affections.’

This treatise was immediately republished in England and Scotland during the Great Evangelical Revival there and greatly assisted in those countries the understanding of the workings of God in revival as well as here in America.

What was the purpose for such a “treatise” from this Northampton pastor? Jonathan Edwards has discovered early that there was a radical difficulty attending not only every revival of religion, but also in every instance of supposed conversion. This difficulty arose from erroneous conceptions generally accepted concerning: “What is the nature of true religion?” “What are the distinguishing marks of that holiness, which is acceptable in the sight of God?” Edwards had observed during these years that “much false religion prevails during a powerful revival of

true religion, and that at such a time, multitudes of hypocrites might spring up among real Christians.” He saw clearly the mixture of counterfeit religion with the true which brought the Devil the greatest advantage against the kingdom of Christ. He stated,

By this he hurt the cause of Christianity, in and after the apostolic age, much more, than by all the persecutions of both Jews and heathens. By this he prevailed against the Reformation, to put a stop to its progress, more than by all the bloody persecutions of the church of Rome. By this he prevailed against the revivals of religion, that have occurred since the Reformation. By this he prevailed against New England, to quench the love of her espousals, about a hundred years ago. And I think I have had opportunity enough to see plainly, that by this the devil has prevailed against the late great revival of religion in New England, so happy and promising it its beginning. I have seen the devil prevail in this way, against two great revivings of religion in this country. By perverting us from the simplicity that is in Christ, he that suddenly prevailed to deprive us of that fair prospect we had a little while ago, of a kind of paradisiac state of the church of God in New England.

Mr. Edwards fully believed that men had to learn to distinguish accurately between true and false

religion **WITHIN** Christianity and between the fine line of true and false revival. It was to this desired end that Mr. Edwards prepared and published his “Treatise on Religious Affections.” The great design of this “treatise” was to show what was true religion, and what are its distinguishing marks and evidences. It was through this worthy contribution that assistance was given to professing Christians to truly see, if he was honest and faithful with himself, to decide whether he was, or was not, a real Christian. A minister in the Connecticut River Valley stated,

Every minister should take effectual care that it is well dispersed among the people of his own charge (The Treatise), and that none of them is admitted to a profession of religion, until, after a thorough study of this treatise, he can satisfy both himself and his spiritual guide, not only that he does not rely upon the mere NEGATIVE SIGNS of holiness, but that he finds within himself those distinguishing marks and evidences of its POSITIVE existence, which the Divine Author of holiness has pronounced sure and unerring...”

Mr. Edwards wrote the Treatise as a check during what he called “a revival of religion.” The minister who used the principles as he ought would find it like a fan in his hand, winnowing the chaff from the wheat. For Mr. Edwards would further state:

Every revival of religion will open a great and effectual door, through which the

enemies as well as the friends of God, will gain an admission into the house of God. And when they are thus admitted, and the ardour of felling has once subsided, the minister will generally find not only that he has wounded Christ in the house of his friends, but that he has destroyed his own peace, and that of his church, and prepared the way for his own speedy separation from his people.

It was to this end that he wrote the Treatise: to aid the leadership in biblically judging the fruit and professing offspring of revivals.

It is amazing to observe how close the Devil is on the heels of God when workings of revival come from heaven to the Lord's people! It should be the earnest, daily prayer of the Fundamentalists for God to bring a mighty, biblical revival to our families and churches; it truly is the antidote for many of our growing problems and failures! But if and when God honors us with such a provision in His Son's atonement we must simultaneously be on guard for the trippings and falsities of the Devil worming their way in to pervert, distort, and weaken, and undermine Truth and its desired pre-eminence. Some men may preach it in such a way that it will bring confusion to the camp of God and yet who would question the preaching for revival. Yes, amidst our hunger and hope for an awakening among God's OWN people we likewise pray for the "treatise" to be on guard so that the genuine fire from the Lord would be evident and the "strange fire" would be put out.

A number of years ago, a conference superintendent in a denomination was speaking to me of why he did certain things in services. In my questioning him about such matters he responded, "I would rather have a little wild fire than no fire at all." My nineteen year old heart at that time made no response, but I have come to realize that a little wild fire not extinguished can bring more deceptive damage to a congregation than a full-blown wild fire. Yes, we are always in need of God's men with a "Treatise" to protect the genuine from the false. Otherwise, the good may end up in error.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dr. H.T. Spence
Vice President,
Christian Purities Fellowship

Announcement

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duly appointed
Chaplain
of the
Foundations
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begins July 1, 1996.*

Rev. Gary L. Dean

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