

I
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

MAKING A FRESH START

“That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” “But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.” Ephesians 4:22-24 & Romans 13:14.

WE CAN all start afresh! However far we have ascended, there is something higher; and however far we have fallen, it is always possible to make a fresh start. We need to take our place in the School of Christ and be taught by Him

"The old man" which we must "put off" is clearly our former manner of life. If we have not put it entirely away, let us do so now by an immediate act of faith in the living Spirit. It does not take long for a beggar to put off his rags and take instead a new suit of clothes, and it need not take a moment longer to put away habits and thoughts, ways of speech and life which are unworthy of the children of God. Do it now and look up to the Holy Spirit to keep renewing you in the spirit of your mind.

But more than this, let us "put on the new man," which is the life of Jesus Christ, that ideal which is in the likeness of God, and which the Lord created for us by His blessed life and death and resurrection. But to enable us to live this life we need the daily help of the Holy Spirit who entered our hearts at the moment of regeneration, and has been with us ever since. Let us begin every day, before lifting our head from the pillow, by saying, "Thou art within, O Spirit of Christ, though I feel Thee not."

If the Holy Spirit be not grieved He will witness to our sonship; He will enthrone Christ as King of our life; will keep the self-life in the place of death; will give us a hunger for the things of God; He will give power in witness-bearing. In order to have a strong and blessed Christian experience, the one thing is to see that we do not grieve the Spirit. I do not think that we can grieve Him away, but we may greatly limit and restrain His gracious work by insincerity of speech, the nursing of an unforgiving spirit, any kind of over-reaching or fraudulent dealing, impurity of speech, or failure in love. Let us take care not grieve Him by such inconsistencies.



Across the Pulpit.

Separated Unto God.

*Extract from a message by Harold B. Good, Part 1.
Danskin Mennonite Church 2006.*

This evening I would like to think about some principles of separation as we see them in the life of Joseph.

Now the doctrine or teaching of separation, separation between the people of God and those who are not following God is taught through out the scriptures.

Separation began with the fall of Lucifer when he rose up in rebellion against God, lifted himself up in pride and said: I will be like the most high, I will sit on the sides of the North; and God cast him out. God didn't say: Well Lucifer I realise that maybe I have been unfair with you and I didn't give you as much honour as you probably deserve and don't get so worked up about this thing, we will get something worked out here.

God didn't say that. God cast him out and ever since then there are in existence two great systems, spiritual forces and entities. These systems are at war with each other, there is a declared war between them and they will never ever be reconciled.

On one side is God and righteousness and on the other side the devil and evil and darkness. Those systems do exist and they will never ever, as I said, be reconciled. And what's more man is the battleground in this war. Both sides are against each other and both sides want man's loyalty and allegiance. The devil wants you and God wants you.

You say: "Well that really isn't fair is it? We had nothing to do with the existence of these two systems, we had nothing to do with the devil rising up in rebellion and being cast out of heaven then, that's between God and the devil. What do I have in it?"

We could reason like that, but you know tonight whether it is really fair or not is beside the point, the fact is that that is the way it is, it's the way it is and the sooner we reckon with that the better off we will be. God was very concerned through the Old Testament that his people would not mix with

the heathen around them. He said in [Leviticus 20:26](#): “And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD *am* holy, and have severed you from *other* people, that ye should be mine.”

Now we often think of the doctrine of separation from a negative viewpoint and we think about being separated from the world and that is what separation is, separation from the world but it is also being separated to God.

I would like us to think about the positive side where he says: "I have severed you from other people that ye should be mine." I have called you for myself.

Now when we think of separation from the world what is the world?

Well it is not this earth, it is not the cosmos, it is not the material universe that we can see, that is not what we are supposed to be separated from but it is the world order or system which is wicked and alienated from God and yet it may be cultured, educated and powerful, it is the system over which Satan is the head, fallen angels or demons are his servants and all men, all unsaved mankind are of his subjects. The Bible refers to Satan as the god of this world.

Also sometimes the word ‘world’ has been defined with the word ‘age,’ if you have a Bible with a centre reference it will give some alternate translations you will probably find in the New Testament many times where the word world is used and in this sense, at least an alternate suggestion in the centre reference, the centre column will be age. And we sometimes describe it as the spirit of the times, the age, the force that is moving people under dominion of the devil.

Now thinking about Joseph.

I'm thinking about the time when his family came from Canaan to dwell in the land of Egypt and how Joseph exercised and carried out the principle of separation. Now we know how Joseph got to Egypt, we know that his brothers envied him and they despised him because the dreams that he had had and because his father loved him above the rest of the brothers. We know what happened to Joseph in Egypt. He was fully trusted by his master, Potiphar, until he was falsely accused by Potiphar's wife and was cast into prison and then he was brought out of prison because he interpreted a dream for Pharaoh and he prophesied the famine that would come, the

seven good years and then the seven lean years and Pharaoh made him head over all that process, he put him in charge of gathering in the store during the seven good years so that there would be plenty.

Now we know that Joseph got to the place he did because of his steadfastness, his commitment to purity and holiness, he did not yield to sin, he said: How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God? And God used him in a mighty way.

I'm going to read from Genesis chapter 46 verse 31 through to the verse 10 of chapter 47.

[Genesis 46:31-34](#)

“And Joseph said unto his brethren, and unto his father's house, I will go up, and shew Pharaoh, and say unto him, My brethren, and my father's house, which *were* in the land of Canaan, are come unto me; ³²And the men *are* shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed cattle; and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have. ³³And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What *is* your occupation? ³⁴That ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we, *and* also our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd *is* an abomination unto the Egyptians.

[Genesis 47:1-10](#)

Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they *are* in the land of Goshen. ²And he took some of his brethren, *even* five men, and presented them unto Pharaoh. ³And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, What *is* your occupation? And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants *are* shepherds, both we, *and* also our fathers. ⁴They said moreover unto Pharaoh, For to sojourn in the land are we come; for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks; for the famine *is* sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen. ⁵And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee: ⁶The land of Egypt *is* before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest *any* men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle. ⁷And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

⁸And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old *art* thou? ⁹And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage *are* an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage. ¹⁰And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.”

Joseph said to his brothers now when you come into Pharaoh and he asks you what your work is, what you do, you tell him you're shepherds, you tell him that you herd cattle and you have brought your herds and flocks, because every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians.

Wasn't that a strange request to make? Wasn't that a strange thing for Joseph to say?

I would like to think about the request for separation. This was a deliberate request. Joseph intended to have his family separated from the rest of the Egyptians, the rest of the people in the land. This was intentional, separation requires initiative and effort, it doesn't just happen. Separation was believed and applied because they choose to do so, they believed that it was important and valuable and they choose to believe it and apply it, they needed to see the value of it.

Now I think that the separation that we see in the life of Joseph is related to humility and we see the evidence of Joseph's humility earlier in the scriptures that we read in [Genesis 41:16](#): "And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, *It is* not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace."

That was when he was brought in to interpret the dream. Joseph said it is not in me. He was a man of humility, he understood that it was God that was working in him.

Then if you go to chapter 45 and verse seven he says to his brothers: [Genesis 45:7](#): "And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance."

There again he saw the hand of God in it all, God over-ruling. We see his attitude toward position and we also see his attitude towards his brethren, he wasn't retaliating against them, he identified with them, we see his attitude toward them in that verse I just read Gen.45:7 and then also in chapter 47 when he took his brothers to see Pharaoh.

You know pride wants man's approval. Humility cares nothing for fame or the approval of the world or of carnal men.

Now just think about how differently Joseph might have talked to his brothers when they came.

Here he was, perhaps second to Pharaoh, with a lot of position and a lot of authority and prominence in the Egyptian government, well known and respected, and here comes his nomadic family, following their flocks and their herds from the land of Canaan. And if Joseph would have been an ordinary person, if he would have been like most people are, if he would not have been a great man as far as his faith was concerned he probably would have said something more like this:

“Now brothers and dad I'm glad you're here, I'm glad to help you out but you have to realise that I have a very, very important position here and I must be careful that you don't in any way jeopardise that position. So when you go into Pharaoh with me, since shepherds and people who herd, who take care of the herds, since they are an abomination unto the Egyptians by all means whatever you do don't let Pharaoh know what your work is.”

Wouldn't that have been more normal? Wouldn't that have been more like men tend to think? But instead Joseph said: “Be sure to tell Pharaoh that you are shepherds because every shepherd is an abomination.” He gave that as a reason as to why they should do it.

The request for separation recognises the enmity that exists between these two great systems that I was talking about, there is enmity between, and God placed the enmity there and God placed the enmity between man and evil. What did God say to the serpent in Genesis chapter 3? And I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed.

And Joseph recognised the enmity here in Egypt, I have already touched on that, we saw that in chapter 46 verse 34, for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians. And if you go to chapter 43 and verse 32 you have this idea again, this was when the tables were set out for a meal for Joseph's brothers: "And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves: because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians." [Genesis 43:32](#).

Now Joseph could have said: “I can't really be identified with you, brothers, because you are Hebrews and they are an abomination to the Egyptians.”

The request for separation appreciates the existing barriers and maintains rather than attempting to remove them, but that is natural man's tendency. Our carnal nature would lead us to get rid of those barriers but a man of faith that understands the value of separation will appreciate those barriers. Maybe an application we could make is relating to our church discipline and standards that are established by the church. Do we see that as something as a necessary evil that we wish we could get out from under or do we see it as a protection and something that we do not need to chafe under? But we can appreciate it because the barriers that it establishes to help us keep separated from the world.

Let's recognise the enmity that exists and take advantage of it.

Now separation also involves identification with God's people.

We see this in chapter 47 verses one through three how that when Joseph family came he identified with them, notice in verse one: Joseph came and told Pharaoh and said: My father and my brethren. He identified gladly with his family, with the people of God, the children of Israel those who were following God.

We may not be ashamed to be identified with God's people because that is a part of identifying with God, we can't be on God's side without identifying with the other people that are on God's side and identify with the followers of God, the people of God.

There is many a person that has been taught the right things and grew up among the followers of God who became ashamed of that identification and tried to separate himself from them.

Now this request for separation needs to be both personal and collective.

We belong to a church, most of us here this evening are part of a church that believes in separation and practices some separation. But you know the church is made up of individuals and whilst there is some variation in conviction it must be a personal conviction and a personal desire for separation on the part of the members of the church, we can't just think of it in the collective sense.

And I would like to challenge us as individuals this evening, and I am going to say a little bit more about that later as I make more applications, but do we see our responsibilities as individuals in the church to do our part in maintaining the practice of this doctrine?

I also would say yet about the request for separation that it needs to be practical.

You know there are a lot of professing Christians who would tell you they believe the Bible teaches this but when it actually comes to carrying it out in practice then it is a different story. But just think about all the areas of our lives that are touched by this doctrine, and if we don't practice it then we don't really believe it, if we don't work it out in a practical application. But this doctrine, this request for separation, the doctrine and teaching of separation in the Bible affects the way we dress, the kind of houses we live in, the kind of cars, vehicles we drive, the places we go, how we spend our leisure time, it affects and directs our speech, our social life, and church buildings and the kind of services we have, our relation to the state, our view of education, our understanding and view of business and occupation, our associations with others.

Are any of those things I mentioned not touched by Bible principles and not in any way related to this doctrine of separation from the world? I think it touches all those areas.

Now next, and were going to come back to this part a little later and make a few applications, but I would like to now think about: The reason for separation.

We notice that this was somewhat of a strange request that Joseph made but why did he do it? What did he see important about it?

Well he did it to maintain a difference between the Egyptians and the Hebrews. And you could say: "Well why, why would he want to do that, why did he want to maintain that difference? There must have been something more than a local reason?" And the reason that he wanted to do that and the reason he saw it necessary, the reason that he wanted the children of Israel to live by themselves in the land of Goshen rather than to be absorbed in the Egyptian culture was because he knew that their stay was temporary, they were not there to stay, their stay in the land of Goshen was for a period of time. Now it was for a long time but it was a period of time.

In chapter 47 verse four it says: "They said moreover unto Pharaoh: For to sojourn in the land that we come." They were not coming to become Egyptians, they came down there to get food because of the famine and they were there for a time, to sojourn. They looked forward to a time when

God would deliver them from the land of Egypt. Now you could say it was 400 years of sojourning! Well compared to eternity it is.

In Genesis chapter 15 we have God telling Abraham what would take place with his descendants, in [Genesis 15:13-14](#):

“And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; ¹⁴And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.”

Now this understanding that their stay in Egypt was temporary was an expression of faith and a matter of faith.

I would just like to notice a couple more scriptures here in the book of Genesis that showed this faith and showed it expressed, in Genesis chapter 48 we have Jacob blessing Joseph's sons, verse 21 of chapter 48, "And Israel said unto Joseph behold I die but God, *now notice this*, but God shall be with you and bring you again into the land of your fathers." God shall be with you.

And then when Jacob was about to die and he blessed his sons which we have the record of in [Genesis 49:29](#), notice what he says: "And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that *is* in the field of Ephron the Hittite."

Why did he request that? Because he knew that they were not there to stay and then also Joseph in chapter 50 when he was coming to the point of death.

[Genesis 50:24-25](#): “And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. ²⁵And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.”

He didn't say they had to take him back when he dies and bury him like they did Jacob but he said: God will surely visit you and when he does and brings you out of here you take my bones along.

And the writer to the Hebrews commenting on this says: That by faith Joseph made commandment concerning his bones. By faith.

Brother Harold's message will be concluded in the February issue by looking at what are the applications for us of being separated unto God.



Down Life's Path

Many go down life's path with lofty plans
To amass a great fortune of houses and lands
And to live a life of pleasure and ease,
Thinking happiness can be found in these.
Others pursue power and worldwide fame
To be known by all and win their acclaim.
But those without Christ who attain these goals
Soon find emptiness remains in their souls.
They could not find true happiness
For life's void cannot be filled with this.
If only they realized this will not last
For life is fleeting and will soon be past.
Wealth, worldly pleasure, fame, and power
Will all be gone at death's dark hour.
And beyond the grave when eternity begins
Those unsaved will be judged for their sins!
If only they would believe in God's Son
And repent of the sinful deeds they've done,
Then they could go down life's path
Not needing to worry about God's wrath.
They would have the joy they longed for,
Inner peace, contentment, and much more
For when their lives come to an end
An eternity in Heaven they would spend!

—Perry Boardman



THE GIFT OF UNITY

One of the glorious aspects of the Church of God revealed to the prophets in old time was its beautiful oneness. Speaking of the gospel era, the prophets wrote: "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion" Isaiah 52:8. "And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them" Jeremiah 32:39.

Thanks be to God that the time for which "the prophets have inquired and searched diligently" 1 Peter 1:10, has dawned. Today God's people can enjoy the wonderful blessing of heartfelt agreement in doctrine and practice because of the blessed work of His Holy Spirit. When we surrender our will to His, unity is the natural outcome. Our spiritual eyes and ears are opened so we can understand the proper application of God's will to everyday life. As He fills our hearts with His love, we become considerate of others instead of selfish and independent. Love motivates us to a life of service that makes us co-workers with our brethren.

Nations strive for unity. "United we stand," they say, and truly so. A disjointed, independently working army is an easy prey. At best, though, nations can only unite their people on the broadest principles. They speak of unity yet prize their independence. So is the heart of man. On the one hand, we long for the fellowship and security unity brings. On the other, we want nothing infringing on our rights and wishes. Discord, competitiveness, strife, hatred, and many other evil traits are the works of the devil which result from the proud, independent nature of man.

God is a God of unity. His perfection includes unity, harmony, and consistency. Therefore when He works in His children, it always tends toward those beautiful traits. Our Lord has made it amply plain in His Word that He has provided for a supernatural oneness in His children. The Holy Spirit's work in our hearts will invariably create a longing for being united with those who love God.

True unity cannot be imposed. Those who merely submit and comply in a self-saving way will often have inner conflicts which they will not long be able to hide. Unity may be feigned, but sooner or later it will be evident that our peace is not complete. We sometimes want to appear to agree with our brethren while knowing deep in our heart that we are not in harmony, yet not wanting to admit it. This is the beginning of deception. Insincere

unity is not unity at all. It would be much better to honestly face our disagreement and resolve it in a God-fearing way.

Unity is not maintained among us simply for the sake of unity. Rather it is an indicator, like the temperature of 98.6 degrees is to the human body. It is a sign that all is functioning normally. When one's temperature is either above or below normal, we become alarmed and start looking for causes. The same is true regarding unity and our spiritual man. When we cannot harmonize with the general conviction of the spiritual brotherhood and the faith once delivered to the saints, we must view it with alarm. The greater the deviation from the normal, the greater the concern that something is amiss in our relationship to the Head, which is Jesus.

Sowing discord is judged in the Scriptures as a sin and ranks with pride, lying, and the shedding of innocent blood Proverbs 6:17-19. In every case, sin is the cause of discord. It was never in God's plan for His children. Criticalness, offense, self-will, and evil speaking are the tools of discord. When one's life becomes discordant, out of harmony with the brotherhood, it is evident that he is out of fellowship with God as well. Just as the Bible says that we cannot love God whom we cannot see while hating our brother whom we see, so we cannot be in fellowship with God and out of fellowship with His children.

Keeping ourselves in unity sometimes requires an effort, as Paul pointed out in Ephesians 4:3: "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." It takes "endeavoring" because our natural tendency is to not yield to the light of our brother unless it agrees with our own idea. The gentle discipline of the Holy Spirit will always point us back to full surrender, which is the basis of all true fellowship.

With unity comes order. Order is God's gift to His children and provides security and quietness. Order gives the message of God's people a clear ring to their observers. The natural agreement demonstrated in His church is a restful oasis in our bold, self-assertive world.

Peace making and fellowship are further fruits of the unifying Spirit of God. His children are never satisfied as long as there is discord. When they sense a breach of fellowship, their prayers begin to ascend, and they seek opportunity to reconcile. Neither are they satisfied with a superficial reconciliation. Experiences could be told of those who repeatedly sought reconciliation because they sensed a lingering discord.

Unity does not preclude individuality. God is a God of variety, as His

magnificent creation testifies. The church also is blessed with a multitude of varied gifts, 1 Corinthians 12:18-25. Each of these gifts works a little differently. The many family and cultural backgrounds in the Church give multiple viewpoints on every issue. Such variety lends breadth and vitality to the body. Yet in their diversity, these gifts labor for the benefit of the whole. They offer and submit their views to the brotherhood if perhaps they may be of benefit. It is not in the heart of the Spirit-led Christian to impose his opinion on the Church. In love, he only seeks to glorify God with his contributions.

Some may question what degree of unity we may expect. Following are a few of the scriptures that describe what God intends:

"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" John 17:21; also vv. 11,23.

"That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" Romans 15:6.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" Romans 16:17.

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ ... that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel" Philippians 1:27.

Since God is not at variance with Himself, He will always lead His children in the same direction. He has affirmed that variance, strife, seditions, and heresies, all of which are contrary to unity, are works of the flesh and will not have a part in the kingdom of God. Galatians 5:20-21.

The vision of the true Church of God is intimately bound to the doctrine of unity. Would a God in whom there is no shadow of turning lead His children on diverse paths? Would the one who condemned heresy, seditious, strife, and variance not lead those who are filled with His Spirit to speak with the same mind? How could He who said, "There should be no schism in the body" 1 Corinthians 12: 25, sanction His children's living in division? By inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the apostle Paul wrote: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" 1 Corinthians 1:10. What a complete unity, to be perfectly joined together

in the same mind and judgment. What a gift from the Prince of Peace!
 "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in
 unity!" Psalm 133:1.



CONTROLLING THE APPETITE

Appetite can be described as "the desire for gratification either of the body or mind" (Webster). We know from experience that our appetite serves for a good purpose. This God-given function of the body is capable of adapting to a great variety of foods. As an example, children are urged to eat small amounts of those foods they don't like so as to develop their appetite. However, when appetite is indulged in an uncontrolled manner, it is the cause of many ills.

Overindulgence (not confined to food) is embedded so deeply in our human nature that we will battle it as long as we live. When Satan offered Jesus the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them, he was using his awareness of this basic desire for the things of the world and what they do for us. "Things" not only serve us but bring us the intangible: prestige, honor, pride, etc. No doubt these are included in "the glory of them."

The first eight verses of Proverbs 23 speak of, among other things, a ruler and those who eat with him. There are also instructions on how to deal with the appetite. Solomon doesn't tell us exactly of which ruler he is warning us, but if verses 6 and 7 are referring to this ruler, he must be evil from the heart. Satan is just such a ruler. Jesus calls him the "prince of this world" John 16:11. The apostle Paul refers to him as the "the god of this world" 2 Corinthians 4:4. Paul says we are wrestling "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world" Ephesians 6:12.

As the Christian passes through this world, he must, to a certain extent, eat with this ruler. Of necessity, he must use earthly or worldly things. Otherwise he would have to "go out of the world" 1 Corinthians 5:10. In that sense, a Christian must eat at the table of the ruler of this world. Satan has used this table since the beginning and seems to realize its value more than ever as time passes. His chefs have been concocting and dishing up an ever-increasing variety of tempting dishes, dainties, and desserts. This table has become irresistible to a world given to appetite.

The admonition to "consider diligently what is before thee" Proverbs 23:1, comes as a solemn warning to this generation. The luxuries of one generation become the necessities of the next. The little rhyme that says, "Now, little gadget, don't you cry! You'll be a necessity by and by," is coming true more rapidly than ever. Technology has brought numerous things to the table and promises many more. The wealthy can and the poor try to taste and enjoy this abundance. The affluence in the church has contributed to the tasting of many of these "dainties" Proverbs 23:3. The result, as always, is an increase in appetite for them. Lot of old looked at this same table and chose from what was available—the well-watered plains and the cities of them. Finally, the life of ease and plenty in Sodom were, very nearly, his undoing.

Satan's scheme is ever so crafty and very often involves the dainties of this world. Solomon, with all his wisdom, failed at this table, and it was the dainties that destroyed him.

Few in life, now as then, are really content with the basics. Those dainties are so tempting and affordable, and all the while we are urged to eat, eat, eat! "Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee" The one with the evil eye is behind the urging. He is not with us but against us, for "as he thinketh in his heart, so is he"

The banquet table of pleasure is loaded to the point of collapsing under its own weight. Society, in general, is suffering from a self-gratification overload. And the modern Christian pilgrim is indulging in dainties like never before. As the dainties are consumed, the effect is always the same: a tragic loss of appetite (that borders on nausea) for eternal things and heavenly values. Spiritual conversation, deep concerns, and a burden for the lost are distasteful to the modern Christian who is filled with the dainties of this life. The candy of carnal thinking, the fluff of fancy homes, autos, and clothing, the snacks of secret loves, and indulgences with a frosting of fun to thickly coat all activity is sweet to the flesh. The earthly man loves these delectable things and will eat until he is full. However, "they are deceitful meat" He eats but is not satisfied. He indulges in great quantities but grows weaker all the while. Still, his craving is for more, and his appetite ever increases. Surely God would say to the believers today, "Put a knife to your throat."

If Solomon had taken to heart what God inspired him to write, history would read differently. It has been said of him, "No fairer promise of true

greatness or more beautiful picture of youthful piety is known in history." But he so sadly failed to control his appetite. Likewise, never has the youth of the church had more opportunity to learn of God and to serve Him freely than now. But how controlled is the appetite?

The table of this world is more tempting than ever, and heaven with its great cloud of witnesses waits in suspense as the church takes from this table. Will she control her appetite? Will the believers put a knife to their throats? Will they, like Moses, choose to suffer rather than enjoy?

Jesus was offered food at the well near Sychar, John 4:31. Though weary and probably very hungry, He refused the natural food saying, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." That meat was "to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work." That hidden meat has been, and still is, very satisfying to the true Christian. It is as a heavenly manna that nourishes and refreshes.

The believer who has been given to his carnal appetite will need seriousness and even severity toward the flesh to deny himself. Surely God never intended for anyone to be given to his appetite, and where this has happened, we must accept the responsibility. The fact that we are more acquainted with feasting and playing than with fasting and praying may be only a small indicator of the depth of the problem. A self-imposed repentance may not be enjoyable, but to ignore the evidence of an untoward appetite carries a cost too great to bear.

Brother Chester.



The Illusion of Pacifism

We extend greetings in the name of Jesus to each one this afternoon.

And illusion is something that is deceptively attractive, an illusion holds a hidden snare. This afternoon we are looking at pacifism and the hidden snares relating to pacifism.

Matthew 5:9 says:

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

Pacifism like Nonresistance is a derived word. Pacifism is derived from the Latin meaning of peacemakers that is found in this verse, blessed are the peacemakers, in Latin it is very similar to pacifism.

If you turn over to verse 39 of chapter 5 Nonresistance is also a derived word: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil. [Matthew 5:39](#), that forms the basis for our term Nonresistance, it is derived from this thought of resist not evil.

In Matthew chapters five, six and seven are what we consider the code of ethics for the New Testament Christian and the kind of conduct that is promoted in these chapters is a result of surrender of the will to God's will, it is what we call the work of the cross in a person's life, it is the work of the cross or the result of the cross experience at work in a person's life and there is a way of life that comes forth when a person surrenders to the will of God and allows God to work in their hearts, and that is what we have in chapters five and six and seven of Matthew.

And so we want to see some illusions or deceptive snares related to pacifism. I don't think I'm going to go into more detail related to the word but pacifism has come to be a counterfeit for biblical Nonresistance. Maybe we could say, and I say it very cautiously, that in the strictest sense this idea in verse nine of Matthew 5, peacemakers, in the strictest sense it is saying the same thing, pacifism could be considered the same thing as Nonresistance but it has been embraced and has been broadened out and has been attached to much thought that is not Christian and that is why it has become counterfeit to us.

I have 10 points I would like to present this afternoon in relation to the illusion of pacifism.

1]. First of all pacifism sees peace as an end in itself.

We see Nonresistance as the fruit of a new birth experience and a world that is yielded to God. The pacifist takes blessed are the peacemakers, that it is an end in itself, for they shall be called the children of God and actually they are turning that around and saying that peace making is the criteria to becoming a child of God, but we believe that a new birth, a yielded-

ness to God is what it takes to be non-resistant and it is also what it takes to be a peacemaker.

Pacifism sees peace as an end in itself and the goal is to get people to get along with one another without the Prince of Peace, [Isaiah 9:6](#), Brother Noah referred to that in his opening comments, our goal as Christians needs to be to bring the Gospel message of salvation and get people to be born again and whether we go to Guatemala or Paraguay or the Bahamas or wherever we go our gospel message needs to be one of repentance and regeneration.

Do you think it is possible to have peace in the Middle East?

Yes it is, but it is through the Prince of Peace, through accepting Jesus Christ and the peace efforts that are being put forth in the world today in society are largely devoid of any reference to Jesus Christ.

2]. Pacifism does not reckon with the sin nature.

It therefore becomes overly optimistic about changing social order in the world and it puts forth effort to bring people together without reckoning with the fact that there is an Adamic nature within each person.

Some years ago Brother Jesse said he wonders what it would be like to serve, in that case our conversation was in relation to a township decision, a local township board making a decision, he said he couldn't imagine what it would be like to serve on a board like that with unregenerate men.

You know we today work with one another on the basis of the new birth and we need to reckon with the sin nature but it is an illusion of pacifism to think that you can bring people together for very long or very effectively without them having been born again, it is an illusion.

And I believe that our first responsibility as I said before is to help people to get on to bearing the cross and to bring forth fruits of righteousness.

3]. Pacifism does not reckon with the basic nature of the State.

The basic nature of the State is that it is an organisation for coercively bringing its people into order and following certain laws and rules, that is a part of the nature of the State, that is what the Scripture teaches in relation to the State that they don't bear the sword in vain, it is a part of their responsibility to have law and order and the pacifist tends to think that the State needs to be loving, and it does not reckon with the nature of the State.

The nature of the nations that are presented in the book of Daniel are beastly and we need to reckon with that fact.

Some governments are better than others but to think that we can apply the principles that we have in Matthew five, six and seven to the State is an illusion, it is deceptive. This idea of a Christian nation is really a product maybe I should say it is of pacifist thinking. There was a certain basis and certain principles that formed the basis in relation to the establishment of this country but to think now that it is a Christian nation is not a right concept, we need to reckon with the basic nature of the State, that it is an organisation for coercing.

4]. Pacifism compromises coercive action.

They could be against war but turn around and sue their neighbour, they are compromising, however a non-resistant person is resisting evil whether it is his nation or whether it is his neighbour or whether it is a nation from across the sea. The non-resistant person sees that as a violation of Christian principles whereas the pacifist will not hesitate to perhaps stand up for his rights in relation to an automobile accident or that type of thing, it is not consistent to take that stand, it is an illusion to think that we must be or can be peacemakers in some areas but not in other areas.

Nonresistance applies to all areas of life and it applies to getting along with our neighbour as well.

5]. Pacifism emphasises the fatherhood of God the brotherhood of man.

It does not draw lines between Christian and non-Christian, after all we are all going to the same place is the idea.

Jesus said I came not to bring peace but a sword. [Matthew 10:34](#). There are some lines that need to be drawn by the Christian and it is an illusion to think that we are all one – because we are not, in society there are some people who are born again and some who are not.

Pacifism shies away from drawing definite lines of action and I believe that we as non-resistant Christians need to be ready to stand up and embrace what the early church and later our forefathers have embraced for many hundreds of years and be ready to die if need be for the faith.

That is drawing lines.

6]. Pacifism seeks to achieve its ends through education and social reform.

The idea here is that it is possible to educate people into doing what is right and that is a pacifistic idea. To think now that we can get people to act right and to be totally non-resistant by just teaching and improving their standard of living is an illusion and it is bypassing the cross.

The idea that all we need to do is get a good education so that we can have a good income so that we can get along with each other is an illusion.

I'm not saying that a good lifestyle is wrong and that if you increase a person's income their way of life does improve but unless we get people, and I go back to this idea again, unless we get people to be born again and surrender their will to the cross experience we probably can teach until we are blue in the face and will not achieve our end.

We need to preach the power of the cross and this is the only way for people to improve the way of life, it is through the redemptive work of Christ on the cross.

7]. Pacifism seeks to work through church in promoting political reform.

It does not believe in the separation of Church and State and we need to maintain a distinct line. It is not in the place of the church to tell the government what to do, it is our responsibility as church members to be citizens that are above reproach, that is what our responsibility is. And I think it can become a snare to us and I think we need to be careful, we also need not link arms with other plain groups in an effort to influence governments to respect us because of how large a block we represent in their State or in their constituency. I think we need to guard against that, we need to be careful.

There is a place for appealing to government and asking if there is something they will do for us but when it comes to telling them how they are to function because we are such a large group we need to be careful, it becomes ecumenical pacifism and I believe that we are living in a climate where at this point the State is very favourable to us and it tends to cloud our view of the need to have separation of Church and State. We need to guard against that, I see that as a threat to us.

The pacifist tries to use the State to achieve his ends from a so-called Christian perspective.

8]. Pacifism holds forth Jesus Christ as the ultimate in reform and social betterment.

And this is an illusion because we hold Jesus Christ forth as well, and Jesus is a worthy example but He is not in modern-day terminology a hero. Let's stay away from that kind of reference.

The thing of it is that pacifism says the same kind of thing for other religions as well, they will also consider Muhammad or heads of other religious groups on an equal level with Jesus Christ in that they were worthy examples to follow in relation to social reform and it can become an illusion because the emphasis is placed on Jesus Christ.

Peace is only possible through the cleansing blood that Jesus shed on the cross.

And I've repeatedly come back to that, the only way that we can hold to the true doctrine of Nonresistance is by accepting the blood atonement and going by way of the cross.

9]. Pacifism seeks to disarm nations and to set up a warless world and bring everlasting peace.

There are efforts today to effect peace and the Scripture says in [1 Thessalonians 5:3](#):

"For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them," and why will that not be a lasting peace? Why, because it is not through the Prince of Peace, it will not be a lasting peace because it is not true that Prince of Peace. And the pacifist seeks to disarm nations and do good and set up a warless world and bring in an everlasting peace.

10]. The goal of the pacifist is a utopia here on earth and thus the transformation of society.

This is an illusion to think now that man is that good that a utopia could be formed here on earth.

In Daniel it talks about the stone that is cut out of the mountain and it is going to crush the kingdoms of this world and He will set up a kingdom in righteousness and peace and it will be a kingdom that is based on the redemptive work of Christ.

*From a message by David L. Sensenig
October, 2010.*

Having Knowledge of the Original Hebrew and Greek

The Bible consists of a series of letters from the Heavenly Father to His dear children, let us cherish them as such, and act accordingly. A few verses that are thoughtfully and prayerfully pondered, will advantage us far more than two or three whole chapters, merely skimmed through.

That against which we are protesting is the God-dishonouring idea that His Word is merely a piece of literature, which may be "mastered" by a course of "study." We would warn against an undue occupation with the technical aspects of the Bible. God's blessed Word is not for dissection by the knife of cold intellectuality. It is not given for us to display our cleverness and "brilliance" upon but to be bowed before in true humility. It is not designed for mental entertainment but for the regulation of our daily lives! Our motive when approaching the Word, should be to seek that which will subdue pride and bring us as supplicants to the footstool of Mercy not to acquire that which will puff us up in our own conceit. Of what value is a knowledge of the original Hebrew and Greek or a thorough acquaintance with the history, geography, and chronology of the Bible if the heart is left cold and hard toward its Author!

I seriously doubt if God has called or requires us, merely to 'study' His Word. What we need to do, is FEED thereon. How much nourishment would your body derive from a study of the chemical properties of foods or from seeking to ascertain the various sorts of soil in which they are grown or the meaning of their Latin names? None whatever! And I am persuaded that much of the modern 'study of the Bible' is equally profitless spiritually! By all means, "search the Scriptures daily" (Acts 17:11); slowly ponder each word in every verse. Pray constantly for the guidance and illumination of the Spirit, that He may open to you its Divine mysteries. Above all, beg God to write His Word more legibly and fully upon the tablets of your heart that you may put the precepts into practice.

"Nourished up in the Words of Faith" (1 Timothy 4:6). God's Word is the only nutritive food for the soul! This is why the Holy Scriptures are given to us that we may grow in love and reverence for them, and be more and more regulated by them. It is only by feeding on this Heavenly Manna, that strength is obtained for our pilgrim walk, for our warfare with sin and Satan, and for our service unto God and our fellows. (Arthur Pink, "Bible Study") *"Desire the sincere milk of the Word that you may grow thereby."*



Grace Sufficient

Friend, never give up,
The day may be long,
The hill may be steep,
The enemy strong.

But you've been promised,
Abundant and free,
God's wonderful grace
Sufficient for thee.

Then take it, my friend
Drink deep of the cup,
His grace is sufficient
So never give up.



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