

THE AUSTRALIAN ANABAPTIST

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

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

Matthew 5:15

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For A Conservative Mennonite Perspective

From The Editor's Desk.

Pilate asked Jesus; What is truth? and that question is still being asked today by many, some place the question in a mocking way as if scoffing at the idea that there is such a thing as absolute truth, others frame the question endeavouring to establish if the truth you espouse is the same as theirs.

We could equate these people with those in 1 Timothy 3:7, ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth as the Bible reveals truth. Jesus said: I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me. John 14:6.

Then there are those who are genuinely seeking the solution, the truth to the conundrums of life, those things that the dictionary defines as something confusing, puzzling or mysterious.

These last mentioned group are small in number when it comes to seeking the truth of the Scriptures and are willing to be those who are spoken of in Matthew 7:7-8. and, as they seek for truth, that pearl of great price, will sell all, give up all, to possess it. Matthew 13:45-46.

To search for truth we must have a desire to find it, cultivate a love for it and this month's edition has some directions to that end in Part 1 of a message entitled "Cultivating a Love for the Truth" with the concluding portion to be in the March edition should the Lord tarry.

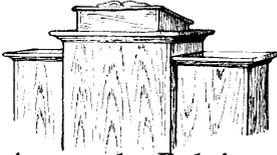
May the Lord bless each one as we continue to search for and develop a love for the truth and a willing heart to live it day by day. *J. v L.*

Truth

Truth is the gem for which we seek,
Oh tell us where shall it be found!
For this we search, and pray, and weep,
That truth may in our hearts abound.

We want the truth on every point,
We want it all to practise by.
Do Thou O Lord our eyes anoint,
With a fresh unction from on high.

Charlotte Haskins.



Across the Pulpit.

Cultivating a Love for the Truth

*Brother James Siegrist
Blue Rock Mennonite Church
Part 1 of 2*

We greet you in the name of Jesus. We are thankful tonight for what He has done for us and what He has done for me.

I appreciated the devotional thoughts on the refining work of the refiner. It would be interesting to hear your testimony.

I also appreciated the thoughts that the brother shared and I want to give my endorsement to those thoughts.

The title that was assigned to me was Cultivating a Love for the Truth. I think we could possibly entitle this sermon: Cultivating Piety That Is Embraced by the Next Generation.

And so our brother already said a good bit and that and I may repeat some of what he said, I also may say some things emphasizing piety but I do not wish to undermine what he said, he talked about quietism and that is perhaps the overemphasis of piety.

You can open your Bible to Matthew the 11th chapter. when I looked at this subject I found myself wishing that there would be a Scripture that I could use as a text, maybe there is and I just didn't find, I'm going to take more of a topical approach and begin in [Matthew 11](#) at the end of the chapter.

As I thought of this subject I thought of a couple of questions.

The first question is: What is truth?

Another question is: Why would we need to cultivate a love for truth?

Now in thinking of what truth is we are not speaking tonight subjectively as in what are the facts of the situation. Well the facts are that you and I are here tonight, at least that is one fact, we are not talking about specific facts about a certain situation but we are using the idea or the thought of truth in a more objective or general way, The Truth, thinking of that which encompasses the Word of God and the will of God and the out working in

our lives and we could say The Truth is a lifestyle or produces a lifestyle, because the Word of God does indeed teach obedience, that has been emphasized already, obedience and discipleship and a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now why would we need to cultivate a love for truth or The Truth?

The Truth apparently can be despised or hated creating a lifestyle that pushes God out of the picture. And I thought of something a customer said the other day, speaking of the society in which we live and how things are so bad and people wonder why it is so bad and why doesn't God do something about it? And his comment was this: "He [God] is a gentleman and if we say we don't want you He will step out of the way."

And so a lifestyle that rejects God, rejects Truth will certainly be a different lifestyle then what the Scripture teaches.

The New Testament warns us that there will be those that speak lies and hypocrisy. [1 Timothy 4:2](#)

The New Testament warns us that there will be those who use vain words and it would seem to be that they used vain words for the sake of money, vain words would be pretending words or false words. [Eph.5:6](#).

The New Testament warns us that there will be those who hold the Truth in unrighteousness, consider that, they know the Truth, hold the Truth but don't live right. [Romans 1:18](#)

I thought of the Scripture that our brother used earlier: Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof. [2 Timothy 3:5](#). And I think and I believe that every religion, in fact every brand of Christianity, has a form, I believe that, and if you look closely you will see that everyone has a form and the difference with piety is that it has power, there is victory, there is discipleship, there is victory over sin.

The New Testament warns us that there will be those who change the Truth of God into a lie.

Think about that, they changed the Truth of God into a lie, they twist it around. [Romans 1:25](#)

The New Testament warns us, and this is the last one I put down here, that God's judgement will be upon those who did not receive the love of the Truth. [2 Thessalonians 2:10](#)

And maybe if you forget everything else maybe you should remember that. Don't lose your love for the Truth! Receive the love of the Truth and I would ask you to consider that, receive the love of the Truth.

On the other hand, we talked about those who reject Truth, on the other hand we like the Apostle John can say, and I love this verse, he said: I have no greater joy than to see my children walk in truth.

And I would say that not among family only but of all of the next generation, those of you who are in your teen years approaching 20, in your late 20s may be, I have no greater joy than to see you walk in truth, and I think I'm saying that for every father and mother that is here, I have no greater joy than to see you walk in truth.

What then does it take to cultivate a love for Truth?

I want to look at three different considerations.

- 1]. Learn of Him.
- 2]. Walk in the Light.
- 3]. Love one another.

And you can possibly remember them by the three "L's", Learn and Live and Love.

Now we have just been warned against Pietism but I want to say this as an echo to the thoughts of our brother, that without piety we will not cultivate a love for Truth, and so being human we will probably err on one side or the other but we do want to search the Scriptures, appreciate the advice of our brother, appreciate the Church and learn from each other and love each other.

In Matthew 11 at the end of the chapter Jesus says this in verse 28:

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and

lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." [Matthew 11:28-30](#).

That is an invitation Christ is extending to us and I used to think that it was an invitation to come to Christ in repentance and come to Him and give our hearts to Him, it may be that, but I think it is also to walk with Him, to live with Him. He is saying that if you cannot do it yourself you need to yoke with Me.

And so I would ask you: Can you do it yourself?

I think we know what the answer is, we cannot, we need to yoke with Him.

Then looking at a couple of truths in relation to this.

In order to love the Truth:

Number one: We need to know and love the One that is full of Truth.

John wrote in John 1:14, that He (Christ) is full of truth and grace, and so to love the Truth we have to love the one who is Truth. He also said I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, that is [John 14:6](#)

He invites us to come to Him, He says learn of me. And you know we are tempted along with all Christians I believe of every age to say that we know Christ when we don't really know Him very well. And in my own mind I have compared it sometimes to saying that I know someone really well but refusing to really communicate with them and refusing to ever read their books, books that they have written or letters that they have written, refusing to read them but still claiming that I know them real well, that I know them in a personal way.

And sometimes I think that is what Pietism is, it is claiming to really know someone really well without reading their book, without communicating with them, without knowing how they want us to live.

Isn't that right?

And we could ask the question: How can we know a person who lived 2000 years ago?

How can we? Is it possible to know someone like that better than we know our own families or siblings or parents or spouses or whatever the case might be?

The answer is: It is. Yes it is, it is possible.

The Apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 3:

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; ¹⁹And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." [Ephesians 3:17-19](#).

Filled with His fullness, knowing Him, knowing all four dimensions if you please.

Are we filled with Him, is our relationship with the Lord the most important thing in our lives? That is piety, and you know it doesn't take long for our children to catch on to that one way or the other what really is most important.

When we face adversity are we still thankful? Do we take to Him the cares of life and the decisions of life? Do we pray about things?

These are things that our children see and they learn what they live.

How does Christ dwell in our hearts today?

That is another question: How does He?

He lived 2000 years ago and you can go to the middle of the book, the book of John 14 where Jesus said: I am the way, the truth and the life. There is a conversation here in this book in this chapter in John 14 and Jesus said: "You have seen me, you have seen the Father." And that was in response to a question that Philip asked I believe, Philip said: Lord show us the Father and it will suffice us. Well, Jesus said, if you have seen me you have seen the Father. [John 14:8-9](#)

And then He goes on to talk of a Comforter, one who would come who would dwell with us, He would not leave us orphans but He would send someone, He is talking to his disciples but also to us today as well, someone to stay with us to be our guide, one who would bring to remembrance, one who would bring comfort and assurance, one who would bring conviction of sin and so on, the Holy Spirit. [John 14:16-31](#)

It seems as if Jesus is anticipating another question: Well how can we know You through the Spirit when you are gone?

And so a third point I would say under Learning of Him is this; in order to know the Lord Jesus Christ who is the Truth we must have His Spirit and

the Lord Jesus described this spirit as the Spirit of Truth. So we must have the Spirit of Truth.

How do we receive the Spirit?

I believe it is Mark who writes that we ask, ask and receive, if fathers enjoy giving to their children good gifts how much more does the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask? He gives that incredible gift for the asking. If you ask anything in my name I will do it. [Mark 7:7-11](#). Now that is not Pietism, it is according to the will of God that's saying: Thy will be done, and submitting ourselves to Him.

Now how can we keep the spirit of truth?

I realise we can't spend a lot of time on this, but the Bible tells us that we must not grieve the spirit or quench the spirit, in other words the spirit speaks truth and we are not to quench that, we listen, we must listen when He speaks.

Jesus said additionally: If you love me keep my commandments. [John 14:15](#)

We cannot quench truth in the form of the Word of Truth when He teaches us that we must learn, and we could go through this chapter and see some of these verses, verse 26:

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." [John 14:26](#).

When He brings it to our remembrance it is for a reason and you know maybe He brings to your remembrance some things from long ago that you wish had been taken care of but aren't. It is bringing to remembrance, what do we do with that? Do we forget it again or do we try to forget it? I don't think so. He brings it to our remembrance because it is truth.

I realise sometimes we can, at least those of us who are more sensitive, can struggle with doubts and then it is time to go to the brethren, another avenue of truth and we can find out what truth really is.

Jesus said we must abide in Him. That is how we keep the spirit of truth, we must abide in Him. That is chapter 14 verse 23 ([John 14:23](#))

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

Listen to the truth and it will stay with you.

Chapter 15, abide in me and I in you, you cannot bring forth fruit unless you are attached to the vine and to that root, you need to be attached in order to bring forth fruit. [John 15:4](#).

Well the Epistles also comment on this truth.

Romans eight, walk in the spirit, that's how to keep the spirit walk after the spirit. [Romans 8:1-5](#).

Galatians chapter 5, walk in the spirit in you shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.

Those are important words.

Galatians 5 also gives us a catalogue of what is the works of our flesh and what are the works of the spirit, [Galatians 5:16-26](#), and so we can take a few minutes in our time with the Lord as we communicate with Him and we can understand whether or not His spirit is working or whether we are quenching the spirit.

We learn of Christ, we learn of the spirit of truth and the Lord of truth through submission and humility and may I say mortifying the flesh.

Go to Colossians chapter 3, mortify therefore all those deeds of the past which are part of the flesh. [Colossians 3:5](#).

Jesus himself set us an example that we should follow in His steps. He went to Gethsemane where He said: Not my will but Thine be done. [Luke 22:42](#). And He struggled there until there was blood on His body as I understand the story, that was pain, the brother talked about pain tonight as part of the refining process, well that was pain, He left us an example that we should follow His steps, and I would say that one of the most difficult ways for us to suffer is when we have to mortify the flesh and say no.

How can we learn of Him, how can we walk with Him, how can we mortify the flesh and consider it dead when it hurts so much? How can we help our children walk in truth?

And I want to say this because I believe this is a fact: When one generation departs from truth it is because the generation before had already begun the departure process in their hearts. I think that is usually how it works because what is in our hearts is going to come out in the hearts of our children and that makes the answers and questions themselves that I have just asked very, very important.

I think as we consider those questions: How can we do this? I think we need to answer that we can't, I can't do it, we need more than what we can supply in our own strength.

Learn of Him. He invites us to yoke with Him, and I think that is the meaning of those verses when the task is hard, there is none that is easy, we need to yoke with Him because his yoke is easy and his burden is light.

The Lord through his spirit enables us to do what we cannot do by ourselves, He doesn't promise us that it is going to be easy but let me say this, that our children sense how important this is. You know if I am given to impatience or anger or a critical spirit, my children soon catch on to that, and I have had to learn some things sometimes because I have seen it in my children and I think any parent, any godly parent can testify of that.

What is in our hearts and lives, what we allow in our hearts and lives probably will be multiplied in theirs and I realise we are human and that we must yoke with Him, his yoke is easy and his burden is light because he is taking the load doesn't give us much to carry, and it is by the grace of God that our children can turn out right and make good decisions I believe, but we must do what we can.

I would like to challenge you along with myself in this way.

Now moving on to the second consideration: Walk in the Light.

So far we have talked about things that have to do with our relationship with the Lord such as abiding in Him, walking in the spirit of truth, and really there is not a lot of difference between any of the three considerations on sharing tonight whether it is learning of Him, walking in the light or loving one another, they are really pretty much the same, yet I do want to emphasise as we go along the importance of discipleship and the importance of cross bearing, the importance of obedience.

Number one: Considering walking in the Light.

When we walk in the light we have Fellowship with Him. [1 John 1:6-7](#).

I would like to consider the Apostle John's words, it would be in order to read most of chapter 1 but I'm not going to take time to do so, but he writes here [1 John 1:4](#):

"And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. ⁵This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. ⁶If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: ⁷But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." [1 John 1:4-7](#).

We have fellowship with Him when we walk in the light. We can say that both ways, you can turn walking in the light to Fellowship, you can put one first, either one first or either one last however you want to put it and I don't think we would do injustice to the wording, the teaching.

I want to emphasise that there is nothing mystical or mysterious about walking with the Lord, and sometimes Pietism makes it out to be something that is kind of mysterious, either you have it or you don't, and that is true of being a Christian I suppose but it is not mysterious, it is not mystical, we can know, we could understand what it is like to walk in the light of to have fellowship with Him.

And my second point I want to underscore this, we walk with Him, we walk in the light with an attitude of repentance or penitence.

When we come to the Lord we repent but I think it is also true that we live that lifestyle, we live a penitent lifestyle realising that we are prone to sin, prone to wander Lord I feel it. Not that we plan to sin and not that we excuse sin but we live understanding that we our fallen by nature.

Now it says here in [1 John](#) that if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. [1 John 1:8-9](#).

It is a promise, a very precious promise of the Scripture. The blood of Jesus Christ cleans up and it cleans up lifestyles.

With could also say our life, the Christian life, is a process of being cleaned up. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin, it is a process of being cleaned up not only because we fail sometimes and need the Advocate that he talks about in chapter 2 verse 1 and 2 ([1 John 2:1-2](#)) but also because the spirit of truth sanctifies us through the washing of the

water of the word, through the help of the brethren, where ever truth is He sanctifies us through truth.

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. [2 Corinthians 3:18](#).

And that Scripture I think is referring to light although it does not speak directly of light.

To be concluded next month.



CONTENTMENT

"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." 1Timothy 6:6-8. There is much in these verses, and yet, it seems, we still have many questions.

We can have many things and still be discontented which says that contentment probably depends largely on our attitude. The dictionary defines contentment as "satisfaction, being pleased, or ease of mind." The last definition impressed me. We have a lot more than we need, and yet we still tend to worry much about how things will turn out.

Another sign that we are not content is when we do a lot of comparing with others. Proverbs 15:16 reads, "Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith." Happiness has nothing to do with how much we have or don't have. It is a heart matter. "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" 1 Timothy 6:9 Hebrews 13:5 says, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." What more could we want but for the Almighty One to promise that He would be with us?

Thankfulness is necessary, and maybe cannot be separated from contentment. "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually: that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name" (Hebrews 13:15).

Brother Lynwood.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH VERSUS CHANGE

It has pleased God to give life a small beginning, physically and spiritually, and He has made provision for necessary growth. Physical growth is not as problematic as spiritual growth. God has not only made provision for growth; it is in His divine will that man should mature. "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" 2 Peter 3:18. It is said that Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favour with God and man, Luke 2:52. This growth shall continue until the Christian comes into "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" Ephesians 4:13.

Points of particular interest are: growth in knowledge of our Lord; increase in wisdom; and growth in favour with God, coming to a full-grown man.

In this day of much learning, new ideas, new interpretations, and new concepts in most fields are emerging. The Bible, with all that is written and in all that it stands for, has become a fertile field for research, to the extent that much that was light has become darkness and that which was once knowledge has become ignorance. Change is interpreted as growth, or as a departure from life as a child unto maturity.

It is important to note that growth is an increase in size by adding new matter into the living organism, whereas to change is to alter by substituting foreign matter.

The eight-pound boy at birth becomes a 150-pound young man in his late teens. It is the same boy, only more of him. He has not changed—the temperament is the same, the vital body organs are the same, and he has the same parents. This is growth. What he has put on is a composition of the original substances.

The green twig stuck into the ground by the horticulturist buds and shoots forth many branches in a few years, increasing to ten feet in height and many feet across, and bears fruit. It is still the same twig, but much more of it. This is growth, for it is an increase of the original.

The illustrations are not a matter of change, but of growth, for in changing there is a moving away from the original and substituting something of a different organism.

A mature man whose life has been moulded in sinful living from

boyhood becomes a new creature in Christ upon accepting Christ as Saviour through the process of the new birth. Even though he is a babe in Christ, he walks in the newness of life. He is different! It is not spiritual growth that makes him different, but a change of attitude or affection, of desires and choices. This man has changed. What you see of him now are not new shoots from the original. The former has perished, and a new man has come forth.

A "babe in Christ" is made partaker of a divine nature in Christ Jesus, and the characteristics are humility, meekness, and openness to correction and teaching. Since he is born of God, he naturally accepts the teachings of the Lord as direction for his life. He also accepts those of like precious faith as his brothers and sisters in the Lord, desiring to be in their fellowship. In this fellowship, each one endeavours to enlarge their understanding of the Lord and His plan for mankind. This knowledge is an incentive to unite all in the faith, to be one in understanding and wisdom. As each one continues in this way, they increase in the knowledge of the Lord and in favour with God and come unto the full stature in Christ.

In this process, many times certain scriptures become more meaningful and some obscure passages become real relevant. The doctrines of the Word and the regulations of the Church take on a new dimension. This is growth. It adds new matter to the living organism. This is not change. The properties are the same.

It is not uncommon to have someone remark that when he accepted the Lord and the Church, he did not understand much about the matter. In those young years, his confession of faith was shrouded in ignorance, but now he feels different about some things. This is growth, an increase in knowledge and understanding. It does not take away from the original, but adds to it. However, it must be said that when new beliefs and new light place a shadow on the confession of faith—of separation, nonconformity, nonresistance, submission, and obedience to authority—it is not growth, for the simple reason that it is not an increase of the original organism. It is a change of views.

The Scriptures say that in God, the Father of lights, there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning, James 1:17. This would mean that when God turns, He casts no shadow. We know that God has turned, doing not what He said He would. But in so doing, it was for salvation for mankind and for a glory to His name. Too often a Christian who is

considered rooted and settled casts a shadow upon his integrity by a change in attitude or behaviour. "I had a lot of faith in my brother, thinking he was sound and stable, but after what he did the other day, I am in trouble."

To move away from restricted zones into areas where one can have more liberties, even believing to enjoy the fellowship of the Spirit more by not being hampered by former convictions and regulations, cannot be growth, for it is an exchange of ideas.

Another important item in growth versus change is proportion—the relationship of one part to another. That eight-pound boy has a proportioned body. Every member is of normal size, giving good balance. When matured, the body is much larger but still properly proportioned; every member is healthy and able to coordinate. The same is true of the twig in becoming a tree. Its branches are proportioned, well-rounded and standing erect.

The Christian begins as a babe in Christ. When he reaches a matured state, he is still proportioned—not top-heavy, not lopsided, not maimed, but well-balanced.

God has so ordained that all living things are proportioned, which gives balance and coordination. However, some Christians, in their attitudes and behaviour, are like trees with growing branches on one side and withering branches on the other, resulting in a decided leaning and being subject to breaking.

Those who are majoring in God's love, mercy, and longsuffering are underestimating the importance of God's holiness, righteousness, and judgment at the same time. Or when the emphasis is placed too much on love, joy, and peace, one is apt to lose sight of self-denial, cross bearing, and ignoring the world. Such attitudes are not conducive to spiritual growth, for they do violence to Bible teaching.

To accept the Bible, with all that it stands for, as the pure inspired Word of God and later qualify some parts of it as of man and not inspired is change and not growth.

To accept a belief as a conviction from God upon receiving peace and forgiveness, and later to believe it to have been an emotional affair is change and not growth.

To accept the Church as the Lord's body and vow fidelity to what she subscribes and then later lower her to the level of other churches is change and not growth.

To accept only those who belong to the same fellowship as brothers and sisters in the faith and later incorporate all who follow Christ is change.

To receive the Church's interpretation of Bible doctrines as authentic and later identify them as rules of men is change.

To accept it as scriptural to discipline disobedient members, even to the point of excommunication, and later apply it only to grave sins is change.

To believe that the scriptural avoidance was meant to be physical as well as spiritual and later believe it to be only spiritual is change.

To believe that the marriage vow is for life, for better or worse, and to now believe marriage can be dissolved by divorce and one can marry another is change.

To believe that the Scriptures ask parents to administer the rod of discipline to their children in order to bring them back into obedience and to later come to tolerate "free expression," hoping experience will mould them, is change.

All these items are not a shoot from the original organism; consequently, they are change and not growth.

What then shall be said about the updating and modernizing among the believers and also in the Church? There are things tolerated, used, and sanctioned now that were not acceptable a century ago. Is it growth, or is it change? Does it add to spiritual life, or does it subtract from spiritual life? There are the telephone, the car, the modern power machinery, the new homes, the furnishings, the clothing styles, etc. Upon what basis can it be said that it is not change but growth?

The Bible speaks about the four corners of the earth, but when it is generally accepted that the earth is round and has no corners, it does not cast a shadow upon God's creation. The Bible speaks about the sun standing still for a given length of time; it is now generally accepted that the sun is stationary and the earth revolves, but that casts no shadow upon the matter in hand. So, also, in Christian progressiveness there are those items that, at first glance, are not beneficial for Christian life or work. But, upon a second look, it is evident that they would help promote a good cause, even to the edifying of the saints and the saving of the lost. Then, if they can be adopted with unity and in fellowship, it can be growth. If in any way it weakens or impairs a doctrine, it is not growth, but change.

We teach consistency and moderation, for this is Gospel. However, we will admit that the landmark of consistency in dress and other matters has

been moved in the last century. Today we request consistency in dress, homes, furnishings, and cars. We stress moderation in operations and holdings, for it is scriptural. However, in this there is a wide margin from a century ago. We would say that it is not change, but growth, for it does no violence to consistency or moderation and it makes the total effort more effective. It must be admitted, though, that in some areas we have allowed and accepted things that have not stimulated spiritual growth. Rather, they have caused retardation.

It will be important to note what those items of the past that were accepted after controversy and some degree of reluctance have done to the witness and to the fellowship and to the expansion of the Lord's work.

The assignments of the Church have been many and far-reaching. If the methods of communication, the methods of conveyance, and the knowledge of how to earn for our own bread and for the poor and to spread the Gospel had not been changed or improved upon, the outreach of the Church would not be what it is today. That which increases Christian witness and makes the work of the Lord more efficient and effective should be considered as growth.

The Church is always going through painful times, and hopefully they can be growing pains and not dying pains.

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HONOURABLE CONVERSATION

"Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" Colossians 4:6.

God has blessed mankind with the ability of communication. The tongue, our minds, eyes, ears, and hands all help us in making communication with our fellowmen. This is important in our homes, places of work, social life, schools, and fellowship with our fellow believers.

"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers" Ephesians 4:29. We are given a mind that controls what comes out of our mouth. It makes a big difference if the mind and heart have been regenerated. God's plan in creation is that man would use his tongue in a

beneficial way, in the way that would encourage his fellowmen. Thanks be to God that we can be converted from the old to a new and living way, that we can use our tongue in a wise manner.

"For of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh" Luke 6:45.

It is easy for us to talk about the things that our fill our lives and capture our interests. We like to talk about something new that excites us, the things we are involved in, happenings of our loved ones, or ego-builders that might just give us a status among our peers. Exaggerating and adding to some interesting account is sometimes used as a lever to give us a greater audience. The abundance of the heart could indicate to us where our treasure is. Would God that we sometimes listen to ourselves talking?

"Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another" Romans 12:10.

A converted heart and mind realizes his need of others. There is an appreciation for fellowship. His eyes are turned away from himself, and he sees his fellowmen. There is a desire within to communicate with others. The one who tends to talk too much denies himself so others get a chance to join in. He also has his mind open to the fact that he doesn't have all the answers or that his ideas may not be the best ones. We need to visit in a way that all may be involved. This requires a desire to hear what our fellowmen have to say and what they have experienced. Youth need to exercise wholesome visiting. Light talk, foolishness, laughing, and teasing lead to emptiness and are often a fruit of an inferior feeling.

It is needful for us to deny ourselves in these areas. We need to visit in a way that invites thoughts, answers, and experiences from our bystanders. God has given us sound minds that we can bring forth something that encourages and edifies.

We need to consider our motive when we are tempted to correct or improve on someone else's story. Facts may be brought in that, to our thinking, are incorrect. Many times it is of little importance to the account if these facts are not completely accurate. It is our pride that would like to get in there and show our knowledge on the matter, thereby taking credit away from the speaker.

There is a temptation to use our tongue in a destructive way. We need to constantly guard this area. God does not want us to cut down our fellow brother. The one we sometimes are tempted to criticize or make fun of is one of God's children. He is one for whom Christ has died, or like one

verse puts it, is "made after the similitude of God" James 3:9. Bad stories that come around should be stopped between our ears and our mouths. Let us rather let our love reach out to our brother or sister whom the negative story is about and consider it misplaced or exaggerated. Or it may have been a slip-up, and the brother who told the story is sorry he did. Just like we would want a negative story about ourselves treated, let us do the same for others. "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise" Luke 6:31.

"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" 1 Peter 4:11. Our tongue should be used to honour and glorify God. The person with a converted heart has a divine assignment for his tongue. By it we can spread the glad tidings of salvation. Our witness can be a help whereby individuals can find the Lord. May we ever be ready to "give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" 1 Peter 3:15.

Self-denial is very necessary in our talking. We should let questionable words go through God's screen before we allow them to proceed out of our mouths. It can make such a big difference if we say words to honour ourselves or if we endeavour to honour God. That life coal that touched Isaiah's tongue, Isaiah. 6:6, is still available to help us so that the words of our mouths may be a benefit to our fellowman.



COURAGE TO CORRECT THE DRIFT

Sometimes we hear or say that there is a drift in the church. What do we mean by that term, considering that Jesus said, in Matthew 16:18, that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"?

This thought intrigued me, especially after I realized that "drift" is not in the Bible. The dictionary gives several definitions: to wander from a set course or point or destination; to move leisurely or sporadically from place to place, especially without regular employment and with no particular goal; a deviation from an original model, method or intention.

Looking at the above definitions, I wondered whether this is happening in the church Jesus established? If it is, it is something that is very serious and spiritually life-threatening to the church.

When a ship leaves port with its cargo or for whatever mission, it does not go without a planned course and point of destination. It may sometimes change course because of varied circumstances, such as, weather, sickness on board, mechanical problems, or even if attacked by pirates. Are we facing severe trials and hardship, or has sailing been too easy and casual, causing us to get sidetracked? "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" Galatians 6:9; 2 Thessalonians. 3:13.

What might cause or influence our sidetracking? None other than Satan and his evil spirits. And he has his ever-faithful ally, the world, which our flesh reaches out for.

Let us focus on "that which is highly esteemed among men" Luke 16:15. Then we can let God show us if these things are in our lives and if they are having an effect on our spiritual man. Jesus' said, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil" John 17:15. We know that the world gets a hold on us in a very small ways. We sometimes remark, "Let the devil have your little finger, and he will take the whole hand." Song of Solomon 2:15 talks about "the little foxes, that spoil the vines."

There is a spirit in the world that takes away the distinction of the two sexes. One way this shows itself is in men and women wearing the same clothes or almost the same. We notice women wearing clothes with a masculine look and men with feminine looking clothes. Some women's casual shoes look like a remodelled work shoe for men. "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God" Deuteronomy 22:5.

There is a spirit of immodesty that displays the body sensually. Some manner of dress may become immodest when certain activity is engaged in or games played. "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array" 1 Timothy 2:9.

The spirit of entertainment is a big thing in the world. It shows itself in many different ways and really is a result of restlessness. Among

Christians it gains an inroad partly because the eyes of the people are not fixed on the "goal" and the soul is not at peace and rest. We all know that the spirit of entertainment is behind television and radio, but this spirit has reached into many areas. Electronic equipment, meant to be a tool, now has some sort of entertainment with it.

The fast pace of life in America and Western society generally is primarily because of rushing here and there trying to make it to this game or social or some source of entertainment. Thus home life is squandered. Meals are eaten on the run or not at all. Small wonder there are so many more restaurants than there used to be. We hear the concern that too many of us do not spend enough time at home. What are we doing with those evenings away from home? Could it be that we are reaching out for entertainment? Has this spirit made an inroad into our school programs and functions and, God forbid, our sanctuaries? Let us be careful, for we read in 2 Timothy 4:3, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears."

The spirit of covetousness or materialism has had an open field in many ways. It is aided by the easy credit system so one can live above his or her means and almost enjoy a luxurious lifestyle. "Let your conversation [walk of life] be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" Hebrews 13:5.

There is another misplaced affection in our world, and it is increasing as time goes on. "Inordinate affection" Colossians 3:5, could apply to this one, which could include man's intemperate affection to pets. Some are treated better than one's fellow human being. This is probably because of selfishness in that a person can't get along with people. People are willing to pay a very high price for a purebred or a pet that is "highly esteemed" because of being featured in a certain movie. They will live and even sleep with them. God made some animals special as useful pets, but man has missed the point and taken it too far!

There is a spirit of casualness, manifested in that not very much really matters, and if it doesn't bother me than it is okay. If this spirit is in our hearts, it renders us powerless to call sin sin and to reprove one another as we are commanded in Galatians 6:1, and also in Matthew 18:15. May we look at our hearts, asking God to help search our lives. Do these things and

spirits have more influence in my life than twenty years ago or even ten years ago? "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set" Proverbs 22:28. History shows us that if a weakness in a parent is not corrected, the children will have a tendency to carry it further yet!

The burden and concern of this article is not as much about a drift as a complacency and feeling of helplessness portrayed when this issue is discussed. "Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" Romans 8:39.

We must arise to the challenge and defeat self and Satan with the power of Jesus Christ and His shed blood. We know God will fight our battles for us if we repent and in humility ask Him to help us. There are many examples of the children of Israel repeatedly falling into idolatry (misplaced affection). Due to their life of ease, they were unconcerned for the "affliction of Joseph" (the church) and were conquered and taken captive. Amos 6:1-8 is a real warning for us today. The warning is not only for the individuals who are carnal but also for those who are unconcerned about the carnality (the affliction of Joseph) in their brothers and sisters in the faith.

The same holds true today just like for the children of Israel. If we allow these things and spirits in our lives, we will be conquered and taken captive spiritually, unless we repent and turn away from them. The Bible is full of promises of God's help and grace for us in these last and perilous times and this paper could never contain them all.

Brother Nathan.

"But he that shall endure unto the end,
The same shall be saved"

Matthew 24:13



LITERATURE IN THE HOME

Train up a child in the way he should go.

Proverbs 22:6.

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church.

Ephesians 5:25.

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

Ephesians 5:22.

As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

Joshua 24:15.

Extract From: The Gospel Herald, July 13, 1911.

Choose with Care

The Bible should be the main book in the home. Have each child at least to own a Testament. Allow them to join in the family worship by reading their verse in turn, as soon as they are able to read. Teach them to find Bible references, Sunday school lessons, etc. As a rule they will enjoy it as much as playing a game.

Aside from the Bible young people should be provided with religious books and papers. These will help to draw the mind toward the Bible. The home should possess more bookcases than china closets. Choose your books for them, or they will choose them themselves in public libraries, daily newspapers and cheap magazines. Why do young minds crave for this trashy reading? Because “luck” rules, and not that of “reaping what we have sown.”

This impure literature can be obtained for only a few cents and thus is very hard to keep out of the homes. It were better if those papers were burned than to allow them about the home. Many parents are not aware of the great danger.

Encourage the studious boy or girl by giving them so much wholesome literature that they have no time for the impure. Here I would suggest weekly or monthly papers which are issued by religious publications. Have confidence in the editors before subscribing. This will bring new material in the home each week. Some people object to stories, but as a rule a child will grasp the thought better by having it arranged in story form; showing that other children have the same temptations and enjoyment as they have themselves. Then as they grow older they can understand the same without illustrations.

Jennie Ebersole.

The Correct Standard

Jesus says, “Search the scriptures.” [John 5:39] Paul says, “Give attendance to reading.” [1 Timothy 4:13] In both these sayings we see that long before the art of printing was discovered, the influence of literature was known. How much more emphatically is it true now when literature of all kinds is within reach of all classes. The majority of people like to read, and the important question regarding literature is what shall we read, and what shall our children read.

The Bible stands at the head of all literature. Nothing ever has or will equal it. It gives us all necessary information regarding our duties toward God and our fellow man, and what we need to know concerning the life to come. And while we can not expect anyone to read nothing else, it should be read much, and is the standard by which other reading matter should be selected.

Not that everything need be religious. Much literature may make no reference to the Bible or to religious subjects, and yet be highly edifying; while a book or an article may contain many scriptural quotations and much on religious subjects, and yet be positively harmful. That which in any way increases the distance between us and our God, or makes His will distasteful to us is dangerous and should be avoided.

On the contrary that which draws us nearer to God and to our fellow man, creates in us a greater esteem for His works and His Word, and a greater desire and greater ability to do His will as He reveals it to us, that is beneficial and can be read with profit. Let this rule govern the selection of our own reading matter, and as far as possible that of our children.

Jacob H. Mellinger.

N.B. To be concluded in the March issue with comments on: What Kind to Admit, Selection of Literature for the Home, What to Read and Cultivating Right Desires.

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