

*"Watchman,
what of the night?"*

*"The hour has come, the hour is striking, and striking at you,
the hour and the end!"*

Eze. 7:6 (Moffatt)

SEEING by FAITH

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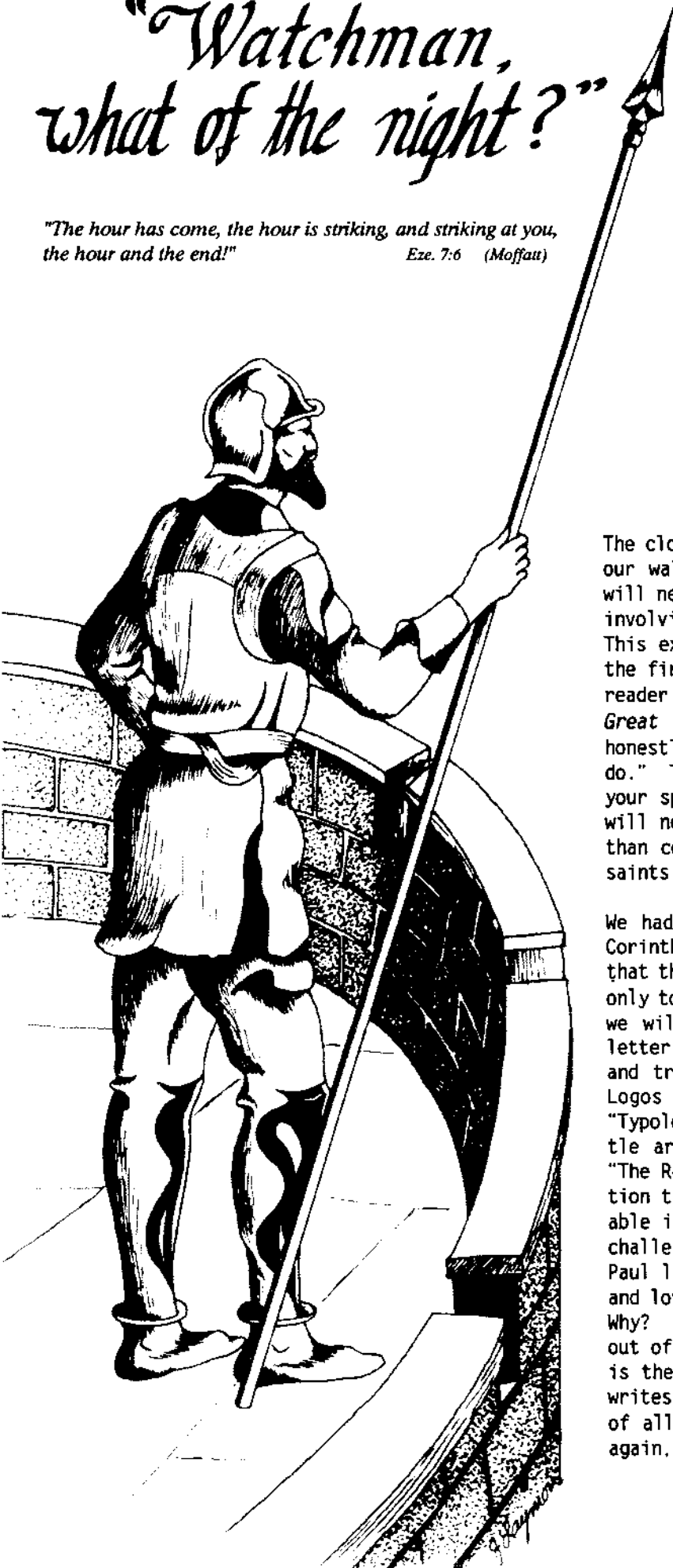
PAUL'S TEACHING IN FIRST CORINTHIANS

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Editor's Preface

The closer we draw to the close of all human history, the more our walk will be by faith rather than by sight. This faith will need to be based on the Word of God. A recent experience involving an exchange of letters brought this vividly to mind. This experience and the lesson to be learned is the basis of the first article - "Seeing by Faith." My suggestion to each reader is that when you come to the questions asked in *The Great Controversy* (p. 625), you pause and reread it, and honestly ask yourself, can I say, "Yes, that is what I will do." Then, consider if you are now laying the ground work in your spiritual life so as to assure the desired outcome. It will not be easy. It will require the faith of Jesus. More than commandment keeping is involved in the steadfastness of saints. (Rev. 14:12)

We had planned to summarize the entire 1998 Seminar on the Corinthian letters in this issue of WVN, but soon discovered that this was an impossibility. So this issue has been devoted only to the first letter, and then in the first issue for 1999, we will note some important truths found in Paul's second letter to the Church at Corinth. We have grouped the lessons and truths of the first letter into topics - "Unity," "The Logos of the Cross" (Note E. J. Waggoner's confession), "Typology," and "The Communion Service." In this first Epistle are two great essays, one on, "Love," and the other on "The Resurrection." Both require much more study and reflection that we were able to give them in the brief space available in this issue. We hope that what has been written will challenge you to some personal study of these two subjects. Paul lists three elements of the spiritual life - faith, hope and love, and declares that the greatest of all three is love. Why? One reason only - "God is love." The other two arise out of the human experience. A part of that human experience is the hope of the resurrection, or translation, for as Paul writes, "If in this life only, we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." But because He died, and arose again, we, too, who place our faith in Him, will live again.



Seeing by Faith

In the June/July issue of *First Things*, a writer borrowing from Mark Noll, on the "scandal of the evangelical mind," writes about "More Scandals of the Evangelical Mind." The author reared as a Southern Baptist tells of his odyssey from the conservative mould of his youth to a more liberal perception of what he once believed. Speaking of his and his wife's present beliefs, he wrote - "We have also concluded that the Pope isn't the Antichrist."

The notation at the end of the article indicated that the author was "a graduate student in history at the University of Ottawa, Canada." I wrote to him in care of the History Department of the University, and included with my letter the tract - "Antichrist - Who Is He?" My letter read in part:

Being a graduate student in history, you can follow the flow of empires from Babylon to Rome. A close comparison with the prophecy of Daniel 7 reveals basic truth and fingers the one-man government of the Roman Church. The enclosed tract offers you the documentation. I would suggest a re-thinking of your conclusion. A close study of history and prophecy provides much light as to the reality of the present, tearing away the facade with which men and nations cover themselves.

My letter finally reached him six weeks later in his new location as a member of the history department of a California State University. He responded in a hand written note: - "Thank you for ... the information sent. I do not find 'Antichrist, Who Is He?' convincing, but I do thank you for sending it."

To this I responded - "May I suggest, unless you do not believe in the prophetic Word, that with your background of the flow of history that you give me a more accurate interpretation of this prophecy. I am interested in truth, truth that is pure and unadulterated."

Again he responded and wrote (this answer observe carefully):

I have no alternative interpretation of Daniel 7 to offer you. The main reason why I reject the view that the pope is the antichrist is that I have read much of the current pope's writing and I fellowship often with devout Catholics. I think Catholics are wrong about some important things, but it is impossible for me to think them in the camp of Antichrist. This probably strikes you as naive. At any rate, I wish you all the best.

There are "devout" Roman Catholics. The present Pope has written much, and that which he has written is "studded" with Biblical references. Consider the Apostolic Letter outlining the "new" theology of Rome in regard to Sunday. It contains many Scriptural references even to

the acknowledgement of the original Sabbath as the seventh day. But do we judge by our senses, or by faith based in the Word of God?

As Eve stood before the forbidden tree in the Garden of Eden, she "saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a *pleasure to the eyes*." (Gen. 3:6, Heb.) She thought with her senses ignoring the word of God which had been spoken to her. On the other hand the victory that overcomes the world is faith. (1 John 5:4) This faith comes by "hearing," and that hearing is to hear what God says in His Word. (Rom. 10:17) Being warned that "Satan himself is [to be] transformed into an angel of light," why should we marvel that "his ministers" should manifest elements of light? In prophetic language, it is the dragon that gives to the beast "his power, and his seat, and great authority." (Rev. 13:2) The language of prophecy is not pleasant language - "dragon," "beast," and "false prophet." But to the student of Scripture it is meaningful; it becomes "a lamp unto (his) feet and a light unto (his) path." (Ps. 119:105) He perceives through the deceptive darkness that covers the earth, the path of truth and with the enlightenment of the Spirit of truth walks therein.

Two questions are asked in *The Great Controversy* in the chapter, "The Time of Trouble," which need to be answered, not just verbally but in the reality of an experience now as well as in the forthcoming time of trouble. They read:

Are the people of God now so firmly established upon His word that they would not yield to the evidence of their senses? Would they, in such a crisis, cling to the Bible, and the Bible only? (p. 625)

You cannot be established upon that which you do not know. Neither can you cling in a crisis to the Bible, and the Bible only, if you have been clinging to something other than the Bible in the present. Videos are an excellent means of communication of events, but as a projection of truth, they have the same effect on the viewer as TV - the mind gets turned off and the viewer is mesmerized by the speaker. Helps, there need to be, but this can be served by audio tapes played on a cassette with a pause button, so that as the Bereans of old, what is said can be checked against the Word of God. Or, there are written study guides available if one wants to avail themselves of such. But you say, "This takes time." True, and it is not as comfortable as sitting back in a recliner and being lulled into a fatal security - a delusion that has cost many viewers unrecoverable thousands of dollars and this is just recent past history. Is it not time, instead of repeating this experience through other "voices" that each determine that he is going to use the Sabbath hours for the study of the Word of God even if it means meeting alone.

With all the siren calls for "unity" which have been made this year by various "independent voices," is it not time we started walking by faith and not by sight? #

Paul's Teaching in First Corinthians

On Unity

One of the problems which Paul faced in the Church at Corinth was disunity. He had received from "the house of Chloe" information that every member at Corinth had declared his partisanship saying, "I am of Paul; and I am of Apollos; and I am of Cephas; and I am of Christ" (I Cor. 1:12). It is not much different today among the "independent voices" on the periphery of Adventism. One says he is of Grosboll; another of Spear, and another of Standish. And others not wishing to be identified as among these three could say, I am of Larson. Paul wrote very pointedly to the Corinthians partisans:

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of the 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. (1:10)

Throughout this year reports of unity meetings involving the above named leaders of "independent" ministries have appeared in the official publications of all of them. We find it most difficult to harmonize Paul's criteria for unity - "speak the same thing," "be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" - with what we read in these publications. It is true that on the back page of *Landmarks* (July, 1998) there was a call to attend a "campmeeting in the beautiful Rockies" with the three "voices" listed as the main speakers. But inside the journal was found a "Special Notice." It read in part:

We believe and encourage all true Seventh-day Adventists in every place we travel to start and organize "home churches." By a "home church" we mean a church that is dependent on God and the Word of God as given in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy for guidance and is independent from the present apostasy in the conference structure of Adventism. ... We still hold the same philosophy, as we have been teaching and writing since 1987. (p. 3, Insert)

A month previously, Ron Spear wrote in a special boxed statement to his "Supporters and Prayer Partners" which was placed just above a copy of the "Denver Statement" the following:

Hope International stands behind the messages of our past sermons and publications, and we are committed to remain faithful to our God given ministry of assisting in the work given to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This remnant church is called of God and will finally triumph in purity at Christ's soon coming! Although the majority of its members will fall, we must all encourage God's people to be faithful and to support the Seventh-day Adventist

Church in every way possible, insofar as is consistent with the principles of God's government and the leading of the Holy Spirit. (p. 6)

Where is the unity as outlined by Paul to the Church at Corinth in these two positions? If he should read them, would he not also say even as he wrote - "Are ye not carnal?" (I Cor. 3:4).

The Logos of the Cross

Please take your Bible and read I Corinthians 1:18-24. In the KJV, the word "preaching" is used in both the 18th and 21st verses. One would expect that the same Greek word would be used in both instances. Not so. In the 18th verse, the Greek word is λογος, the same word used by John in speaking of the Word in John 1:1-3, 14. While we cannot say that Paul used the word in the same sense as John used the word four decades later, yet John's usage reflects back on previous usage. Logos as used by Paul conveys the concept of the "message" which the Cross speaks. Elsewhere Paul will write of this as "the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory" (I Cor. 2:7). That mystery was revealed in the Logos made flesh (I Tim. 3:16).

While the Jews required a sign which appealed to their senses, and the Greeks wanted logic which could satisfy their thinking, Paul declared that "we preach a Messiah crucified" (ver. 22). To the Jews, this was a "stumbling-block," a scandal (σκανδαλον). They perceived that anyone who was hanged on a tree was "cursed" of God (Deut. 21:22-23). They could not perceive of the Messiah, one sent from God, being cursed by God. Such a concept was a stumblingblock to them. Yet for us to be freed from the curse another had to bear the curse (Gal. 3:13).

To the Greek such preaching was "foolishness" (μοριαν). This Greek word come through into English as our word, moron. How could logic justify a God who would die for the creature who had chosen to be a rebel against Him? It is not logical, but it is the way of *agape* (love). To those who respond to the Logos of the Cross, this Messiah of God, the cross becomes for them "the power of God, and the wisdom of God." The prophet Habakkuk caught a vision of this redemptive act and declared - "And His brightness was as the light; He had bright beams coming out of His side: there was the hiding of His power" (3:4, margin). One cannot separate the stigma of the Cross from the Logos of the Cross. (Gal. 6:17; "marks" in the Greek, σιγματα) Throughout eternal ages in the Word made flesh will be seen the scars of the Cross.

But what does this "message" of the Cross mean for us? Consider - verse 30 - "But of Him, are ye *in* Christ Jesus who has been made wisdom to us from God, both righteousness and sanctification and redemption. (Lit.). Why?

"That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord (verse 31) The Logos of the Cross speaks to me, telling me, that I cannot boast that I have contributed one iota to my justification, sanctification, or to the glorification which is to come. It is but mine to do the "work" (singular) which God requires (John 5:29).

The Logos of the Cross perhaps could be better perceived when one considers E. J. Waggoner's *Confession of Faith*. He testified:

Christ is primarily the Word of God, the expression of God's thought; and the Scriptures are the Word of God simply because they reveal Christ. It was with this belief that I began my real study of the Bible, thirty four years ago (1882). At that time Christ was set before my eyes "evidently crucified" before me. I was sitting a little apart from the body of the congregation in the large tent at a camp meeting in Healdsburg, one gloomy Sabbath afternoon. I have no idea what was the subject of the discourse. Not a text nor a word have I ever known. All that has remained with me was what I saw. Suddenly a light shone around me, and the tent was, for me, far more brilliantly lighted than if the noon-day sun had been shining, and I saw Christ hanging on the cross, crucified for me. In that moment I had my first positive knowledge, which came as an overwhelming flood, that God loved me, and that Christ died for me. God and I were the only beings I was conscious of in the universe. I knew then, by actual sight, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself; I was the whole world with all its sin. I am sure that Paul's experience on the way to Damascus was no more real than mine. (pp. 3-4)

Typology

Take time to read I Corinthians 10:1-11. Biblical typology is of two kinds - horizontal and vertical. Here in the Corinthian letter, Paul uses the horizontal typology. The smitten rock from which the water gushed in the wilderness journey (Ex. 17:5-6), symbolized Christ. The events during the wilderness wanderings are also declared to be "figures" or "types" for the instruction of those "upon whom the ends of the world are come" (ver. 11, margin)

All that happened during the wilderness experiences of Israel are not recorded, but those that are recorded served as an example or type for our study and edification. Further, the application of typology is limited to these wilderness experiences and cannot be applied to all of the Old Testament history of Israel. In other words, only that which is plainly inferred to be a type can be so used. This avoids unwarranted speculation.

Adventism is based on two counts in typology using both the horizontal and vertical. The dating for the beginning of the judgement in 1844 was a horizontal use of typology. The typical Day of Atonement was the tenth day of the

seventh month. From this, the antitypical Day was determined to be October 22, 1844. The meaning and significance of what took place in the cleansing of the Heavenly Sanctuary was developed from vertical typology based in the book of Hebrews which declares that the priests of the earthly tabernacle "served unto the example and shadow of heavenly things" (Heb. 8:5). The horizontal typology was first applied during the Millerite Movement by Samuel Snow in the Spring and finalized in the late Summer of 1844. The vertical application is uniquely Adventism growing out of the Great Disappointment.

Here is a crucial area of study. The Bible of the Apostolic Church was the Septuagint (LXX). Every quotation from the Old Testament used in the book of Hebrews is from the LXX. It is in this book that the vertical typology between the earthly sanctuary and the Heavenly counterpart is set forth. However, nowhere in the book of Hebrews is the Greek word usage as is applied to the concept of atonement in Leviticus 4 and 16 to be found. The focus in Hebrews is on the priestly ministry of Jesus as the Surety of a better covenant. The Day of Atonement is alluded to (10:25), but the typical relationship is not developed. The fact is that when describing the typical Most Holy Place, the text reads - "of which we cannot now speak particularly" (Heb. 9:5). The emphasis is placed on *hagia*, which is defined as the first apartment, or "tabernacle" (Heb. 9:2).

The Communion Service

Paul indicates that the order of service and its significance was received by him directly from "the Lord" (I Cor. 11:23). The first service introduced by Jesus the night of His betrayal was connected with and preceded by the Passover Feast. This same combined "supper" was evidently practised in Corinth inasmuch as many Jews had believed including the Chief Elder of the synagogue and possibly his successor. Problems had developed. Not everyone could bring his own supper, and those who did, did not share. Besides this the wine brought by some was used to excess and drunkenness followed. See I Cor. 11:17- 22. In such a state, the real meaning and significance of the Lord's Supper was lost.

First, Paul says the Lord took some of the bread which had been prepared for the Passover, and "when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, Take eat: this is my body which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me" (11:24). The question arises, why could Jesus give as a symbol of His body a piece of bread which had been broken, when the type indicated - "A bone of Him shall be broken." (John 19:36; Ex. 12:46) Both Matthew and Mark omit, in their review of the service, the clause - "which is broken for you." Luke merely writes - "which was given for you." John writing decades later at the close of the age gives the reason and tells why a bone was not broken. (See John 19:31-37) First, Jesus was already dead. Sec-

only, a soldier pierced His side, and from it flowed both blood and water. John emphasizes that he saw this actually occur. Gelke, in his *Life and Words of Jesus*, indicates that what John saw reveals that "Jesus died, literally, of a broken heart!" (p. 541) Why? My sins; your sins. What a contemplation should be ours each time we partake of the broken bread.

Next followed the cup symbolizing "the new testament (covenant) in my blood" (11:25). The blood of Jesus makes Him "the Surety of a better covenant" (Heb. 7:22), even "the everlasting covenant (13:20). Those who drink of this cup, accepting the terms thereof, are the "new" Israel of God. This is not a covenant of Equals; God disposes everything. It is "His will" that is to be realized "through Jesus Christ" (13:21). In partaking, we yield our wills to do His will, otherwise we drink unworthily. (I Cor. 11:29) While it is true, the "old" Covenant was based upon the promises of Israel, the fact is the "will of God" did not change from one covenant to the other. This fact must be kept firmly in mind as we face the final conflict between truth and falsehood.

While the synoptic Gospels and Paul emphasize only the bread and wine of the Communion Service, John writing his gospel at the end of the Apostolic era - omitting the recitation of the actual Service as given by the others - emphasizes the preliminary Service - the Ordinance of Humility. From this emphasis, we can better understand what Jesus did first, which made possible the sacrifice symbolized in the bread and wine. John writes that after the Passover supper was ended (13:2), Jesus arose from the table, "laid aside His garments; and took a towel (λεντιον) and girded Himself" (v. 4). Thayer defines λεντιον as the towel or apron which "servants put on when about to work." Jesus laid aside His glory - the "form of God" taking upon Himself the "form of a servant" (Phil. 2:6-7) and walked in life to the one commitment - the Cross. But having made provision for the washing (cleansing) of His own whom the Father gave Him, "He taketh His garments" again (ver. 12). There would be a Resurrection; He would drink anew with them the cup in the Kingdom (Matt. 26:29).

Agape Love

Inserted between two chapters on "Spiritual Gifts," is the sublime essay on "Love" (KJV, "charity"). While Paul advises the Corinthians to "covet earnestly the best gifts" yet he would reveal to them "a more excellent way" (I Cor. 12:31). After concluding his essay on the more "excellent way" - the way of love - he encourages them to "desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy," and don't forget to "follow after love" (I Cor. 14:1).

The Greeks used four different words to express various human emotions and relationships which we cover by the one word, "love." Φιλεω meant to "regard with affection."

It was the most generally used word for love as can be seen by its derivatives. Philos was a friend; philema was a kiss. Compounds of this word are well known: philadelphia, brotherly love, and philosophia, love of wisdom or knowledge. Another Greek word for love was στεργω which expressed the mutual love of parents and children; respect of people for rulers; and even dogs for their masters. It is not found in the New Testament, except in compound words as found in Romans 12:10, and translated, "kindly affectioned."

The Greek word for "sensual ecstasy which leaves moderation and proportion far behind; forgets all reason, will and direction on the way to ecstasy," εραω (ερος), is not found in the New Testament. Paul and John chose to express love by the word, αγαπαω (αγαπη) which conveys an active love on another's behalf. While the verb form appears in Greek literature from Homer on down, the noun has been found only once outside of the New Testament. In both Paul's and John's use of the word, is revealed a new dimension of love. "God is love;" "God so loved ... that He gave His only begotten Son," was how John used the word to convey a love expressed unselfishly and unstintingly. Paul expresses his perception of the word in his essay to the Corinthians.

Against this backdrop, there are some definitive statements in the Writings in regard to what must be assumed to be agape love. These read:

Supreme love for God and unselfish love for one another, - this is the best gift that our heavenly Father can bestow. This love is not an impulse, but a divine principle, a permanent power. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. Only in the heart where Jesus reigns is it found. "We love Him, because He first loved us." (Acts of the Apostles, p. 551)

True love seeks first the honor of God and the salvation of souls. Those who have this love will not evade the truth to save themselves from the unpleasant results of plain speaking. When souls are in peril, God's ministers will not consider self, but will speak the words given them to speak, refusing to excuse or palliate evil. (Prophets & Kings, p. 141)

The concept that love is "a divine principle," a power which guides the life causing the possessor to speak the truth plainly regardless of consequences must be contrasted with what is today's norm - speaking and doing only that which is "politically correct" or "socially acceptable."

The force of what Paul has written could be better perceived if in place of love (charity) we would substitute the name of Jesus in verses 1 - 8. Doing this, these verses would read:

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels,

and have not Jesus, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not Jesus, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not Jesus, it profiteth me nothing.

Jesus suffered long and was kind; Jesus envied not, was not rash (margin), nor puffed up, did not behave Himself unseemly, sought not His own interests, was not easily provoked, thought no evil; rejoiced not in iniquity, but rejoiced in the truth; bore all things, hoped for the best, endured to the end. Jesus never failed nor will He fail us.

The Resurrection

Every recorded sermon or testimony in the Book of Acts references the resurrection. From the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:22-24) to Paul's presentation on Mars Hill (Acts 17:31), the Apostolic message was that God raised Jesus from the dead. From the fearless testimony of Peter before the very men who plotted the death of Jesus (Acts 4:8-12), to the testimony of Paul before Agrippa (Acts 26:22-23), the theme was the same, God raised Jesus from the dead. Paul's stated objective was that he might know "the power of [Christ's] resurrection," and that he, too, "might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Phil. 3:10-11). The reason is plainly stated in Paul's treatise on the resurrection in this first Epistle to the Corinthians: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (verse 19).

The cry of humanity which echoes through the Old Testament is summed up in the question asked by Job - "If a man die, shall he live again?" (14:14). There is nothing more hopeless to all earthly appearances than to look on the face of a loved one whose eyes are closed in death. Those who stood before the Cross saw Jesus - "His visage ... so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men," yet these same disciples beheld the glory of the resurrected Lord with only the testimony of the nail scarred hands and riven side remaining. To them the resurrection was for real. It was their hope. Because He lived again, they, too, would live!

Paul begins his essay on the resurrection stating that he declares to the Corinthians the gospel "by which also ye are saved." The first point he affirmed to be "that Christ (the Messiah) died for our sins according to the scriptures" (15:3). Here is where Christianity and Judaism divide. The "Messiah" for whom the Jews looked would not suffer but reign. The Christian Messiah was the Messiah of Scripture, the suffering servant, who would be "brought as a lamb to the slaughter" (Isa. 53:7). Secondly, this Messiah "was buried, and that He arose again the third day [also] according to the scriptures" (15:4) On these two fundamental premises, the gospel rests.

Paul then begins his argument. How is it, that if we preach that Christ arose from the dead, some say "there is no resurrection of the dead?" (15:12) If this be true, then Christ is not risen, and our hope is a vain hope; we are yet in our sins, and those who are dead having placed their hope in Christ "are perished" (15:17-18). Not so, says Paul, but rather:

Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. (15:20-23)

After establishing the ultimate objective of time - the triumph of life over death by Jesus Christ, Paul returns to the challenge that the dead rise not. This time it becomes personal. Why is he doing what he is doing? Why be "baptized" for the dead if the dead rise not? (15:29). There are two baptisms in the Bible - water baptism, and a dedication. Of the latter, Jesus said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straightened till it be accomplished" (Luke 12:50; see also Matt. 20:20-23). To his like baptism, Paul was referring for he asks, "And why stand we in jeopardy every day?" (15:30) How useless would be his life - and note the perils he faced as enumerated in II Cor. 11:23-28) - his daily dying - if the dead rise not. He illustrates - "If [speaking] after the manner of men I fought with the beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not?" Rather, "let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die" (15:32)

Next Paul turns to two questions - "How are the dead raised up? and "With what body do they come" forth from the grave? Answering the second question first, Paul declares there are "celestial bodies" as well as "bodies terrestrial" (15:40) Then he writes:

So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. (15:42-44)

Paul concludes that "as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (15:49) In his second epistle to the Corinthians, Paul returns again to the subject of the resurrection. He speaks of the present existence as "our earthly house of this tabernacle" There is to be another, "an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (5:1) So long as we are in this present "tabernacle" we "do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life" (5:4) Why must a change take place? "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (15:50) The final phase of the new birth must be realized. When? The answer is clearly stated:

Behold I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? (15:51-55)

Paul in these verses uses two different words to describe the status of the redeemed. Those who die in the Lord, in the resurrection, put on *αφθαρσιαν* (incorruption), while those who are translated put on *αθανασιαν* (immortality). This latter word is used only three times in the New Testament, twice in these verses and once in 1 Tim. 6:16, where the nature of God is described. This fact opens before the student of the Word, a realm for contemplation and an insight into the plans and purposes of God.

It is this victory over death and the grave to which Paul refers when he concludes - "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (15:57) Man cannot alter the hopelessness of death, But God can. He raised up Jesus, and because He lives, we, too, shall live. The victory came and comes through Him. He could say - "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore; and have the keys of the grave and of death" (Rev. 1:18).

The very element of the hopelessness of death, is used in Scripture to convey to us the very helplessness that is ours in this fallen nature. Paul wrote that we "who were dead in trespasses and sins," God "hath quickened (made us alive) together with Christ and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace and His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:1, 5-7). By what means - "by grace are ye saved" (v. 5) Even as our bodies succumb to death, so we must surrender to the working of God (Phil. 2:13; Isa. 4:8). #

Let's Talk It Over

In a co-authored book, *Victory on the Battlefield*, which discusses exorcism, there is listed "possible symptoms" of demonic oppression. In listing these symptoms, the writer states that these symptoms "were not discovered by reasoned study, but rather they have been discovered as tormented people have come seeking help." (p. 122) The symptoms are listed in nine groups of categories such as "social abnormalities," "personality problems," and

"inner turmoil," to cite a few of those listed. There is one which Jesus gave which is not listed - lying. He told the Jewish religious leaders that they were of their "father the devil. .. He is a liar and the father of it" (John 8:44). One possessed of demonic influence has difficulty with truth.

This is an issue in the final conflict. There will be a small group of people in whose mouths will be "found no guile" (Rev. 14:5). On the other hand, the rest of mankind will become "the habitation of devils" (18:2). It has been well stated:

Through yielding to satanic influences, men will be transformed into fiends; and those who were created in the image of God, who were formed to honor and glorify their Creator, will become the habitation of dragons, and Satan will see in an apostate race his masterpiece of evil, - men who reflect his own image. (R&H, April 14, 1896)

What will make the difference between the guileless and the fiends? The guileless will "have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 7:14) whg

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CORINTHIAN SEMINAR VIDEOS - Any who might wish to review the 1998 Seminar studies on The Corinthian Letters may obtain these videos by writing directly to Gary Patrick, 634 S Van Buren, Mason City, IA 50401. He will quote you the price.

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