

# A CHALLENGE TO FUNDAMENTALISTS

## LET'S WAKE UP AND OBEY THE WORD OF GOD

### LET US OBEY THE WORD OF THE LORD

At this time when the world is torn asunder by strife and blood-shed would it not be wonderful if the prayer of the Lord Jesus, concerning the unity of His people, might be answered, "that they all may be one, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me"?

What blessed truth is declared in Romans 12:5, "so we, being many, are one Body in Christ, and every one members one of another." And we should never forget the commandment of the Lord Jesus, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another," John 13:34. And note the words of the of the Holy Spirit in Ephesians 4:2 to 5, "With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love: Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; one faith, one Body, one baptism,"

We all thank God for His loyal, uncompromising servant who are earnestly contending for the "one faith"; for the fundamentals of the Christian faith; salvation by grace through faith in the crucified and glorified Son of God, His eternal Deity, His bodily resurrection, and His premillennial coming. We all know that there is but one true bible Church during this present Divine economy and that the believing sinner becomes a member of this one Church by a Divine baptism at the time he believes unto the saving of his soul.

The Holy Spirit has expressed the Divine Will in these words, "That there should be no schism (division) in the Body." I Corinthians 12:25. "Baptized by one Spirit into one Body." I Corinthians 12:13.

If the men and women of God who are so earnestly contending for the one faith in the midst of the modernism, ritualism and fanaticism all about us, were as earnestly contending for the one Body and one baptism, what a united army we would have against the enemies of the grace of God and the Word of God. Has any true Bible Christian the Scriptural right to contend for a sectarian church or a sectarian baptism? And surely after all these centuries God's true evangelists know that it is a spiritual crime to follow in the steps of the foolish Galatians and pervert God's "grace" gospel by mixing in Israel's Old Testament religious program. Moreover God's Bible-teachers know that God has in His Book an intelligent Divine principle by which His children can know how to bring into this present economy of grace any part of the kingdom program of the Old Testament Scriptures and of the Four Gospels that fits into God's "grace" program.

Just this past week, in a series of radio messages, an evangelical messenger was earnestly contending for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints. He had little or nothing to say against the modernism or ritualism or fanaticism with which the Church of Christ is being troubled on every hand. He had nothing to say against men affiliated with cults propagating unscriptural heresies and Satanic vagaries. His attack was against those who agree with him as to the verbal inspiration of the Bible, the virgin birth and eternal Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, salvation by faith in Christ's redemptive work and His premillennial coming, and all of the Bible

fundamentals of the Christian faith. He was attacking such of his fellow saints as do not agree with his "dispensationalism". Such of his statements as were not untrue were ungracious. The brother wanted to impress upon his hearers that he was "ultra-orthodox", "super-spiritual" and "anti-dispensational". Instead of using the Scriptures to prove his assertions, he employed the carnal weapons which are forbidden in the very Scriptures he was defending. He ridiculed, condemned and insulted those with whom he disagreed. Perhaps it never once occurred to him just how inconsistent, or ignorant, he was when he boastfully said, "I take the whole Bible," "it is all for me to obey I do not divide the Bible up, and give some to the Jews and some to the Gentiles". He warned his hearers against those who do not agree with his principle, or lack of principle, for Bible study.

Now in this counter-charge, that this dear brother is either inconsistent or ignorant, perhaps both, we do not want to use the same carnal weapons. We would not want to be so ungracious as to say that the brother was either ignorant or dishonest. Our appeal will be to the Scriptures, to common sense logic and to our brother's own teaching and practice as a Christian minister. We will ask you to weigh the evidence and render your own verdict.

A few days before this brother was broadcasting his "castigating" message I read a letter from a Chicago pastor, who is an acknowledged leader among Fundamentalists. In his letter he said that any preacher who does not obey the commands of the Lord Jesus is a servant of Satan. After you have considered the Scriptural arguments in this message you be the jury and the judge and see whether or not this Christian warrior has called himself a servant of Satan.

## THE CHRISTIAN AND CHRIST'S COMMANDMENTS

Undoubtedly more than ninety-nine per cent of Christians would say that a Christian is a follower of Jesus Christ; a Christian is one who keeps the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then to the mind of the Berean immediately comes this question, "which of the Lord's commandments?" Are Christians in the present economy of grace to obey all the commandments which Jesus Christ on earth gave to His disciples and to others?

After we have read this message we shall think with the Jewish rabbi who said to an outstanding evangelical pastor of London, "It was not your Jesus who gave you your evangelical grace message and program. It was the apostle Paul. Your Jesus was a religious Jew under the law."

Of course, that rabbi did not understand that Christ revealed to Paul the grace message and program in his Epistles. But if that rabbi had been an evangelical Christian, he would not have endorsed the red-letter New Testament which emphasizes the words of Jesus on earth above the words which He gave to Paul by revelation.

Hear the words of the Lord Jesus Christ: "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." These words were spoken to the disciples of the Lord. Then we read in Acts 11:26, "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."

Is a Christian one who keeps the commandments of Christ? Which commandments?

If Christ were on earth, would He not again put to thousands of professing Christians the same question He put to religious professors of His day? "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? (Matthew 15:3). "Ye make the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." (Matthew 15:6). "Teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:9).

Nearly one hundred per cent of Christians are the victims of tradition. We are so sheep-like, in that we fall into the religious habit of following religious leaders and permit them to formulate our religious creeds. Sooner or later we come to the place where we interpret, appropriate and apply the Scriptures by the rules and standards of interpretation and application established by certain leaders and rulers. Of course, in the hearts of Christians, who zealously follow some particular leader and accept him as final authority in Bible doctrine, there is generally a mixture of contempt and pity for fellow-Christians who they think are ignorantly following some other erring Christian leaders. Many of those who play "follow the leader" are not only zealous and loyal but they are so satisfied with their own position and so prejudiced against others that they will not even seriously and prayerfully search the Scriptures, under the leading of the Holy Spirit, to ascertain whether or not they may be mistaken. They do not ask whether or not they have substituted a few religious traditions for Divine Truth:

Thus we have more than three hundred groups of Christians, with their varying and contrary religious creeds. We may be sure that the unhappy discord and divisions exist because far more than ninety per cent of Christians permit others to do their thinking for them. And there is no Christian sect in this country that has not included in its program and creed some human tradition or theory. These traditions and theories cause schisms in the Lord's Body in disobedience to the plain command of the Lord.

#### WHICH COMMANDMENTS?

But now to the question: which of the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ are Christians to obey? Let us begin with a most important command of the Lord Jesus. Read it very carefully in Matthew 23:1 to 3:

"Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to His disciples, Saying, the scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say and do not."

Do not hurry on. Consider seriously this command of the Lord Jesus. Is it for present-day Christians to obey?

This is a very clearly stated, positive, important command. Jesus Christ told His disciples that they were to obey the crooked, hypocritical blind fools, (Matthew 23:14 to 19), the scribes and the Pharisees. Why? Because they occupied Moses' seat (cathedra). Where is Moses' seat in this day of grace? Believers in this dispensation are seated with Christ in the heavenlies. Compare Ephesians 2:5 and 6 with Matthew 23:1 to 3

Neither the radio messenger nor the Chicago pastor obeys this important command. They refuse to recognize Moses' seat in this age of grace. If they consider themselves what Christian pastors should be, faithful stewards of the mysteries of God (I Corinthians 4:1 to 4), they should give such a clear Scriptural exegesis and explanation that their hearers and followers would be convinced that the Lord's command of Matthew 23:1 to 3 has no place in this present economy of grace. There was a place for Moses' seat while Jesus Christ was on earth.

When the Holy Spirit teaches these stewards of the mysteries of God the dispensational place of Moses' seat, they should teach their hearers and followers why they do not obey some other commandments which the Lord Jesus gave. And just one such sane, Scriptural message should make them very careful as to their unjust, ungracious criticisms of their fellow-Christians. If they would give forth one such clear exegesis, taught by the Holy Spirit, they would neither say that any man who does not obey the commandments of the Lord Jesus is a servant of Satan,

nor boastfully say, "I obey all of the Bible". You are beginning to see that they do not believe what they seem to think they believe.

It may sound well to a Christian who does not use his mind in Bible-study to hear a leader say, "I obey all the Bible"—"It is all for me to practice"

But when the Christian does think seriously, he decides that the claimant is either very ignorant, or at least a bit dishonest.

Let us ask the two brethren to whom we have referred; "do you believe that the Lord Jesus Christ was in earnest when he gave the commandment recorded in Matthew 8:4? Now, honestly do you consistently obey it, or make even the slightest pretense to practice it?" Hear it:

"Go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."

Again, if these two brethren were really practicing what they are preaching, after reading Matthew 5:23 and 24, they would never pray the "Our Father" prayer until after they had paid a visit to their fellow Christians whom they have denounced, against whom they have brought false charges. Carefully note this plain and positive commandment of the Lord Jesus Christ

"Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Do you believe that these brethren believe this commandment fits into the Pauline program of grace? If so, they, are doing nothing about it.

Again, if these two brethren were sincere and honest in their claims, they would obey Matthew 6:17 when they obey the Lord and pray the "Our Father" prayer. Yes, instead of publicly condemning their fellow saints, they should with the same zeal and energy implore their hearers to obey Matthew 6:17: "But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face." This was the Lord's command. Our brother says those who do not obey His commands are servants of Satan.

### WAKE UP, FUNDAMENTALISTS!

Something is wrong with our Bible teaching. We do not obey such commands of the Lord Jesus as we find in Matthew 10:5 to 8 and we do not give any Scriptural explanation for our negligence or disobedience if we are guilty of either. If ever the Lord Jesus was in earnest He was when He gave that clear positive command: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give."

Why is it that these dear brethren who claim to obey the orders of Christ wholly ignore these plain commands? They do not do one single thing included in this Divine command, and they cannot. They do not do one single thing to obey Ephesians 3:9. They could and they should. But instead they malign, ridicule, condemn and disfellowship other brethren who use Ephesians 3:9 to show why they make no attempt to obey the great commission of Matthew 10:5 to 8, which was God's program in a former dispensation, but which has no place in the Lord's present program of grace for members of the Body of Christ. Is it not a mark of ignorance for any Christian to say, "I am not a dispensationalist? We here quote some other commandments of the Lord Jesus and ask you if they are to be obeyed in this present dispensation?"

### SOME OTHER COMMANDMENTS

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth."

"And He said unto His disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on,"

"And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind."

"But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

"And He said unto them. Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece."

"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet."

"And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away."

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal."

How interesting it would be to examine the two brethren in the presence of witnesses and say, "I understand you bitterly condemn other men who are saved by faith in the precious shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, because you say they do not obey the commands of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Now a few questions:

1. Have you sold your property and earthly possessions?
2. Do you take any thought for your life or lay up any treasures on earth? Have you a savings account in the bank?
3. Do you wash each other's feet?
4. Do you put any money in your purse when you go away to hold a religious meeting?
5. Do you take more than one coat?
6. Do you love your enemies or do you hate men that disagree with your faulty dispensationalism?
7. Do you give to him that asketh of thee?

I wonder if these brethren would be satisfied to have our heavenly Father forgive them no more than they forgive Christians who disagree water baptism theories. They should really tremble when they read Matthew 18:34 and 35. But they can be saved from trembling by reading the "grace" message of forgiveness in Ephesians 4:32. What a difference!

Yes, it would be interesting to ask the two brethren to whom we have referred why they do not obey Luke 12:33 and urge their hearers to do likewise:

"Sell that ye have and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth." Luke 12:33.

I understand one of them has recently done the very opposite, having purchased a house and a lot. I am doing the same thing right now. How different from those Pentecostal disciples

"Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at

the apostles' feet; and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." Acts 4:34 and 35.

"And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need." Acts 2:45.

These two brethren erroneously teach that this present "dispensation of grace" began on the day of Pentecost. They get into no end of trouble because of this blunder. They consider that first Church under Peter's authority, the ideal Christian Church. Then the message and program should be considered ideal, and they should preach Acts 2:38 and practice Acts 4:34 and 35. But they wholly disregard the division of property. They preach a message entirely different from Acts 2:38—Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." They make no attempt to speak with tongues.

They present no Scriptural explanation for the elimination of many of the practices of Christ and His apostles from their spiritual program. They do not even offer an apology. And yet they condemn and ridicule and malign and disfellowship other men of God who likewise eliminate certain kingdom messages, ordinances and ceremonies from the present "dispensation of grace" but who present an intelligent Scriptural explanation for the difference between the program of Jesus Christ and the Twelve, and the program which Jesus Christ in heaven gave through the apostle Paul to supersede His "kingdom of heaven" program. One of the very important commands which the Lord would have His servants obey is II Corinthians 4:2, "not handling the Word of God deceitfully.

Now think for a moment of an intelligent man of God, who is considered an outstanding leader among Fundamentalists, a man, regarded as a gifted Bible teacher, making the statement that any person who does not obey the commands of Jesus Christ is a servant of the devil. If this brother really believes what he says, the very first command of the Lord Jesus he should obey is Matthew 5:23 and 24. He knows his brother has something against him and he has not gone to that brother to be reconciled. To him that knoweth to do right and doeth it not to him it is sin. If asked why he does not obey this, he would have to confess his disobedience or prove that that command belonged to a different dispensation. You see that he was not sincere and honest in writing his letter.

Recently this same brother is doing something that he never did before. He is coming out strong for the "Our Father" prayer. He states that this is the command of Christ. But the command we have just quoted is in the same sermon of Christ, as is also another command in the same chapter wholly ignored by our brother. "But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face." Matthew 6:17.

Is it not handling the Word of God deceitfully to select what you please from the Sermon on the Mount and wholly ignore other commands? To say the least it is very inconsistent to practice one command and ignore the other.

#### THE KINGDOM SETTING OF THE KINGDOM PRAYER

Then let us see the "kingdom of heaven" setting of all three of these commands. The commands are in the fifth and sixth chapters of Matthew. Now note carefully Matthew 4:17 and 23 and Matthew 10:7 and 8:

"From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the

gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

"And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely ye have received, freely give."

Do either of these brethren, or any other intelligent messenger of grace, preach "the kingdom of heaven is at hand"? Certainly not. They definitely preach and teach that "that kingdom of heaven" has been postponed and that God's message today is Titus 2:11—"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." Thus they claim to obey II Timothy 2:15 and prove that they are "dispensationalists".

Is our brother a servant of Satan because he does not obey Matthew 10:8? Suppose some evangelist would stand in his pulpit and condemn dispensationalism, and say with the radio messenger to which we have referred, "I believe the whole Bible is for us to obey and practice." So, in the series of meetings, which I am to conduct here we shall take the message and program of Matthew 10:8 during my stay". The evangelist would not even be permitted to finish his first message. Why? Because "the kingdom of heaven" is not at hand. The brother couldn't heal the sick, or raise the dead, or cast out demons, or cleanse the lepers. Did not the Lord give that command in earnest? Did not the apostles obey it? Is it for us today? How about the credentials of a Christian in Mark 16:17 and 18? Who practices those signs in this age of grace? What became of those signs? God has an answer. God's servants should know God's answer.

If a Christian worker owns several suits of clothes, has a savings account in the bank, owns real estate, stores fuel and food in the cellar for the winter, and refuses to give money to some one who asks him, is he not breaking the commandments of Christ? Does that mean that he is a servant of Satan? Christ said "agree with thine adversary quickly." Should we obey this?

Note the positive and definite command of Christ in Luke 24:49, "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Inasmuch as those disciples lived before the advent of the Holy Spirit and we live in this day of grace, is any kind of a tarrying meeting in any city in order today? When we have the Scriptural explanation as to why we do not have to tarry for the Holy Spirit, do we not have God's dispensational principle by which we interpret, appropriate and apply the Scriptures in obedience to II Timothy 2:15? "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth."

Again referring to that petition in the "Our Father" prayer, which is dispensationally a "kingdom" prayer, "forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors", how could either of the brethren to whom we have referred ever get into heaven, if God condemned them for their unforgiving spirit as well as for their utter inconsistencies in taking two or three of Christ's commands and entirely ignoring thirty or forty of them? If ye keep the whole law and offend in one point ye are guilty of all—Was not the anathema of God pronounced upon the religious preachers who mixed law with grace? Galatians 1:7 to 9. Note carefully Matthew 6:15: "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

Now in the name of the Lord, I challenge these two brethren to meet in the presence of a company of Christian brethren and prove by the Scriptures that they were sincere or Scriptural in the statements they made. We are reminded of Shakespeare's words, "my words fly up, my thoughts remain below; words without thoughts never to heaven go." Men of God should be very careful about misrepresenting the Lord's servants.

UNSCRIPTURAL OR UNDISPENSATIONAL

There are some splendid Christians who religiously practice the washing of feet. Are they Scriptural or unscriptural? There are some splendid Christians who religiously abstain from eating pork. Are they Scriptural or unscriptural? There are some splendid Christians who anoint the sick with oil, while others use blessed handkerchiefs. Are they Scriptural or unscriptural? There are some splendid Christians who tarry for the Holy Spirit after they have received Christ for salvation. There are many Christians who claim visions, angelic visitations, and that they hear supernatural voices. Are they Scriptural or unscriptural? There are thousands of Christians who break forth in some kind of a speech which they call the gift of tongues. Is it Scriptural or unscriptural to speak with tongues?

I wonder if these two brethren and many others of you Christian leaders have any idea of the number of zealous, sincere Christians who are troubled to know why Christian pastors and Bible teachers wholly ignore the truth of I Corinthians 12:28 and 12:8 to 10:

"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily, prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."

"For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom: to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues."

They have the right to ask the question, "If God put them in the Body and if Christians in 1941 belong to the same Body, who has taken these gifted men out of the Body?" Men who are God's Bible-teachers are stewards of the mysteries of God. They should rightly divide the Word of Truth, and show from the Scriptures why the most carnal saints of Paul's time exercised all of the sign-gifts, whereas the most spiritual and gifted Christian "grace" preachers today do not even attempt to exercise one of these gifts. They simply ignore them without explanation or apology.

Christians have the right to know whether or not they are to obey I Corinthians 14:39—I Corinthians 5:5—I Corinthians 7:29:

"Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues."

"To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

"But this I say, brethren, the time is short; it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none."

How much of the program of Acts 19:5, 6, 11 and 12 is for today ?

"When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."

"And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul; so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them."

This was God's program more than twenty years after our two brethren and many of you claim that "the dispensation of grace" and "the dispensation of the mystery" began, (for they say they began on the Jewish Pentecost with the twelve apostles). What part of this program is for this present economy-of grace? We have here the last Bible record of water baptism. Imposition of hands, Holy Spirit baptism, speaking with tongues, miraculous healings, followed that water baptism. Should we not insist on the complete program today as the Pentecostalists do, or give



an intelligent Scriptural explanation as to what right we have to take just the water baptism and drop everything else? When we find this explanation we shall find that we have no such right. "But the Christians who have done this have followed sectarian creeds and human traditions instead of the Word of truth rightly divided. We say again, "Wake up Fundamentalists!" Think of the wild fanaticism among the religious "healing" and "tongues" Christians. Ridicule and condemnation will not remedy the situation. God's antidote is obedience to II Timothy 2:15 and Ephesians 3:9. In our new 320 page book, entitled "The Unsearchable Riches of Christ" we have not only made the claim, but we have proven by the Scriptures that the understanding of Ephesians 3:1 to 11, (the unsearchable riches of Christ), is Gods curative for every ill and "ism" with which the Church of the Lord is afflicted.

### A FOLLOWER OF JESUS

Then we say that a Christian is one who follows Jesus Christ. Let us read carefully Luke 2:21 and 22 and 24— Acts 2:39 and Acts 4:16. Here we see the infant Jesus and the Man Jesus. Are we to follow Him in circumcision? Are we to follow Him to the Jewish synagogue on the Jewish sabbath? Note John 7:10 and Luke 22:11: "But when His brethren were gone up, then went He up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret."

Jesus Christ was circumcised thirty years before He was baptized with water and about thirty-four years before His death baptism. Luke 12:50. He was a minister of the circumcision. Romans 15:8. He was sent to the circumcision only. Matthew 15:24. He said unto His twelve apostles "go not into the way of the uncircumcision". John the Baptist baptized with water that Christ might be made manifest to the circumcision John 1:31. All the time Jesus Christ was on earth the covenant of circumcision was in full force. Acts 7:8. Genesis 17:5 to 15. Note the attitude of the eleven apostles toward Peter because he preached to an uncircumcised man seven or eight years after the baptism of Christ on the cross: "They of the circumcision contended with Him saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised and didst eat with them." Acts 11:1 to 3.

Note some years later how Peter still feared the circumcision:

"For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision." Galatians 2:12.

Note what Paul did about that time:

"Him (Timothy) would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters for they knew all that his father was a Greek." Acts 16:3.

From the day John the Baptist began to baptize with water until the day Peter baptized Cornelius and his household no man was baptized who had not first been circumcised. So we may be sure that the Eunuch of Acts Eight was a circumcised proselyte. As we compare the nineteenth chapter of Acts, where we find the last Scriptural record of a baptism with water, with the twenty-first chapter of Acts, we learn that God's Book shows that circumcision was being practiced after the last record of water baptism.

From this we see the absolute folly of teaching that water baptism was instituted by the Lord to take the place of circumcision. Thousands of Christians have been led into this erroneous teaching and accept the error as truth because they follow their leaders without following the example of the noble Bereans who searched the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were true. Then, to think of outstanding "grace" preachers who immerse little infants in a bath tub and

say little Israelitish infants were immersed in the Red Sea and we should immerse the infants of Christians in obedience to I Corinthians 10:1 to 10.

Think of a Christian pastor telling other Christians that he obeys all of the Bible, that he does not give some of it to the Jews and some to the Gentiles and some to members of the Body of Christ. Did not the Lord state positively that unless a man was circumcised he should be cut off from His congregation? Genesis 17:5 to 15. Was this not binding at the time Jesus Christ gave the commandments in the Sermon on the Mount, at the time He taught the "Our Father" prayer, and for some years thereafter? Surely we are the victims of tradition and have substituted commandments of men for the doctrine of God rightly divided. Whenever a Christian leader holds on to a religious ceremony, he will interpret the Bible to defend his religious practice.

### SHOULD WE FOLLOW THE LORD JESUS IN KEEPING THE PASSOVER?

"And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest chamber, where I shall eat the passover with My disciples?" Are we to follow the Lord Jesus and keep the Jewish feasts? We are told by some zealous religious leaders that we are to follow the Lord in baptism; but they seem never to have read Luke 12:50 and Colossians 2:11 and 12.

Circumcision is just as essential to salvation as is baptism. No one can get into heaven who has not been circumcised or baptized with the circumcision and the baptism of Colossians 2:11 and 12:

"In Whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, Who hath raised Him from the dead."

I am sure we are all agreed that since the days of the apostles the human race has lived in God's economy of grace. We believe Romans 6:14, "ye are not under the law, but under grace." We are sure that God's will concerning members of the Body of Christ, expressed in Colossians 2:16, is to be obeyed by these Body members—"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days."

Any spiritual intelligent child of God knows that it is utterly impossible for him to obey this command in Colossians 2:16, and at the same time obey the command of the Lord Jesus, in Matthew 23:1 to 3, with respect to the authority of those who sat in Moses' seat. The explanation is that between the command of Matthew 23 and that of Colossians 2:16, the great event mentioned in Colossians 2:14 took place. "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross."

Now let us compare Ephesians 4:32 with Matthew 6:14 and 15: "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

Do you see that one is grace and the other is law? Note again Colossians 2:13 and Acts 13:39, and compare with Matthew 18:34 and 35. We quote these four verses:

"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses."

"And by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

"And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall My heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."

Which is God's message for us in this age of grace?

## RECOVERY OF TRUTH

Let us remember that before John, the apostle, died the prophesied apostacy had set in. By the end of the third Christian century the organized church had been plunged into spiritual darkness, which grew worse and worse until Luther's reformation. The fundamental doctrines of Christianity had been lost to the great majority of professing Christians. The church-leaders, for the most part, were unregenerated religious political rulers or religious men allied with ungodly political potentates. This condition prevailed for centuries. Christendom was in an awful spiritual state. Religious teachers had departed from sound doctrine.

Even the recovery of "justification by faith" produced a tremendous reformation. The people who sat in darkness saw a great light. But Luther and his co-laborers and followers recovered little or nothing of the truth of Ephesians and Colossians Concerning the Body of Christ. The church-leaders of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries would have persecuted unto death Christians who would have dared to teach concerning the Body of Christ and the gospel of grace what "grace" preachers are proclaiming today and what John Darby taught in his day.

We quote a note from the writings of the very pastor to whom we have referred in this message. This note is concerning the one Body of Ephesians

"It is a great truth that the Lord is teaching many over again in the present day, after it has been buried in the rubbish of ecclesiastical traditions for centuries that God has a Church upon earth. It is our part then, not to be making churches, but to acknowledge what He has already made. The various churches spoken of in the New Testament are but severally the Church of God in such or such a place. Nothing is owned but this; the Church of God. Membership is in this, and not in local bodies . . . Into this membership man cannot admit, but the Lord only . . . Our part is only to bow to what He has done, and to receive one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God. Now all making terms of admission is plainly out of the question, for we do not admit at all."

Even now, centuries after "The Reformation", how many Christian pastors, all of whom are supposed to be stewards of the mysteries of God (I Corinthians 4:1 to 4), are obeying Ephesians 3:9? "And to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God." Be honest, servants of the Lord, are we to obey this command or ignore it? What are you doing about it? Christians will never enjoy the most blessed and glorious truth of the Bible, for them, until they see this.

The pastor, who branded as servants of Satan men of God who do not obey all the commands of the Lord, and who himself ignores most of them, bitterly condemns and maligns and abuses God's servants who are faithfully endeavoring to obey Ephesians 3:9, while he does absolutely nothing about it.

Concerning "the dispensation of the mystery", this pastor wrote in one of his books on Paul, "how earnest was the apostle Paul in seeking to lead Christians into the knowledge of this precious truth." How true is this statement of this pastor who is fighting this precious truth today? Note what Paul wrote in Colossians 4:2 to 4

"Continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanksgiving: Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds; That I may make it manifest as I ought to speak."

This precious truth certainly got Paul into plenty of trouble. Note what he wrote in II Timothy 2:9: "Wherein I suffer trouble as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the Word of God is not bound." Leaders among the Fundamentalists of today will certainly treat as "evil-doers" men of God who seek to follow Paul as they are commanded to do.

If you are faithful in proclaiming this precious truth today you will be in plenty of trouble. This is because of sectarian prejudice resulting from mixing man's traditions with God's truth, or by using some hit-and-miss, snatch-grab method to bring some of Israel's religious program over into "the dispensation of grace" (Ephesians 3:1 to 3), without exegesis, explanation or apology. Thus the mystery is still a mystery.

Note again several quotations from the pastor to whom we have referred:

"Throughout the writings of the Apostle Paul he again and again refers to a wonderful secret, which he designates in a special way as "the mystery," or "the great mystery."

"For centuries it was almost entirely lost sight of. In fact, until brought to the fore through the writings and the preaching and teaching of a distinguished ex-clergyman, Mr. J. N. Darby, in the early part of the last century, it is scarcely to be found in a single book or sermon throughout a period of sixteen hundred years."

"Of ordinances exalted to the place of mysteries, as in heathen rites, he will find much; but as to the mystery, which to the apostle was so unspeakably precious, rarely a reference."

"That a doctrine so clearly revealed in the Scriptures could have become so utterly lost is only to be accounted for by the Judaizing of the Church, and the consequent minding of earthly things that beclouded the heavenly ones."

"The mystery" was not something of difficult, mysterious character, but a sacred secret never known to mankind until in due time opened up by the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul."

"It was not hid in the Scriptures to be brought to light eventually; but we are distinctly told it was hid in God until such time as He chose to manifest it."

"This was not until Israel had been given every opportunity to receive Christ both in incarnation and resurrection. When they definitely refused Him God made known what had been in His heart from eternity, that from all nations, Jews and Gentiles, He would redeem and take out an elect company who would, by the Spirit's baptism, be formed into one Body."

"The mystery formed no part of the revelation of the previous dispensations. Had it been otherwise, Paul could not rightly have written that it was "kept secret since the world began." It was part of the good news he was commissioned to publish abroad but he learned it not from the former Scriptures, but by direct revelation from the Lord Jesus Christ in glory."

**THE MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH AS THE BODY OF CHRIST WAS NEVER MADE KNOWN IN OLD TESTAMENT TIMES, NOR YET WHEN OUR LORD WAS ON EARTH. IT WAS HID. THE DIVINE METHOD OF MAKING IT KNOWN WAS BY A SPECIAL REVELATION TO THE APOSTLE PAUL, COMMITTED TO HIM TO PASS ON TO THE SAINTS.**

"The Divine method of making it known was by a special revelation to the apostle Paul, as he tells us in Ephesians 3. But this revelation was not for him only. It was a ministry committed to him to pass on to the saints."

"How earnest was the apostle in seeking to lead Christians into the knowledge of this precious truth."

Note carefully the statement, "That the doctrine so clearly revealed in the Scriptures could have become so utterly lost is only to be accounted for by the Judaizing of the Church, and the consequent minding of earthly things that beclouded the heavenly ones."

If this doctrine is not utterly lost to our brother, he should be as earnest as was Paul in seeking to lead Christians into the knowledge of this precious truth, instead of being one of the greatest hindrances to this truth in the country. If the truth is utterly lost to him, then it is because he has Judaized the Church and is minding earthly things. This is his own confession. But the explanation is that he came face to face with a decision. He had to make his choice; a tank of water for his baptism ceremony or the proclamation of the mystery. He must have decided that the water ceremony, his watery grave theory, was more precious than that truth that was so precious to the apostle who said "Christ sent me not to baptize."

### WAKE UP FUNDAMENTALISTS!

The Body of Christ is only one phase of this precious Divine truth, which is the most blessed and glorious truth for saints in all of God's Word. Many centuries ago the risen Christ revealed this mystery, "His eternal purpose in Christ." Ninety-nine plus per cent of Church members are as ignorant of this truth as though it were not in the Bible. It is God's answer to the fanaticism, to all the Israelitish movements with which the Church of Christ is afflicted. It is the Divine curative for every ill and "ism" that is troubling the Body of Christ.

If there is to be a revival before the Lord Jesus comes for His Church, it will be when this glorious truth is brought from under the rubbish heap and ecclesiastical tradition to which our brother referred.

See why God wants this glorious truth known:

"And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a Perfect Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. That we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

Let us no longer be children—Let us obey the Lord's command.

If there is any reason why the Lord is delaying His coming for His Church, it is not because He is waiting for the revival of the Roman Empire, but because He wants His saints to see and obey Ephesians 3:9 to 11:

"And to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenlies might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

### LET US DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT

Now let us be gracious and longsuffering and forgiving. Let us obey Ephesians 4:1 to 6:

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one

another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

But in kindness let me ask you, do you think a man is honest or intelligent when he says he obeys all the Lord's commands?

We do not obey Matthew 10:8 and we cannot:

"Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils freely ye have received, freely give."

But we can, and should obey Ephesians 3:9:

"And to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God."

We do not, and we should not, wash one another's feet.

We do not agree with our adversaries quickly, or slowly, in obedience to Matthew 5:25.

We do not and cannot, speak with tongues or perform miracles. But we can, and should obey Ephesians 3:9. When we obey Ephesians 3:9, we shall see why we cannot speak with tongues, heal the sick, cast out demons, raise the dead, have visions, preach political signs to prove that Christ's Second Coming is at hand.

We do not, and should not, preach "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," or "repent and be baptized for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

But we should obey Ephesians 3:9.

We do not sell our houses and lots and give the money to religious leaders, because he that provideth not well for his own household denies the faith and is worse than an infidel.

#### WHO OBEYS MARK 16:14 to 18?

Why did not the twelve apostles obey Mark 16:14 to 18? Why do not Fundamentalists obey Mark 16:14 to 18 today? Do you know of a single grace messenger who preaches or practices Mark 16:14 to 18? Do you know of a single Scripture to prove that the twelve apostles preached the gospel throughout Asia, Africa and Europe?

Now before our comments carefully read Mark 16:14 to 18: "Afterward He appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but He that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In My name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

Surely we have here in very simple and plain language a clear program presented to the eleven apostles by the resurrected Christ; "Go ye into all the world". "Preach the gospel to every creature." "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." "These signs shall follow them that believe."

Now note Matthew 24:14 and Colossians 1:5 and 6 and 1:23:

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

"For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth:"

"If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;"

Note carefully, "Whereof I Paul am made a minister." Then note II Timothy 4:17:

"Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me, that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion."

The gospel preached in all the world to every creature was under Paul's authority. But when he had accomplished this, the end mentioned in Matthew 24:14, did not come. The end of Paul's earthly ministry came. But he commissioned Timothy to go right on with the grace message and program. But Paul did not tell Timothy to put hands on the sick. Note carefully I Timothy 5:23: "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine oft infirmities."

If you will open your Bible and turn to the Book of Acts, you will read these headings, "Paul's First Missionary Journey." "Paul's Second Missionary Journey" and "Paul's Third Missionary Journey". But you will not read of Peter's first, second or third missionary journey or of the twelve apostles'. Why? Because they did not take any such journeys, according to the "Acts" record. They remained in Jerusalem. Acts 8:1 and Acts 15:1 to 3. How then could they have remained in Jerusalem and have preached the gospel to every creature in the world? Note carefully the Lord's instructions to Paul:

"And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance; And saw Him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on Thee: And when the blood of Thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him. And He said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles."

As we carefully examine the Divine Record telling of the ministry of the twelve apostles and Paul, we should learn why Paul said, "I am the apostle of the Gentiles." Romans 11:13.

The language in Galatians 2:9 is very plain and any misunderstanding of the statement certainly seems inexcusable. Note this plain statement: "And when James, Peter and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision."

Again the question, how could any student of the Scriptures teach that the twelve apostles even began the task of going into all the world to preach the gospel to every creature when they agreed to evangelize the Jews?

Paul preached to many Jews in many different places, but he was peculiarly the Lord's special messenger to the Gentiles. Paul emphasized this fact time and again. I Timothy 2:7, II Timothy 1:11, Ephesians 3:8.