

STRAIGHTWAY

“And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him” Mark 1:18.

CHRISTIAN PURITIES FELLOWSHIP

The Witness Outreach of
Foundations Bible College
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THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY CHRISTIAN PURITIES FELLOWSHIP “STRAIGHTWAY” NEWSLETTER

1973 – 2003

Dr. H. T. Spence

Thirty years ago, an unpretentious meeting took place on the outskirts of Dunn, North Carolina, in the home of Dr. O. Talmadge Spence. This meeting proved to have far-reaching importance for Dr. Spence, his family, and a remnant of individuals. The birth of the “Christian Purities Fellowship” was Dr. Spence’s last major attempt to call his fallen, spiritual-mother denomination back to her legacy of the Fundamentals and separatist living.

Dr. Spence’s ministry commenced in 1952, in the Pentecostal denomination in which he was born. Over the succeeding years, the Lord brought him to

prominence within this ecclesiastical system. He became a noted pastor, literary and music author, Bible conference speaker, teacher, assistant and professor in its oldest theological seminary, and founder and president of a college within the denominational system. Nevertheless, continued change at the conference and local church levels of leadership caused deepening grief to his soul.

The late 1960s and early 1970s witnessed the inroads of a “Neo” Christianity that eventually destroyed the Pentecostal system of the 20th century. During these years Dr. Spence was a puritan within this system,

Special Edition

endeavoring to bring the system back to its historical roots of holiness and the separatist message, with a greater emphasis upon godly living.

The Neo Christianity Movement Within:

One of the great influential changes taking place in the Pentecostal churches during the mid-decades of the 20th century was the emergence of Oral Roberts, who was a member of the Pentecostal Holiness Church denomination. My grandfather, Hubert T. Spence, was the Bishop of the denomination at that time. He was a strong defender for the supreme authority of the Word of God, believing in its complete revelation from God. When Mr. Roberts came into prominence, he declared that the power of God was in his right hand and that God was personally giving him extant revelations and voices. Bishop Hubert T. Spence took a strong stand against Mr. Roberts during those years of his "Healing Waters" ministry. Mr. Roberts'

teachings were clearly unbiblical and were birthing a "Neo" movement that became known as "Neo-Pentecostalism." Because the general board of the denomination refused to do anything about Mr. Roberts and his heretical teachings, Bishop Hubert T. Spence resigned from his position. Throughout his remaining years (passing away in 1969), he stood firm against the heresy and apostasy of Mr. Roberts and the "Neo" movement which later spawned the Charismatic movement.

As the 1960s unfolded great turbulence in our country (through the powers of rock-'n'-roll music, drugs, and the hippie movement), the Neo-Evangelical movement within the denominational systems of America began to lay aside the "old" and invite the "new" into its inner sanctuary of worship. Although both Neo-Evangelicalism and Neo-Pentecostalism were born in 1948 (along with the World Council of Churches), during the 1960s they become bedfellows within all the Pentecostal churches. One example of this strange relationship was Dr. Billy Graham's invitation to Oral Roberts to attend the World Evangelism meeting in Switzerland, and Oral Roberts' invitation to Billy Graham to be the dedicatory speaker for the newly built Oral Roberts University.

These two movements in return prepared the Pentecostal denominations to open their doors to contemporary Christian music. The leading influences of CCM in

STRAIGHTWAY

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**CPF Members Excluded*

Pentecostalism included Ralph Carmichael, the increasingly popular Bill Gaither, Kirk Kaiser, the Oak Ridge Boys, Jake Hess and the Imperials, the Singing Rambos, and the deceptive sway of Southern Gospel and Convention music. Neo-Evangelicalism and Neo-Pentecostalism, along with the contemporary music trends, profoundly began affecting the dress standards of these denominations that once held to personal separation as well as ecclesiastical separation. Places that were once forbidden for attendance were being tolerated and finally accepted as proper. Means to manipulate a crowd to respond became the greater burden in sermon preparation rather than the truth of doctrine and holy living. Changes and their consequences rapidly increased in just a few short years. Emerging from this unalterable decline, a number of puritans stepped forward to voice their concern; only a few took their burden to the pulpit.

The Charismatic Movement

The year of 1967 birthed from the Neo-Pentecostal movement a new strain of spiritual virus: the Charismatic movement. This "Neo" movement was originally found *outside* the Pentecostal denominational context. The Charismatic movement actually began in Lutheran, Episcopal, and Methodist denominations through the influence of men such as Oral Roberts. Around this time, there appeared within the liberal Protestant context some of the earlier signs of

"tongues" and operating "gifts." The emphasis was upon the "Spirit" and the "Charismata," or the "gifts" of the Spirit operating during the church services or small prayer gatherings. This was in response to the formal churches that had gone so long in their apostate coldness of religion and "worship." Passivity was the congregation's place amidst a liturgy of cold sermons read word for word from books. The religious climate was right for such a birth. This new Charismatic movement began to undermine doctrine, truth, absolutes, holiness, and godly living. It emphasized a "spirit" kept unencumbered by rigid rules and "doctrine." Feelings and emotions were to be enjoyed without any restriction of dogma or principles of Scripture.

The Charismatic explosion came to international notoriety when this diabolical wind swept through the doors of the Roman Catholic Church. In 1962, the Pope at Vatican II predicted that there would be a fresh move of the Spirit of God, the "winds of Pentecost," that would open the doors of the Roman Catholic Church and bring in fresh air. The changes that came to the Roman Catholic Church through Vatican II greatly aided in the growth and popular acceptance of the Roman Catholic Church by the end of the twentieth century.

Between 1968 and 1972, this Pentecostal wind swept across the Roman Catholic Church, Christianity's oldest apostasy. It was this movement within the Roman Catholic Church that popularized the term

Charismatic. By 1972, major Charismatic meetings began to be held at Notre Dame with tens of thousands of priests and nuns claiming a new spirit. They called this experience a *renewal* rather than a *baptism*, because they believed the Holy Spirit first came to a Catholic believer at his Confirmation at the age of twelve. This popular new experience, with the accompaniment of speaking in tongues, was viewed as a *renewal* of their confirmation.

Because of this movement within the Roman Catholic Church, by 1972 most Pentecostal denominations were accepting the Roman Catholics as bona fide “Christians.” The historical view of Romanism by all Pentecostal denominations heretofore designated it as the Harlot of Revelation 17. However, prominent Pentecostal leaders, such as Dr. Vincent Synan, began calling for “Charismatic bridges” to be built back to Rome. This diabolical “spirit” was perceived as a unifying principle that would unite divided brethren. Health and wealth began to be promoted as signs of God’s favor; sickness and poverty were noted as signs of God’s disfavor.

By 1973, it was merely a matter of time before the carnal, worldly, Charismatic movement would sweep the entire Evangelical spectrum and, hand-in-hand with Neo-Evangelicalism, bring about the demise of any God-centered denomination.

The Christian Purities Fellowship

Somewhat like a Methodist society that is longing for spirituality, purity,

biblical revival, and deeper interest in communion with God *within* the church, the Christian Purities Fellowship was born as a puritan movement. It was initially the hope that preaching and fellowship rallies would be held in local churches to stir the hearts of the people to Christian purity. Amidst its small beginning, the CPF received strong opposition from the conference level leadership. Harsh attacks from the conference leadership served only to reveal the diseased heart of the system. As has been well documented in history, apostasy has no antidote—its only remedy is judgment.

By 1974, it became evident that the *puritan* Dr. O. Talmadge Spence had to become a separatist, a *pilgrim*. Within this exodus from a fallen denominational system, Foundations Bible College and Church were birthed on June 2, 1974. Although an independent, non-denominational, Fundamentalist-separatist ministry was formed, the CPF remained an independent ministry. It continued to be a help to those who were still struggling as puritans within the system. However, the following year its board voted unanimously to come under the canopy of the Foundations Ministries. Although its governing body is Foundations Bible College, it still has a membership of individuals throughout the world who are found in both the *puritan* and *pilgrim* contexts.

Conclusion

A Sovereign God ordains into what home we are born, whether it

be, for example, an atheist's home, a drunkard's home, a Jehovah's Witness home, a Roman Catholic home, a Baptist home, or a Southern Baptist home. My father and I were appointed by Providence to be born in Pentecostal homes. Although my father was *never* a Charismatic, he was in a Pentecostal system, endeavoring as a puritan to call this spiritual mother back to days of purer concepts of truth in doctrine and living. However, this Pentecostal system was on a collision course with the last days' "new time" religion. It has now been proved that this uniting element is bringing Protestantism back to Rome and becoming the spirit for the global ecumenical movement.

When my father and I made this exodus in 1974, he was 48 years old and I was 26. Having been ordained to the ministry at the tender age of 19, I had pastored a small church for a summer during school terms and pastored for two years in the early 1970s. I also taught for three years in the Pentecostal Bible college my father started. However, from the early 1970s, my father knew that our days were numbered in this system in light of the powers taking over the leadership and conferences of the denomination. One must understand that the "manifestations" of the gifts of the Spirit were not the emphasis of the historic Pentecostals. The legacy of the historic Pentecostalist sought the spiritual emphases of biblical holiness, godly standards, and deeper preaching that called men and women to spirituality in days when the church was being

controlled by carnality and worldliness. To them, the power of the Spirit was to be manifested moment by moment in the living of life.

When spirituality dies within a system, the leaders and people are automatically drawn to an outward "form of godliness." Moreover, there is no greater outward form of "spiritualities" displayed than that of Neo-Pentecostalism and Charismaticism. They place the greater emphasis upon the fleshly manifestations and their subjective visions, dreams, and voices which compete with the *written* Word of God. They live from one week to the next to see these manifestations; they believe worship is not true worship unless these elements are present. Yet all kinds of sexual lusts and sins dominate the movement; their music is "rock," catering to the flesh. It truly is the end time "Corinthian Catastrophe" where the flesh dominates the "spiritualities."

God called my father through Isaiah 54 and other passages to begin the Foundations Ministries in the summer of 1974. To this day, we have never regretted the exodus from the system. My dear father desired a school for the Body of Christ without any label or tag other than a Fundamentalist-separatist school. He wanted it to be a laboratory of the exploration of Truth in an environment of spirituality—a place where anything that was true could be said without the fear of condemnation from a church board or denominational hierarchy.

Likewise, the Christian Purities Fellowship has had an honorable purpose for these last days, before the secret coming of the Lord. On July 14, 1973, in its first meeting in my father's living room with twenty individuals present, my father presented the "CPF Pledge," which stands to this very day.

The Christian Purities Fellowship is committed to this singular principle to preach and teach, to declare and defend the historic and basic tenets of

fundamental Christianity in a pertinent context of Christian purities as set forth in the biblical remedy of the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is our object to pursue this principle through our daily witness of soul-winning and soul-building, performing a mission with methods and means that are holy and clean, amidst the apostasy of the last days before the return of our Lord.

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THE FUNDAMENTALIST AND THE HOLINESS OF GOD

O. TALMADGE SPENCE

"One of the warnings which must be sounded concerns the extremes to which some theological systems have taken the teaching of sanctification. Each World Congress of Fundamentalists has included resolutions against the errors of hyper-Calvinism, hyper-Arminianism, and other hyper-systems. These resolutions are a safekeeping for many doctrines, providing a balance against such extremes. These extremes include *antinomianism* at one end of the pendulum and *legalism* at the other end. We must guard against such extremes which produce errors stating that God is the author of sin, condoning sin in our lives, as well as claims toward human, sinless perfection. Somewhere in all of this cautiousness lies the distinctive principle that should be the basis of the interpretation of sanctification in the life of a Christian governed by the grace of God. Sin is always possible; but sin is never a necessity. All of our individual distinctives must fall within these boundaries, or else we shall defeat the hope of a holy life at all in Christ Jesus."

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The Fellowship Organization and Purpose

(Taken From The First “Straightway” Newsletter – 1973)

Dr. O. Talmadge Spence

From an unpretentious meeting on July 14, 1973, came the launching of a new Ship of Hope. With a charter membership of 20 Christians, we have dedicated ourselves to the spiritual prospect of actively engaging in a venture of Christian soul-winning and soul building with a pointed purpose and emphasis upon Christian Purities.

We take as our biblical trust the words of Job and Paul: “The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger” (Job 17:9). “Keep thyself pure” (I Timothy 5:22b).

In our own modern society, there seems to be a general lack of emphasis upon the “purities” of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Many evangelical circles are widening their practical interpretations of Scripture to a mere semantic, situational ethic that does not stand upon the biblical absolutes. The precious law of *separation* as presented so forthrightly in the Bible is not being heard in the land, and a kind of schizophrenic witness is being promulgated through many churches.

We are also hearing much about a pentecostalism that does not bear the impress of practical, biblical holiness, and claims of super-spiritualities are being voiced abroad in the land.

It is earnestly believed that there is a group of Christians who are hungering and searching for a clarion call back to the full authority of the Scriptures, with an active, practical desire for evangelism with pure motives and methods. We share affinities for the verbal, plenary propositional revelation of God as revealed through the Scriptures. We would desire to take the Gospel Message of Christian Purity everywhere we find an open door. We desire compassion without compromise – to emphasize our message above our method. We are available to go wherever there is an invitation to sincere faith.

If you are interested in any of our ministries for your church, youth organization, civic club, or home, write us. We also have a ladies’ program of projects.

We are building a library of the Purity Classics of the Bible, and an accurate statistical bank of the moral needs of our nation, church, and home. It is our purpose to use the printed page, film, seminar, convention, and evangelistic service, small or great.

A quarterly entitled *Straightway* will carry the voice of our purpose and plan for the scheduling of our program. If you are desirous of information concerning the possibility of joining CPF, contact any one of the Board of Directors, who will act as your sponsor to membership.

It is our sincere prayer that we might assist and supplement the evangelical and fundamental churches under our influence, and it is not to be construed that we are seeking an organizational entity within ourselves.

Let us all pray for repentance, revival, and purity in these days.

Why Is This Publication Called STRAIGHTWAY?

And Straightway They Forsook Their Nets, And Followed Him.

(Mark 1:18)

Dr. H. T. Spence

Back in 1973 my dear father, Dr. O. Talmadge Spence (who went to be with the Lord in July 2000), began a publication entitled *Straightway*. He took this word from Mark 1:18 that reads, “And *straightway* they forsook their nets, and followed him.” In this context Mark’s commentary on two of the Lord’s disciples depicts the tonal quality of his book as a part of the harmonious quartet of the Gospels. Mark’s Gospel portrays Christ as “the Mighty Worker,” rather than “the Teacher” as depicted in the book of Matthew. Mark wrote his Gospel to the Romans, a busy people, always in a hurry, working for the cause of the Empire. Through the Holy Spirit, Mark wrote with this theme, the activity of Christ, the “Servant of Jehovah.” The characteristic word of Mark in the Greek language is “*enthus*,” translated “anon,” “forthwith,” “immediately,” and “straightway.” He uses the term 42 times in his Gospel. Notice verses 10,12,18, 20,21,28,29,30,31,42,43 in the first chapter of his book. All of these verses show the busy activity of the book.

In the reality of biblical truth, Mark 1:18 is the commentary of every genuine servant of the Lord. When the Christian views the depraved gallery of philosophies, the hopeless and dark oceans of life, it encourages him to abide in the absolute truth of God. The sinner has no hope in his invented nets out in the world. He tries endlessly through his birth-blemished vocation of sin (“we have turned everyone to his own way”) to reap something better than that which he has sown. The daily, senseless cycle of going out with nets made of filthy rags and coming back with an empty soul has no hope for eternity. What a fruitless life to live!

But thank God! One day while we were trying to mend our feeble nets, Christ came and extended the call, “Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men” (Mark 1:17). While we were in our pollution, while we were “in” sin, He passed by and said, “Live.” “And *straightway*,” immediately, instantaneously, the Lord saved our convicted, repentant soul. It took place in a moment! Thank God for the experience of the New Birth!

But this small, truth-laden verse, has more to say of the two disciples: “...they forsook their nets.” That is the purpose for salvation! Not only to save us “in” sin, but also to save us “from” sin. We are to “forsake the nets,” to lay aside “every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us” (Hebrews 12:1), and to “come out from among them” (II Corinthians 6:17).

That is the only way we can unreservedly follow Christ: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” We make our “exodus” during our *straightway* conversion, and Egypt is to be left behind, forsaken, denied, and forgotten. We all have been bought with a price, redeemed, and we are no longer our own; we have been made a servant, a laborer, a worker full time in the Kingdom of God.

You will notice in Luke 5 that for some reason Peter went back to fishing. He had forsaken the nets and ships once, but he had not fully sold out to the Lord. The net business had taken over in his life again. Christ had to come for him again and once more in Luke 5:11: “...they forsook all, and followed him.” Peter stayed with Christ until the cross. But again in John 21, we find Peter back in the fishing business. It is the *forsaking* that seems to be his problem. Oh, the sad portrait of so many servants who have been called by God. Take heed to the example, my friend. Forsake all, and continue forsaking all for Christ. Leave the nets, and do not return!

May God bless, keep, and preserve our lives until His Coming or until He calls for us through death. May we **STRAIGHTWAY** forsake this world and what it will have to offer; forsake all for His glory! Then may we **STRAIGHTWAY** follow our Savior throughout all the days of our lives.

JANUARY **“TAPES OF THE MONTH”**

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The Fundamentalist and the Holiness of God

I will arrive in heaven having been known on earth as a separatist, Fundamentalist pastor and founder of an independent American church, as well as founder and president of Foundations Bible College and Ministries.

My grandparents fled a liberal Methodist church in North Carolina. My father was one of their nine children. When he became a Christian, his parents were simply involved in independent worship services identified with cottage prayer meetings in private homes, as well as old “brush arbor” and Gospel-tent worship services. In the process of these things, which began around 1910, a denomination was born. It was centered upon the Biblical truths of holiness of heart and a Spirit-filled life. My dear father and mother gave their entire life together for that denomination until he died in 1969.

I became a Christian at Bob Jones College in 1947 and married a young lady attending there. I pursued my education from the field of music on to a doctor of theology degree, after which I gave nine years of my young life as a faculty member of a seminary founded by a Presbyterian lawyer. The founder of this seminary had trained in Edinburgh; later receiving a call from God to the ministry, he became pastor of a Presbyterian church in South Carolina. Recognizing the liberal inroads appearing in his denomination, this Presbyterian pastor became attracted to the Northfield Conferences of Dwight L. Moody and R. A. Torrey. After hearing the able ministry of Moody and Torrey on “the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the Spirit-filled life,” he fled his denomination and started an independent American church and Bible institute that later became a college and seminary. My dear father sat under the teachings of this pastor, later becoming a member of the ministry’s board of trustees as well as bishop of the fledgling, newly organized denomination.

By 1969, my dear father had seen the terrible inroads of the growing apostasy in his denomination, and he took his stand solidly on the Word of God and was attacked by a majority of its ministers. After my nine years in the seminary and the pastoring of several churches, I, too, fled the denomination and became a pilgrim in the earth as a separatist fundamentalist. When I made

my exodus, Dr. Bob Jones, Jr. became a close and dear friend to me and remained so until his death.

At my exodus from what had become a neo-pentecostal and charismatic denomination, I set in writing the open burden of my departure to be founder, pastor, and president of the Foundations Bible College and Ministries. My extended article was printed in *Faith for the Family*, Bob Jones Press, September-October, 1973 issue. In 1974, the Foundations Ministries were born. In my article dealing with “Modern Pentecostal Tangents,” seven tangents were set forth. This article launched me into historic Fundamentalism.

Twenty-five years have passed in Fundamentalism, and I have enjoyed a ministry that has led me into thirty states as well as Scotland, the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, Japan, England, Spain, South Africa, Northern Ireland, and fifteen times to South Korea.

I was among the invited speakers to all of the World Congresses of Fundamentalists, as well as a member of the International Committee. My last contribution was through an article read by my son, Dr. H. T. Spence, at the Congress in July of 1999.

Fundamentalism at this time is a fragile movement plagued by a difference of opinion concerning the Authorized King James Version, as well as a movement that has lost the battle against Contemporary Christian Music. Its ecclesiastical separation in some areas has been compromised, and its younger men are seeking a far more moderate view of the ever-mutating ecumenicity of neo-evangelicalism and the neo-pentecostal-charismatic movements as well as the ecumenical evangelism of Billy Graham. Personal separation was never a strong point among Fundamentalists.

As Fundamentalism moves into the twenty-first century, it is in desperate need of a genuine Bible revival in which the holiness of God is paramount to its spiritual need.

I wanted to dedicate this unpretentious book to that prayer and hope. If Fundamentalism is to diminish in size, may it be enlarged by a hunger for the holiness of God in these apostate days.

The Preface

O. Talmadge Spence, Autumn 1999