

# The *Contender*

"CONTEND FOR THE FAITH WHICH WAS ONCE DELIVERED UNTO THE SAINTS" JUDE 3

Vol 10 No. 1

*Printed Voice of Faith Assembly*

March 1978

## Divine Love Is Truth Lived



Rev. Raymond M. Jackson

### ST. JOHN 14:15

THERE IS MUCH BEING SAID IN OUR DAY ABOUT LOVE. IT HAS BECOME THE MAIN THEME OF A GREAT NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO DO NOT SEEM TO BE ABLE TO RECOGNIZE BASIC TRUTH WHEN IT HITS THEM IN THE FACE. THIS WORD LOVE, HAS FURNISHED SATAN WITH A TOOL OF

DECEPTION, WHEREBY, HE HAS BEEN ABLE TO LEAD A GREAT MULTITUDE OF PEOPLE INTO A PLACE OF STRONG DELUSION. YOU WILL FIND THOSE PEOPLE JUDGING OTHER PEOPLE'S SPIRITUAL STANDING BY HOW MUCH LOVE THEY ARE ABLE TO DISPLAY, YET THEIR VERY CONCEPT OF LOVE IS BASED SOLELY UPON HUMAN EMOTIONS, RATHER THAN THE NATURE OF THE SPIRIT WITHIN THEM. FOR THIS REASON, I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE A TEXT FROM ST. JOHN 14:15, WHERE JESUS SAID, "IF YE LOVE ME, KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS," AND TRY, WITH THE HELP OF GOD, TO CLEAR UP SOME OF THE MISCONCEPTIONS THAT SOME HAVE OF THE WORD LOVE.

To begin our message let me say this, DIVINE LOVE IS TRUTH LIVED. Does that sound a little strange to you? Here is what I mean by such a statement, we cannot divinely love unless we have truth in us. We may have a very meek nature and pleasing personality, but that is not divine love. There are a lot of people that each of us know who

Contents

ST. JOHN 14:15 ..... 1

THE APOSTLE OF LOVE ..... 3

SEEING THE SPIRITUAL SIDE ..... 3

TRUTH AS A CLUB..... 4

WHAT THE CHURCH IS BUILT UPON ..... 4

I WILL COME TO YOU..... 5

A WAY OF LIFE ..... 6

COMMANDMENTS - WORDS - SAYINGS ..... 6

FOLLOWING TRUTH ..... 7

OUR TEACHER..... 9

ABIDING IN LOVE..... 9

THE BIBLE - A JEWISH BOOK..... 10

TRUE JOY..... 12

VICTORY THROUGH SUBMITTING..... 13

CHURCH OF YOUR CHOICE - ANTICHRIST DOCTRINE..... 14

KNOWING OUR BENEFITS ..... 15

LIVE YOUR OWN CONVICTIONS..... 16

DIVINE LOVE TESTED ..... 17

REVELATION REMAINS THE SAME..... 18

SALVATION - GOD'S FREE GIFT..... 19

INTERPRETING GOD ..... 19

BE YE THEREFORE PERFECT ..... 20

TRUTH OR LIE ..... 21

RECEIVING THE HOLY GHOST ..... 23

LED BY THE SPIRIT ..... 24

ENDURING TO THE END ..... 25

LIVE WHAT YOU PREACH ..... 26

ALL THINGS COMMON..... 26

JESUS DIED FOR ALL ..... 28

SOWING AND REAPING..... 29

MEASURING SPIRITUALITY..... 30

AS HE IS SO ARE WE ..... 31

SONS OF GOD - WHEN? ..... 31

have a wonderful nature, but they do not have the divine love of god in their lives. It is scripturally impossible to have divine love

radiating from your life before you experience the new birth, and furthermore, there are vast numbers of people calling

themselves “born again Christians,” who have experienced nothing more than a handshake from a preacher, and had their name placed on a church membership book. That kind of an experience will not produce the kind of love that we are going to speak of in this message.

### **THE APOSTLE OF LOVE**

It seem that the apostle John must have caught every word that Jesus spoke on the subject of love. He was the author of the gospel of St. John, and was the one who leaned on the bosom of Jesus at the conclusion of the last supper, before Jesus was betrayed by Judas. John also authored the three epistles by that name, and has been called the apostle of love, or John the beloved, by many. He was very close to Jesus in those years of Jesus’s ministering to the people. He is the one who was exiled to the Isle of Patmos because of his Christian testimony, and in A.D. 96, received from the Lord, that which we read in the book of Revelation. In his writings he had much to say on the subject of love, therefore, we want to begin our study with the words spoken by Jesus, and find out what genuine love is cultivated by and built around.

### **SEEING THE SPIRITUAL SIDE**

In the verse we are using for a text we find Jesus speaking to his disciples, “IF YE LOVE ME, KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS.” He did not mean, by that, that if they loved him they would keep the Ten Commandments of the Old Testament. Words such as this were

terminology words. At other times, instead of saying keep my commandments, he said, keep my sayings, or keep my words. It all means the same thing regardless of the terminology. He is telling the, if they really love him, they will do according to his teachings. I believe we can say, in the light of the truth that was preached in the first age, love without truth is not love at all. It is just carnal, or maybe I should say natural attraction. Its foundation is human emotions. In the beginning many people followed Jesus only because they were drawn to the human side of him rather than the spiritual side. If they had been drawn to him in a spiritual way, they would never have become offended because of what he said. If they had been following him because of a spiritual revelation as to who he was, they would not have let anything separate them from that revelation. You will remember, there was quite a difference between the multitude of his disciples that became offended to the point where they turned back and walked with him no more, and the twelve who stayed with him. You will find that account in John 6:66-69, “From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then Jesus said unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou has the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.” Peter had a completely different attitude about it. He was full of human weakness, and constantly displaying it, especially before the day of Pentecost when they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, but, one thing was sure, he had a revelation in his bosom, and he did not intend to let anything separate him from that. He did not bother to take a vote among the other eleven. He immediately said, “LORD, TO WHOM SHALL WE GO? THOU HAST THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE.” He, evidently, already had a revelation of something Jesus said to them in answer to a

question asked by Thomas at a later time. In John 14:5-6, we find Thomas saying to Jesus, “Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH... AND THE LIFE: no man cometh unto the Father, but by ME...” Even though these words were spoken much later than the occasion here in chapter 6, Peter had heard what Jesus said in verse 63, of chapter 6, where he said, “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; THE WORDS... THAT I SPEAK UNTO YOU, THEY ARE SPIRIT... AND THEY ARE LIFE...” In other words, just to follow Jesus from a fleshly, human standpoint would profit a person nothing in a spiritual sense, for the gift of eternal life was wrapped up in what he had to say. He went on to say, (while speaking to the multitude before they departed), “but there are some of you who do not believe,” knowing from the beginning who they were that believed not. He then said to them, “No man can come unto me, (THE WORD), except it were given unto him of my Father.” Now, in case you may be wondering, what has all that got to do with love? Let me say this, LOVE without TRUTH is not LOVE at all, and TRUTH without LOVE is not TRUTH at all. I say it like that to get your attention. Now I will explain what I mean.

### **TRUTH AS A CLUB**

Truth can be used as a club to promote human objectives. This has been done in many religious circles. They have used truth as a club to beat people with, and all for a selfish motive, just to build themselves an empire. People like that will use enough truth to get what they want, but the thing they build is never for the glory of God, it always turns out in a way that man gets the glory. Love itself,

is the spirit of truth manifested. Therefore, it was the divine plan of God, that as truth was implanted in the hearts of people, the life of that truth could not help but be love, for God is love, and he is truth. Jesus said, “And ye shall know the TRUTH, and the TRUTH shall make you free.” You cannot separate truth and love. They go together, and those who would try to separate them will surely miss the mark. There cannot be a true objective in such.

### **WHAT THE CHURCH IS BUILT UPON**

I hope you realize that the scriptures we are reading contain the words which were spoken in the beginning, that caused the church to be a church. In other words, it was the words spoken by Jesus that laid the foundation for the church. The church itself is made up of people who have this spirit of truth in them; it is not the large, eloquently constructed buildings with their stained glass windows. For this reason we need to get a clear picture in our minds of how and what Christianity lives on. Just what is the church, in the eyes of truth, obligated to reflect? That brings us right back to the 15<sup>th</sup> verse of chapter 14, “IF YE LOVE ME, KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS.” There is no need for a person to say that he, or she, as the case may be, loves the Lord with all his heart if he is the kind of person who, when he has an opportunity to hear truth he begins to kick and squirm, rebel and draw back. There is something wrong with a person who locks his feet and refuses to take a step forward when truth is presented to him. I have always said this, if something is presented to you that you do not understand, and there is no opportunity for you to analyze it in the light

of scripture, it is better for you just to file it away and say, "Now, Lord, I have never heard that before, and I just do not understand it. Right now, I cannot see it like that." He will not hold that against you, but file it away, do not throw it away. Then, as you walk down life's pathway, if you are open and honest before God, so that you can say "Lord, I want to walk in all the light of truth that you have for me," I promise you that if you do your best to walk in the light of God's love and truth, you will reach a place in your spiritual life where those things that you did not understand before will come ringing down through the avenues of your soul, and you will say, "Why didn't I see that a long time ago?" When truth becomes revelation to you, it seems as though you have always known it, but for those who kick and struggle, and froth at the mouth, and become so frustrated that they cannot sleep at night, it is quite a different story. I have seen Christians react like that, but it is to their own hurt, for if they are children of God, He, (GOD), will work circumstances to get them into the place where they can see more truth. It is a bad thing for Christians not to know how to look at truth, but I have observed that some are so busy fighting against false teaching, that they cannot recognize the real thing when they hear it. Brothers and sisters: we need to keep our priorities in order. Jesus went on to say, in verse 16, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; 17, Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for HE DWELLETH WITH YOU, and SHALL BE IN YOU." Let us be thankful for the Holy Ghost that abides IN US. I am glad for the fact that he is not forty or fifty miles away from us, but instead, he is ever present, even in us, and for what purpose? For the answer to that let us read a verse or two from the 16<sup>th</sup> chapter, beginning with verse 12, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye

cannot bear them now. 13, Howbeit when he, the SPIRIT OF TRUTH, IS COME, (Where will he be? IN THE BELIEVERS 14:17), HE WILL GUIDE YOU INTO ALL TRUTH: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and HE WILL SHEW YOU THINGS TO COME. 14, He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and SHALL SHEW IT UNTO YOU. 15, All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you." Brothers and sisters: he is not, just a Comforter to soothe our hurt feelings and patch up our wounds, (spiritually speaking), but he is with us, even in us, every mile of the way through this earthly journey to reveal truth to us, that we may take on the mind of Christ, as the apostle Paul admonished the Colossians to do. HE WILL SHOW US THINGS TO COME.

### **I WILL COME TO YOU**

Let us now return to chapter 14, verse 18, "I will not leave you comfortless; I WILL COME TO YOU." These verses could help a person see that God is one, and not three, if that person had eyes to see. Jesus was not saying I will come to you in flesh, no; he was to come back to them in spirit form, and that is exactly what he did. We read about it in Acts 2, "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. (There is your key, they were doing what he had told them to do, Luke 24:49, "And, behold, I sent the promise of my Father upon you: BUT TARRY YE IN THE CITY OF JERUSALEM, until ye be endued with power from on high." They loved him and believed him, and by doing what he had instructed them to do, they were in the right place, at the right time, to receive the

promised benefit). 2, “And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3, And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4, And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.” That was Jesus fulfilling the promise that he made to them, “I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU COMFORTLESS, I.. WILL COME TO YOU.” The Holy Ghost that filled them on the day of Pentecost, was the spirit of truth, which is the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is none other than the spirit of the Great God who spoke, in the beginning, and said, “Let there be light,” Gen. 1:3, and there was light. He is TRUTH, he said, “I will come to you,” and he came. Now, verse 19, “Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me; because I live ye shall live also, 20, At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, (SPIRITUALLY), and ye in me, (SPIRITUALLY), and I in you,” (Spiritually). We cannot have three persons inside us, but praise God, we can have the ONE SPIRIT inside us, which is the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost.

### **A WAY OF LIFE**

Verse 21, “He that HATH MY COMMANDMENTS,” now, notice this, you will recall that in the 15<sup>th</sup> verse he said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” To keep them is to pay attention to them, to observe them, put them into practice and do everything you can to allow them to become a part of your life. Christianity is not just a belief. It is a way of life. On the other hand, it is not just a way of life that will allow a person to believe anything that he might be tempted to believe, while he continues his same old routine. No, it IS... a belief, but it is

a belief that will affect your life, your way of living. It is a FAITH BELIEF that opens up a whole new way of life for those that enter in. Many who profess to be Christians never do allow the principles of Christ to affect their way of life, and therefore, their ways and beliefs are from that spirit of antichrist. The devil will try first to keep a person in the beer parlors, and away from church. Then if all his efforts in that direction fail, he will then try to push that person into a trap spiritually, on other words, he will get behind them and push them 90 miles an hour, trying to get them wrecked up in the word of God. That is where so many religious cults, and organizations get their start. It is the devil’s business to try and sidetrack us if he can, but truth will prevail for those that love it.

### **COMMANDMENTS - WORDS - SAYINGS**

Let us go back to the 21<sup>st</sup> verse, “He that HATH... my commandments, (HATH... means that he is already living by them), and KEEPETH them, he it is that loveth me.” In verse 15, he said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments,” and now he has turned it right around to where he says the man that already hath his commandments, and is living by the, that is the man that loves him. Then, the rest of the verse, “And he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. 27, Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? 23, Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my WORDS...” Not just a verse or two, but all of his sayings, and teaching. 24, “He that loveth me not, keepeth not my SAYINGS...” You will notice that the

terminology has changed from COMMANDMENTS..., to WORDS..., and now to SAYINGS..., which all add up to the same thing. Those that love him, will endeavor to do what he has instructed us to do. I believe we can say then, in talking about divine love, that the love which was projected from God through Jesus Christ, which was the fountain of God's love opened up at Calvary, is a love that will definitely change lives. Calvary made a way for that love to project through every individual that would purpose in their heart to walk with God and stand for his truth. Jesus did not come into the world just to speak every kind of an idea that some might like to hear, hoping that through it all love might be cultivated. It was quite the opposite from that. He came with a mission, and that mission was to do the will of the Father, to accomplish the Father's purpose. In the sixth chapter of John we find Jesus speaking of what that purpose was, verse 38, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, 39, And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. 40, And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which SEETH THE SON, and BELIEVETH ON HIM, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." We can see from those verses that Jesus had a definite mission in the days while he walked on earth. Then, in the 17<sup>th</sup> chapter we find Jesus praying to the Father and we hear him say, 14, "I HAVE GIVEN THEM THY WORD..., and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world." If a person really receives the WORD OF GOD, the world will hate them, and there will be no way for such a person to line up with the world. That is why the apostle Paul was inspired to write as he did to the Corinthians. In 2 Corinthians (6:14, we find these words, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with

unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? 15, And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16, And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God: as God hath said, I will dwell in the, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17, Wherefore, COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM, and BE YE SEPARATE, saith the Lord, and TOUCH NOT THE UNCLEAN THING; and I will receive you, 18, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

### **FOLLOWING TRUTH**

I know that some of you will say, "But, Bro. Jackson, how will we ever win the people to the Lord if we don't fellowship with them?" Therefore I want to say this, "The devil recaptures more people in those mixed situations, than the Lord ever gets hold of as a result of any witness you might have among them." The Bible is against this idea of taking your light and your truth, and just mixing it with everything. Jesus even said, "Cast not your pearls before swine." Yet we realize that he also said, "Ye are the salt of the earth," and again, "Ye are the light of the world." Now, how do we reconcile this: We certainly cannot win anyone to the Lord by joining them in their unrighteous ways, for they will say, "If what you have is so great, what are you doing here?" All sinners know how Christians are supposed to live and conduct themselves. Therefore, what is the conclusion of the matter? It is this, we must realize that if truth is to shine and reflect, it will have to do so by being exemplified in the believer's life in every aspect of his whole being. If every believer would allow truth and love to

reflect through their every day lives the way God means for it to, they would, (by their example) make others thirsty for what they have as they travel along life's pathway. One thing is sure though, the divine love of God has certain guidelines. It will cause you to love all mankind, but you will not love their unrighteous ways. You will pray for them, but you will not seek your fellowship among them. That goes also, for those who profess to be Christians, but will not allow truth to guide their lives, for the Bible also says, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3;) As Jesus prayed to the Father we hear him say, 17:17, "SANCTIFY THEM THROUGH THY TRUTH: THY WORD IS TRUTH." He went on to say, "Father, I am not praying just for these that are here with me, but for them also that shall believe through their testimony, or their word. It is my desire that they be one as we are one." Those who walked with Jesus, and stayed with him long enough to be found in the upper room, all came out of that upper room teaching the same thing. They did not have a dozen different versions of what walking with God required of a person. That is why I say, "If a person in this age is willing to follow truth and be led by the Holy Ghost, they will be led to the light that has been revealed to this age." Every church age has had its messenger, and the people of that age were required to walk in the light of the messenger of their age. Therefore, when you hear people say, "I am not going to follow any man," you can be sure, that person is missing the mark. God never asked us to follow any man's flesh, but there is the other side of the picture, that is what God would have us to see. That is what we are to follow. God sent his messenger to this age for the purpose of calling the children of God from all the various denominational circles they were locked up in, and his motive and objective is that they might follow truth and have the love of God perfected in their hearts. The Bible makes it absolutely clear that

divine love cannot exist in its purity and perfection, except where people walk in obedience to truth. You will hear some say, "Oh, it was a lot easier for the early church to live as they did, for they had such power with God." Let me tell you, the key to that is found right in the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of Acts. They were all in one accord, and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine. They all believed the same thing, and they had it straight. The fact that they had a common ground of faith, motivated them to go from house to house breaking bread. You have heard the old proverb, "Birds of a feather, flock together," that is the way with those who are born again. They enjoy fellowshiping together. The true nature of God can only be expressed in an atmosphere such as that. For this reason, anytime you have a mixed group of people together, with some believing one way, and others, another; you will always have an undercurrent that will prevent divine love from reaching its peak. God's very objective is lost in such an atmosphere, for God is truth. That is why Jesus said, "I am the WAY..., the TRUTH..., and the LIFE," he only spoke the Father's words. He said, "the words that I speak unto you are not my words, they are the Father's," meaning, the Eternal Spirit. His teaching was not designed just to please a mass of society so that they could coexist. That is what we have in our generation, but it did not come from the spirit of God. It had its beginning with the spirit of antichrist. The modern church world today has a gospel that will appease everyone who comes in, no matter what his religious background may be, or what he believes. It is all done for the sake of love and unity when you hear them tell it. They will say, "It doesn't make too much difference whether we believe everything alike or not, just as long as we believe in Jesus, and have love for each other." Show me that in the Bible. Nevertheless, that is the main theme of twentieth century world religion. Wherever you find a charismatic meeting, you are likely to find people there



from a dozen different denominations; and, doctrinal wise, they are not too concerned about what is taught; just as long as they can hear something exciting about someone's personal experience. Such as this, many times, has served as a bridge for people who were imprisoned in some stiff collared denomination to cross over to a place where the spirit of God could deal with them, but a person who never goes any farther than these charismatic gatherings (with God), is not seeking truth; they are only seeking an experience. Some of these people have been in the same place for 10-20 years without growing one little bit, (spiritually speaking). They may seem more spiritual, but where is the apostles doctrine, and the revelatory truths that it takes to make God's building strong? You will not find it there, for they have got the cart before the horse. They keep the Holy Ghost testifying of Himself; and Jesus plainly said that he would not do that, (John 16:13). The Holy Ghost will lead a person to truth every time, if that person is hungry for truth, and willing to follow.

### **OUR TEACHER**

Let us continue reading in chapter 14:24; "He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings; and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." Here we have a man speaking; (a man of flesh), but he is making it very clear that the words which they hear him speaking are not words with a fleshly origin, in other words, not just human thoughts. These were divinely inspired words, sayings, teachings, instructions, exhortations that were beneficial for proper conduct, proper living, and relationship to God. 25, "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. 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." That is like saying, "I have not told you everything that you will need to know in this life, and much of what I HAVE TOLD YOU has already slipped your mind, but the Holy Ghost which will come to you after I am gone, will teach you all that the Father would have you know, and will cause you to remember the things which I have spoken unto you." Brothers and sisters; the Holy Ghost is ever present to enable us to walk in the truth of God's word. He will remind us of the right way when we are tempted to do something wrong. He is the SPIRIT OF TRUTH; He is the SPIRIT OF DIVINE LOVE. That is why we say, DIVINE LOVE IS TRUTH LIVED. When we allow the Holy Ghost to be our motivation, he will always manifest love and truth. That is why Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them," (Matt. 7:15-23). A Holy Ghost filled child of God can tell whether a person's deeds are led by the Holy Ghost or by the spirit of antichrist just by observing that person's life. That does not mean that you have the privilege of determining that person's eternal destiny; that is in the hands of God alone. Our responsibility is to judge (by the person's deeds) whether we should fellowship with that person, and be a partaker of those deeds.

### **ABIDING IN LOVE**

Now, to keep on the subject of God's love, and his commandments, let us go to chapter 15, verse 10, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in his love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." Notice here; YE becomes very personal, yet it is also collective for he is

talking to his disciples. If YE keep my commandments, YE shall abide in MY LOVE. What is his love? It is the same love that caused him to be obedient to the will of the Father; never seeking to please himself, saying only what would express the mind of God. In such a love relationship, one does not seek to please himself, but rather the other. As he passes that on to his disciples, it is to make them an inseparable arm of God; reaching out to lost mankind with a message of salvation. Why? Because it is an inseparable love; and it is the will of God for all men to hear the gospel. Therefore, if they keep his commandments, they WILL abide in his love, for they will be living, walking, teaching and practicing what he has taught them; thereby ruling out all possibility of a separation. If they would live like that, they could not help but be one. That is why the apostle Paul admonished Eudias and Synteché to be of the same mind in the Lord; in his letter to the Phillippians. What beauty - what harmony - what bliss, when you find a group of people who are consistent in their thinking, and speak the same things, (in love), without carnal divisions. That is where God dwells. That is what God desires, among his people. Think of this; God is one, and he created the world and all things that are in it; yet when you go halfway around the world, you find that the people on the other side have another God. (I only say it like this to illustrate, or make a point. I know that we have people right in our own part of the world who serve other Gods.) We know that there is only one God, but this all goes to show what mankind in his journey through time has done; he has accumulated various deities, and built religious organizations around them until the world population is broken up into ever so many groups, all believing in a different God. This breaks the family, human relationship with the heavenly Father. God cannot be worshiped by a vast majority of the human race for the simple reason, they do not know who he is; yet we know that, for six

thousand years God has been seeking to reconcile lost mankind back to himself. When we look to the Middle East we see the Jews on one hand, and the Moslems on the other; all claiming to be children (descendants) of Abraham, yet the Jews hold God to be one certain deity, and the Moslems another. Then, when we come into the Gentile realm many of them have him as something else. When we sum it all up, there cannot be but one God. The same God that created the Russians, created us. The God that created the Orientals, created the Indians also, as well as the black man, and he is ONE, not TWO, not THREE, but ONE. Many people who have their affections pointed to the one great God of all creation, still try to break him up into three persons. It is no wonder that it is so hard to find genuine love expressed in our day. It just cannot project through such a mixed up mass of confusion. The early church had it two thousand years ago. Wherever they went, preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, that love projected; and Gentiles were turned from paganism to the true God through the name of Jesus Christ. That name also separated thousands from Judaism and turned them to a life of love and truth that they had never known.

### **THE BIBLE - A JEWISH BOOK**

The Bible has always been a Jewish book. The truth of it was given to the Jews, and various ones of them wrote as they were inspired by God to do so; thereby giving us the Bible as we have it today. We Gentiles have become the guardians or caretakers of it, but the God of that Bible is soon to return to those Jews with the message of salvation that is contained therein. God raised up this race of people from the seed of Abraham, of whom we have spoke much in other

messages. It was through this race of people that God began to reveal his great plan of salvation. However, in the old testament it is seen only through types and shadows, signs and symbols, but since Calvary it has been proclaimed to the whole world of lost mankind, and by revelation of the scriptures we are able to see and understand the whole plan of God for mankind from the creation all the way to the eternal age. In this great plan for the ages, I believe it is easy for us to see that the hub of all God's dealing with man has been love. It is like the old hymn which has the words, "LOVE IS THE THEME, LOVE IS SUPREME," that is God. God is love, and He is supreme. All his dealings with man are in truth, and his truth is given in love. Can you now see why I said, and so say again that, DIVINE LOVE IS TRUTH LIVED? It is because man can only project divine love when the very nature of God is allowed to project through him. Man in his natural make up does not have it, and cannot possibly produce it apart from complete union with God. Do you see how it works? If you are in complete union with God, and I am in complete union with God, there can be nothing else but love and unity between us. Now, how do we get in complete unity with God? Only through truth. How do we get truth? By hungering and thirsting after God and his righteousness. Read Matthew 5:6, "BLESSED ARE THEY WHICH DO HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS: FOR THEY SHALL BE FILLED" WITH WHAT? GOD, who is SPIRIT, who is TRUTH, who is LOVE, and who is righteous. That is why the early Christians of that first age conducted themselves as they did. They were filled, F-I-L-L-E-D with the Holy Ghost. God was once again being looked upon, worshiped, adored and fellowshiped as the great Eternal being that he was to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. God's love was being perfected in the lives of humanity. No wonder the apostle Paul could write as he did to the Ephesian

church which was made up of Jews, and Gentiles. Addressing his words first to the Gentile element of that congregation, he reminded them of where they had been, (spiritually), and where they had attained to in Christ Jesus. Let us read a few verses from chapter 2, beginning with verse 11, "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For HE IS OUR PEACE, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, (Gentiles), and to them that were nigh, (Jews). For through him we both have access by ONE SPIRIT unto the FATHER. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; AND are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone; In whom all the building fitly framed together growth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Some of the same words could be spoken to us. There was a time when we were without hope, (as individuals), and far from God, but now we are made nigh by the blood of Christ, and he is our peace. Furthermore, we do not look upon our brothers and sisters in Christ as foreigners if they are not natural citizens of our particular

country; neither do we look at the color of their skin; for as Paul said, "Through him (Christ), we all have access by one spirit unto the Father." We are one in him; if it be that we are in him. Look over in chapter 4, at some of the words spoken to the church at Ephesus. Remember, this church at Ephesus is set forth as the model church in this age of Grace. As we have said before, in other messages, it was from the revival fires that burned at Ephesus, that the other churches in Asia Minor got their start. Verse 1, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, **FORBEARING ONE ANOTHER IN LOVE**; Endeavoring to keep the **UNITY** of the **SPIRIT** in the bond of **PEACE**. There is **ONE BODY**, (made up of people from every race and culture), and **ONE SPIRIT**, (The Holy Ghost), even as ye are called in **ONE HOPE** of your calling; **ONE LORD**, **ONE FAITH**, **ONE BAPTISM**, **ONE GOD AND FATHER** of all, and **IN YOU ALL**." It would be impossible to have that kind of relationship, and fellowship, where you have a dozen different versions being taught on the same subject; all a result of carnal minded men trying to make a name for themselves. There are just too many self styled preachers that have not been called of God. When God calls a man into the ministry, that call is to stand for truth at any cost to the flesh. Jesus was our example for that: He stood for truth, speaking only what the Father showed him to speak, and it took him right to the cross. That is why he could say, "It is not I that doeth these things. It is the Father that dwelleth in me." (Meaning the Eternal Spirit). Flesh should never receive any credit, or glory for that which God does. That is how many people have gotten themselves into trouble with God, and man. God began to use them a little, in some (out of the ordinary) way, and immediately, they began to take the credit, and receive honor from men. On the other

hand, if a person will wait for the spirit of God to instruct him, and then give God the glory for whatever is accomplished, God will vindicate that person's ministry.

## **TRUE JOY**

God has given us the Holy Ghost, and He in us, should cause us to conduct ourselves in a godlike manner. When we begin to take on the mind of Christ we will begin to throw off our childish, human ideas about Christianity, and begin to see it from the divine standpoint. That is exactly why the scriptures point out, "You are a chosen people, a peculiar people." That does not mean that we should go around just trying to be peculiar; but I will say this much, if you will allow God to lead your life as he sees fit, you **WILL** be peculiar to the world. To abide in him is to be peculiar, as far as the world is concerned, and beside that, in the 5<sup>th</sup> verse of this 15<sup>th</sup> chapter, Jesus said, "For without me ye can do nothing." In other words, if we do not abide in him we are helpless anyhow. To abide in him is to live in the realm of his love and revealed word. 15. "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." Many people seem to have the idea that a person who is full of the joy of the Lord should be leaping up and down, shouting, and praising the Lord continually. That is a childish way of looking at it. The joy of the Lord is that inner feeling of confidence and security that holds a person steady even in the midst of storms and hard trials. Certainly there is a time for shouting praises to him, a time for leaping, running, dancing, or whatever the spirit of God would lead you to do, but it would seem mighty strange to find someone carrying on like that if their little child had just been struck down by a speeding automobile, or they had just

received word that a close relative or friend had just passed away. Yet, in those times of trial we can still have the joy of the Lord in us.

Many people have followed preachers from one place to another because of fleshly attractions, and then when something happened to the man they were following they could be heard saying, "I just don't know what I am going to do now that Bro. - is no longer with us." When you are following a man because of his flesh, his flesh is all you see; you never see the truth, and for that reason you do not have anything to hold to when that man is no longer around. It happened to many of the disciples of Jesus, when he was taken from the earth. That is why he said to them, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." If Jesus had not departed, and sent the Comforter (the Holy Ghost), to dwell within those disciples, do you think Stephen could have faced the stones of that angry mob, calling upon God not to lay that sin to the charge of those who were killing him? Of course he could not. It was the indwelling presence of the Holy Ghost that gave him such great joy in the face of his murderers. Believe me, even though they were down cast in spirit when Jesus was taken from their presence, those disciples who received the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost never spent one minute grieving about Jesus not being with them anymore after that; for they knew that he was living inside them as he said he would be. After that, it was his joy in them (HIS SPIRIT, HIS TRUTH), that made their joy full and complete. It is like the apostle Peter said, in his first epistle; it is joy unspeakable and full of glory.

## VICTORY THROUGH SUBMITTING

I know you can say, as can I; that some of the times when you have recognized that joy the most, have been times when the devil has been slapping you around to the point where it seemed like there would be no end to it; then, God enabled you to duck, just in time to miss his licks and give him one. Then you know that you have seen the hand of God working on your behalf, when the old devil goes running off, and leaves you alone. Remember what James said, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." The key to that kind of a victory is for us to **SUBMIT OURSELVES TO GOD**: so that we can draw from his inexhaustible strength and wisdom. It is true, the devil is a bluff; for he was defeated at Calvary on behalf of every child of God; but his attack is very real while it is taking place. God allows all this for our testing, and growth, and so we will not be going around trying to bluff the devil all the time. God is not a bluff, and he will not allow his people to be; he will let them get into situations where they have to have the real thing to get out of them. It was in the letter to the Hebrews where the apostle wrote, "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of Grace, (not proudly, boldly, there is a great difference), that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." In these trying situations that great joy is made more real to us. Our growth and stature in the Lord is not accomplished when we stay on the mountain top all the

time; we have to come down to reality to find the grace of God working on your behalf.

### **CHURCH OF YOUR CHOICE - ANTICHRIST DOCTRINE**

As we come back to verse 11 now, what does that joy depend upon? Is it going to the church of your choice that produces it? You know that is not right. Jesus never did teach anything that would give children of God that choice; neither did his apostles. That popular slogan is an antichrist diversion, but you can't make the world believe that: for they see it as great liberty in the Lord. You point them to a church that stands for the apostolic truth of God's word, and tell them that God is not in those denominations, and immediately you are branded as a fanatic. "I don't want to get too close to that fellow," they will say; well, let me say this, "Jesus was a fanatic, John was a fanatic, and so was Paul, if that makes you one. Did not Paul write to the Galatians, saying, "If any man, or even an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that we have preached, let him be accursed?" Did not John write in the little epistles, "If there come any unto you, and bring not THIS DOCTRINE, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed (SAYS GOD BLESS YOU BROTHER, KNOWING THAT HE IS NOT PREACHING THE TRUTH), is a partaker of his EVIL DEEDS?" We, as revealed children of God are supposed to be contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. How can we do that if we allow, or encourage those who preach something different, to minister in our assemblies, or even to come into our homes spreading their antichrist doctrine? Do not become offended at this,

saints; for if it is different than what Jesus and his apostles taught, it is antichrist doctrine. We do not deny that every major denomination was originally strong in some scriptural truth that the early church taught; but where they missed the mark was in taking only the scripture that they agreed with and attributed everything else that anyone other than their particular group received, to the devil. One group believes one truth from the Bible, and another group believes another one; but they cannot get them all together. Those early Christians believed every truth in the Bible; therefore, it is no wonder they could go into the Roman Arenas to be killed, with such great joy bubbling in their soul; they knew the truth. As the apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." They went by the hundreds into the lion cages to have their flesh ripped from their bones; but they had the joy of the Lord in their soul. They could put them in jail and they would sing just as loud in jail as they did in church. At times, when some of them would wind up in jail, here would come an angel to open up the doors for them to leave. There was no magic involved in those activities; it was just the fact that they had a God who heard the joy of their hearts singing instead of feeling sorry for themselves, and he sent an angel to loose them. "THESE THINGS HAVE I SPOKEN UNTO YOU, THAT MY JOY MIGHT REMAIN IN YOU, AND THAT YOUR JOY MIGHT BE FULL." What things? His commandments, his teachings and his words, "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." The great theme of the Bible is love, all the way from Genesis through Revelation, and the world has caught the words, but they have missed the meaning. When Jesus said, "Love one another as I have loved you," he was not talking about the kind of love that could be affected by human emotions; he was talking about a love that

would be steadfast and consistent through every situation. When that kind of love is projecting, it makes no distinction between the rich and the poor; it is not affected by color of skin nor place of birth; neither is it affected by human weakness or bad attitudes. Remember now, when we talk like this we are talking about loving a human soul with a godlike kind of love, and loving that soul is quite different than fellowshiping the flesh. There are many that we can have that kind of love for, and still not be able to fellowship with them because of the life they live, and many times because of what they believe and stand for.

### **KNOWING OUR BENEFITS**

When people do not know what to believe, and still have not come to the place where they will hear truth, they cannot have real joy: for just about the time that they get one little thought settled, and start trying to stand for it, the devil will hit them with something else that will be different. That kind of a person will spend much time sitting around, gloomy, and despaired; always grumbling and complaining that they just don't know what to believe anymore. I want you to know, that believing truth is quite different than playing with it. When you believe truth you see it for what it is; then you allow it to get down in your soul and do its work in your life. The devil's greatest delight is the keep people in confusion. He lives in confusion, and loves it, but God dwells in peace. That is why God desires for us to be in unity, and oneness of belief and purpose. There is no peace outside of it. I have heard denominational people say, when they would be confronted with truth, "We don't want to believe a thing like that: that is just the devil trying to cause confusion in our church. Let me say, "If it is truth,

inspired by the Holy Ghost, it is not the devil, and God is not the author of confusion, so where does that leave you?" It is not truth that causes confusion; it is the devil's lie that people are holding on to that is causing confusion. Let me say also, "A person that never becomes grounded in truth is always groping, looking for some preacher to pray for them. They are in every prayer line that they can find; always hoping for a miracle, never knowing what it is to just rest upon the truth and reality of God's word. Seemingly, such persons never grow up enough to distinguish between the blood purchased benefits that are available to every child of God, and the extra benefits that God bestows upon individuals from time to time for his own glory and pleasure; things that he does to bring about circumstances for the purpose of getting peoples' attention, and changing traditional ideas. Through faith we can reckon unto ourselves sufficient grace for each day if we know what benefits we have available to us. For an example, let me say this, imagine an American citizen not knowing the difference between a one dollar bill, and a five dollar bill, and having to deal (in a financial way), with dishonest people every day. Do you think that person would get all that was coming to him in the financial transaction, once the other parties found out that he did not know the difference? You know he would not, the devil would see to it. The point I am desiring to make is that, in this natural life we have to reach a place where we begin to accept a certain identity, and certain responsibilities, and in doing so, we equip ourselves so that we are not completely at the mercy of the parties we are dealing with. We learn how to sell, buy, make change, get what we have paid for, and give others the same benefit. That is all a very necessary part of adult human activity. If the devil finds out you do not know a one from a five dollar bill, you can be sure he will do his utmost to keep you broke all the time; he will strip you of everything. Do you get my point?

Can you catch the thought? Spiritually speaking it is the same way. If the devil finds out that you do not know for sure what the Bible teaches on a particular subject, he will do you exactly like he did Eve, (through the serpent), in the garden of Eden. God had said, "Do not eat, (or partake), of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: for the day that you do, you will SURELY (no doubt about it), die." God did not leave any doubt about it, he said, "if you eat, you die." The word surely as used in Gen. 2:17, is a word that means ABSOLUTELY, Not maybe. The serpent came along and said to Eve, "Did God say that you shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Notice how the woman answered the serpent's question, Gen. 3:23. This proved she did not understand it exactly as God had said it; for she said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the MIDST of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, (GOD SAID THAT), neither shall ye touch it (GOD DID NOT SAY THAT), LEST YE DIE." (GOD DID NOT SAY THAT). Eve added the part about not touching the tree, and she changed the next part; for as she supposedly quoted it, she said, "LEST YE DIE." The word L-E-S-T means, perhaps, maybe, or there is a chance you will die, but that is not the way God said it. He said you will S-U-R-E-L-Y die; no doubt about it. Right there is where the trouble for the whole human race began: the serpent saw his chance, (being inspired and led by the devil), he said, "Ye shall NOT surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Doesn't the words of the serpent remind you of a lot of people you know? They will say, "Aw, come on John, Jim, Bill, Susie, (or whatever your name is), you know God doesn't expect Twentieth Century Christians to live by those old fashioned ideas; He is a good God; he will not cast you into hell just for taking one little drink to be

sociable. After all God doesn't expect us to go through life without having any fun." Young people: you had better watch that kind of talk; that is the old serpent talking flee from it, and lay hold upon the word of God, which is able to deliver your soul. The devil is always perverting (changing), the word of God, trying to cause unsuspecting souls to miss God's true way. He does it many times through preachers who are just trying to make a name for themselves, rather than to build something for God. That is why if you do not know a one, from a five, (spiritually), you are likely to be led down a cold trail and miss God completely.

### **LIVE YOUR OWN CONVICTIONS**

It is up to every child of God to get this word settled in his heart, gain some convictions concerning the way you are to dress, the way you should talk, the places you are to go, or not to go, the kind of people you should fellowship with, and find out what your benefits are as a child of God. If you will do that you will not be forever looking for someone else to pray for you. When you gain your own personal love relationship with your heavenly Father, you will no longer have to walk through every mud hole that some one else might choose to walk through. You will follow him, instead of the crowd. That is where you will find real joy, even if following him (GOD), causes you to wind up in jail. You will not find any sad letters written by the apostle Paul, while he sat in jail for so many of the last years of his life. Every letter that he wrote shows just the opposite. He spoke of his bonds many times, but never in a complaining way. He even said in one place that many of his brethren in the lord had



become very confident because of his bonds, so that they were much more bold to speak the word of God without fear. In other words, his bonds were sort of an example to others; that is, if they wound up in the same shape, they could still have the joy of the Lord bubbling up in their soul. Prisons and chains can never destroy LOVE, TRUTH, nor the great JOY that is experienced by those who are genuine partakers of the grace of God. These virtues are perfected in trials, and testings; on the other hand, the spirit of the world will kill love and joy that is not founded on truth. How can we say that we even have divine love for Jesus, unless we love his teachings.

### **DIVINE LOVE TESTED**

After his resurrection, and just before his ascension, Jesus put Simon Peter to the test by asking him the same question three times. "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" There was no question about Peter's love for him from a human standpoint, and Jesus knew that Peter had a revelation in his bosom, but Jesus gave him a chance to examine himself a little bit by asking him the same question again the third time. By the time Jesus asked him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me," old Peter had begun to be a little nervous and provoked; probably realizing that Jesus had sensed a weakness in him; a weakness that caused Peter to deny the Lord for a short time right after he was arrested, but Jesus was tempering him; getting him ready for a time that was soon to come, when he would see him in the flesh no more in this life. At that time he commissioned Peter to feed his lambs, and his sheep. However, when he was questioning Peter, in reality, what he was really asking was, Peter, do you love me so

much that you will allow nothing to stand in your way, to prevent you from carrying out the responsibility that you will have when I am gone? In other words, Peter was to have the responsibility of unlocking the kingdom of God for those hungry souls that would desire to enter in, just a few days later. That would require divine love, in the face of all that had taken place since the arrest of Jesus. A carnal, natural love could not withstand the pressure; it could not reach out into a throng of people, some of which, no doubt, had been present when Jesus was crucified, and extend love, mercy, and the grace of God to them. Peter displayed natural love and loyalty to Jesus when he grabbed a sword and cut an ear off one of the men who came to arrest Jesus, but Jesus displayed divine love when he reached over and put the ear back on his enemy. That is the kind of love that Jesus was speaking of in Matthew 5:44-45 when he said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." He went on to say, "If you love only those who love you, how are you different from anyone else? Even people of the world do that." Divine love will project, even in unlovely situations. Jesus is our example in every area of life. He showed us how to face the onslaughts of the devil when we are under attack, as he was in the wilderness. He set a perfect example of obedience to the will of our heavenly Father, and he exemplified love in every respect as he walked among men. "THIS IS MY COMMANDMENT, THAT YE LOVE ONE ANOTHER, AS I HAVE LOVED YOU. 13, Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. YE are my friends, IF ye do whatsoever I command you." Just in case you may be one who is thinking that this does not seem like much of a way to judge friendship,

(based upon whether a person does what you tell them to do or not), let me remind you that these are the very words of Jesus himself, and they reach way beyond any human understanding, (that is, grasping only with the natural mind), for only those who have the kind of love that he is talking about, can understand the depth of such a statement. What he said in verse 14 encompasses all that we have been reading and talking about in these two chapters. In other words a person could not keep his commandments unless he did have the divine love of God in him; then we turn right around and say, "If a person has that kind of love in him, he will do as Jesus said for us to do, and this automatically makes you a friend of Jesus. It is all wrapped up in one package, and the apostle John understood it, and recorded it, in order for us to benefit from it later.

### **REVELATION REMAINS THE SAME**

Let us turn over to the little Epistles of John and see how he felt about this kind of love after more than fifty years had passed, and he was an old man. This was written somewhere around A.D. 90, when John did not have many of the old timers left who had heard it from the mouth of Jesus as he had. Let us read 1 John 2:3, and see if fifty some years of living, since hearing those words from the mouth of Jesus, has changed his revelation of them. "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS." When you take that right back to the gospel he wrote, the revelation is exactly the same. He is actually saying, This is the way that we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments, or, as we said before, observe his teachings. 4,

"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." What do you think John would have done, in his day, if some preacher got up and preached for an hour on the "blessed holy trinity?" John, that guardian of love and truth, would have been bound to reveal him as a false prophet. The very words of such a person testifies to the fact that they do not know him. What if John could live in our day, and go into one of these charismatic meetings where some big priest or bishop, with a log chain and a big cross hanging from his neck would be shaking people, slapping them on the back, and trying to teach them to speak in tongues? How do you think John would react to that? Don't forget, John was in that upper room when the Holy Ghost fell on the disciples of Jesus for the first time. He knew that there was no one present that day to teach them to speak in tongues. I believe John would create a disturbance in such gatherings, and I believe that when he got through with those charismatic leaders, they would have to admit that they did not have what they were talking about. I say these things only for the sake of illustration, because it is truth that we are after; Otherwise we would just be playing religious games like the church world in general. The truth that God has revealed to us in our day is like jewels, precious stones, diamonds, emeralds, and all the other things that natural man looks upon as valuable. You would not think of taking a 5 carat diamond, and setting it in a cheap ten cent store mounting; no, you would carefully choose a solid gold mounting that would compliment such a stone; something that would enhance and add to the beauty of it. We know how to display natural things, but we have a great deal to learn yet about displaying the precious gifts of the spirit of God that he has so bountifully bestowed upon us. 5, "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in him." The love of God is perfected in those who keep his word,

live by his sayings, and follow the example that he set before us when he walked in human flesh.

## **SALVATION - GOD'S FREE GIFT**

God requires that we prove our love for him by accepting his love and truth on his terms rather than on our own. That is why some very proud folks have to be broken, so badly, when God begins to deal with them in a spiritual way. They want God to be real in their lives, but they want him on their own terms. That will not work; God is not a compromiser. There is only one way into the spiritual family of God, and all that come to him have to find that way. It matters not whether we are rich or poor, whether we are very smart or just average, and it doesn't matter who we may or may not know. God does not care about any of that, for there is no way that we can merit the grace of God. Paul expresses it in Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by GRACE (God's unmerited favor), are ye saved through FAITH; (believing God's word), and that not of yourselves: (You cannot earn salvation), it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast." If we could work out our salvation, (do anything to earn it in any way) then we could possibly have something to boast about, for our abilities are not all the same. Some, far exceed others in many ways. Knowing this, we ought to be even more grateful, realizing that the apostle wrote in 1 Cor. 12:13, "By one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one spirit." That one spirit that we have all been baptized into one body with, is the spirit of truth, and God's purpose in doing

this is that we might be made one in him. He is cultivating truth in us, and that truth will make us free. We are free from the bondage that Satan has held us in for so long. We are now members of the body of Christ, "and God has set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." (1 Cor. 12:18) Every denomination on the face of this earth has their little formula for making new members in their assemblies. We will not go into those methods in this message for we are interested in only one method; that is the one we have just mentioned. These people speak of love and many of them refer to each other as precious brother, or precious sister, but you had better not cross their doctrine, or you will find out real quick that they do not have the kind of love that they talk so much about.

## **INTERPRETING GOD**

Through the years while people were all mixed up in Babylon, they tried to interpret the word of God, and found that they could not do it, so they began to do what they considered to be the next best thing; they began to interpret God. Now we have the Baptist, the Methodist, the Presbyterians, the Catholics, etc., who are all mixed up in Babylon, and for years they have been fighting each other, refusing to let their members go to any other church, and now, as we approach the end, we can see them all climbing into the same nest. Do you know what happened? They each one (denomination) kept noticing that all the other denominations were growing instead of diminishing, and being unable to interpret the word of God, they began to interpret God himself, in this way; they began to say, "God can be in any denomination." They read where Peter made the statement while in the home of Cornelius that God is no respecter of

persons', and that caused them to begin saying, "God is no respecter of denominations." Time and conditions, and the grace of God has caused people to assume things about God, and take him for granted. They take the scriptures that speak of God's love, mercy, and longsuffering, and it makes them feel secure, not knowing that the longsuffering of God does not mean that he has accepted our ideas. What they fail to understand, is that God knows we are all weak and he gives us plenty of time to accept his (God's) ideas, his plan, his purpose for our lives. God, in his love and mercy, will tolerate, for periods of time, the things that we are doing, but it is his plan and purpose, to bring all of his foreknown children to a place of perfect unity, all believing the same thing, with nothing left to cause divisions. Now I hope each of you will understand what we are endeavoring to point out in this little message. I am sure some of you who have been around this message of truth for quite a while may be thinking, "Bro. Jackson; we don't need to hear all that," but I ask you to be patient, and have consideration for your younger brothers and sisters that are still trying to find their way out of Babylon. You would be surprised at some of the questions people ask me, concerning the very things that we are talking about. Many are wondering if it is alright to go hear Bro. So and So, who doesn't teach everything exactly like we do here, but he seems to have an awful lot of love for everyone. To that, I will have to say, as I have said before, if it is love that you are interested in, you will still have to find it in truth or it will fail you. This modern theory that claims we do not have to see eye to eye on everything, just as long as we love each other, is from the pit; that never did come from the lips of God's anointed preachers. I will grant you this much though, up until he sent a prophet to this age, for the purpose of turning his children back to his revealed word, God did accept those honest hearted, sincere people in every system who

sought him with all their heart, and walked in all the truth they had available to them in their hour. Therefore, you can stop worrying about your great grandmother, and examine the truth that is available to you in your day, that is where your salvation lies.

### **BE YE THEREFORE PERFECT**

God has been merciful to people in every system of Babylon, just as he was to the Jews who were carried away to Babylon in the days of old. It is also like God being merciful to Jews in dispersion throughout the world, but tell me, "Did God ever give them a city anywhere except in Israel?" There is only one capital city that God will ever give to the Jews, and that is Jerusalem. God extends mercy to Jews in other places, but it is only those who return to that land, who stand in the place of inheriting that which God has promised. Therefore, if we can see how God deals with the Jews in the natural, we will better understand God's dealing with us in the spirit. We have to leave Babylon and return to our homeland, (spiritually speaking), in order to receive our inheritance. There is a transition period, of course; God allows for that, but the ultimate goal is to return to God's original plan. God never did change, and he has never altered his plan for the ages; it is just that man (through the ages), lost his way, and God has been longsuffering, waiting for his children to return home. Right now all signs point to the fact that we are nearing our destination, and we know that it is the purpose of God to have a people that are perfect, not in the sense of being perfect in our flesh, as some believe, but in the sense of a perfect experience with God, perfect love, perfect unity, perfect fellowship and inseparability. Do you know, I have actually heard people scoff at the idea of the children

of God being perfect. It is because they are carnal in all their thinking, and void of understanding, when it comes to spiritual matters. Would Jesus have instructed his disciples to be perfect, if it were not possible for them to obtain perfection in the sense that he was speaking it? Matt. 5:48, "Be ye therefore PERFECT, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." What did he mean? We all know that we can never be perfect (flesh wise), in this life. This word PERFECT, as used here, by Jesus, comes from a Greek word which means, "to be complete," in the sense of fullness, or oneness. Jesus has just been instructing his disciples, teaching them, I should say, about love. In the discourse he said, "I know you have heard it said, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy,' But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute (greet, speak to), your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publican so?" He has been teaching them that the God kind of love reaches beyond the bounds of one's own little circle, and includes even the unlovely. In other words, he said, "This is the way God is; therefore if you want to be like him you will have to conduct yourselves the same way; "then he called upon them to be perfect, even as their heavenly Father is perfect. Does that help you to relate the statement to its proper application? In this particular setting he is talking about unselfishness, proper attitude, proper conduct, and the ability to love as God loves. No doubt, John heard every word that Jesus said that day, for it seems that the subject of love burned in him like an unquenchable fire throughout all that we

have recorded about him, and by him. We find recorded in Luke 6:40 where Jesus said, "The disciple is not above his master: but every one that IS PERFECT shall be as his master." Also, in 1 Cor. 2:6, we find the apostle Paul writing this, "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them THAT ARE PERFECT." Then, in Colossians 4:12 we find Paul writing to that church using the same language. "Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand PERFECT and COMPLETE in all the will of God." Being perfect in the sight of God is for us to be what God has called us to be, and to live our lives according to God's principles. Just as the Bible says that Noah was perfect in his generation, so also can we be perfect in our generation if we will walk with God. Whatever God has called you to do, do that, and do not covet your brother's job that the Lord has called him to fulfill. For an example, just to illustrate perfection: If you had a job some place that required you to cut strings from packages that had been shipped, you might use a very small pocket knife. For that job this could be a perfect knife, for the simple reason, it is doing all that you require it to do. But suppose you have need to cut a large branch from a tree in your yard that is located in a place where it is forever in your way. Will that same little knife be perfect for a job like that? You know it will not. Your requirements for a knife will be different in this situation. Walking with God is the same way. As he shines more light for people to walk in, there is more required from those who would be perfect in his sight.

### **TRUTH OR LIE**

As we follow John's writings on this theme of love, let us look at 1 John 2:3-4, where he

Copyright 2018 Faith Assembly Church

approached the subject from another direction. We have already read the scripture, but let me say this; if we believe that God sent a messenger to bring us back to an original, then we could well be living in the very hour when this scripture will hang right over our very souls. We have been restored back to the word and now we are without excuse. If we say that we love God, and then allow ourselves to deviate, even a little, from the truth, we make ourselves a liar. No one else will have to do it, for according to the Bible, we make ourselves a liar. "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments IS A LIAR, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God PERFECTED: hereby know we that we are in him." The days of playing around with religious theories is over for us. God tolerated that while we were still in Babylon, but he will not tolerate any such among those whom he has called out to be a part of the bride of Christ. You are going to see many people renounce every aspect of Christianity, and turn to the world, all because they have tried to hold onto some little old religious theory or idea that will fail them when they need it most. God will make sure that what you are holding onto will either cause you to grow in him, or it will be the very thing that will shake you loose from the vine. God is going to let every unclean and evil spirit of hell be turned loose to invade society, and rule apostate religion; for we are living in the age of falling away. People are going to get sick of religion. They will become almost hysterical when they finally begin to see just how apostate, religion has become. Only those who are keeping God's truth will be spared from apostasy, from that spirit of apostasy that is pulling on the religious world. "BUT WHOSO KEEPETH HIS WORD, IN HIM VERILY IS THE LOVE OF GOD PERFECTED, (MADE COMPLETE)." We do not walk with God, ignorant of what his will is for our lives. You hear people say, "I

hope this is right, or, I think this is right, or, that is what I have always been taught." Brothers and sisters: it makes me sad to hear Christians talk like that, for it reveals the fact that they are without revelation, and that makes them an easy mark for the devil. In this hour of time, it is imperative that we come to a settled understanding of what our soul believes; for the enemy will throw everything he has at us as this age closes out. It will be his business to try and get us to throw up our hands and quit the race, but remember, "WHOSO KEEPETH HIS WORD, in him verily is the love of God perfected." He (the Lord) is our shelter in the time of storm. It is in him that we are secure, and the way that we know that we are in him, is by keeping his word. When we keep his word, his love is perfected in us. Then we do not have doctrines to fuss about, therefore our fellowship is sweet. Now, did I say that we should not teach doctrine? Absolutely not, but we will all have the same doctrine. I want to read to you, the first 13 verses of the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of Titus. "But speak thou (Paul writing to Titus), the things which become sound DOCTRINE: That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. In all things shewing thyself a PATTERN of good works: in DOCTRINE shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; not purloining, but

shewing all good fidelity; that they may ADORN THE DOCTRINE OF GOD OUR SAVIOUR IN ALL THINGS. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” It seems that the apostle Paul (in a very few words), summed up the Christian way of life, beginning, by exhorting Titus to speak the things which become SOUND DOCTRINE, and then went on to say that he should show himself to be a pattern of good works. In other words, he was to be an example before them in word and deed while he taught them sound, and uncorrupt DOCTRINE. God placed certain doctrines in the Bible for the purpose of setting a standard for those who would walk with him; however, it was never the purpose of God for some to hold to one Bible doctrine, and others to another one, causing division among believers, for as we said before, every doctrine of truth that men have found in the Bible belongs to the total makeup of every true Christian. We must keep in mind though, that God is sovereign, and that he is not obligated to deal with every person in exactly the same way as he begins to draw them into his great plan. Some think because the Bible says that God is no respecter of persons, he is obligated to give every believer the exact same experience that they, or someone else had. That only holds true in the overall benefit, or end result of each person’s experience of salvation. God deals with every individual according to each one’s particular personality and human makeup. That is why God can give you an experience that is not even like mine, and the end results of our experience will lead us both to the same place in our overall makeup.

## **RECEIVING THE HOLY GHOST**

We hear people say many times, “Now in order to receive the Holy Ghost you must get it in such and such a way.” Such instruction is not correct. When I received the Holy Ghost I was lying on the floor, but that doesn’t mean that everyone must be lying on the floor to receive the Holy Ghost. In the upper room they were sitting when they were filled with the Holy Ghost, Acts 2:2, while others have been standing. God is sovereign; when it comes to certain experiences he will do as he pleases, but the end results will be the same. It doesn’t make any difference what position we are in when we receive the Holy Ghost; but once he is in us, remember, he is a teaching spirit; he will not teach you something contrary to what he is teaching me. He will lead us both to a true understanding of his plan and purpose. His plan includes doctrines which start at the Godhead, and come right on down through water baptism, sanctification, foreknowledge, election, predestination, eternal security of the believer, the catching away of the saints, the resurrection of the dead, the millennial reign of Christ, and many more, but he will teach each one of us the TRUTH of these DOCTRINES, for he is the spirit of truth. Now you may say, “Bro. Jackson, is it really necessary for a person to know all these things in order to be saved? No, I did not say that, but what I have said is that if what we know about these things are taught to us by the Holy Ghost that dwells within us, we will all be believing the same thing. There will be nothing to fuss about. Let me say right now, there are certain doctrines that are mandatory, for they form the framework of the Christian faith. A proper understanding of the Godhead, water baptism, sanctification, baptism of the Holy Ghost, these Bible doctrines form the foundation for your spiritual building, while

others just add to your statural growth in the Lord, but my point is this, there is no two, three, or a half dozen ways, for as we have said already, God's one way is perfect, and it will lead us all into unity and oneness when we find it. When God, by his spirit, gets us taught properly, and established in the same teaching, then we have nothing to fuss about; we can come to church and know that the brother sitting next to us has been baptized the same way we have, and that he believes the gospel just like we do, and that neither one of us have anything to brag or boast about. Just for a little illustration of boasting, I remember back to the depression days when money was scarce, and hard to get hold of, especially for little farm boys. We did not have nickels and pennies to carry around in our pockets in those days. But, once in a while when dad was a little fortunate to get an extra fifty cents from someplace, he would sometimes say, "Here Junior, you can take this penny and buy yourself a sucker today." That was a treat for me, but at the same time other boys and girls whose families were better off financially might come to school with a sucker every day. Naturally a situation like that can cause bragging and jealousy. Other little boys and girls were sometimes made to feel bad. It made you feel like, if you could just get one lick from that sucker it would sure be wonderful. Now that is the kind of thing that you expect to find among children, but it is sad to find such bragging and jealousy among the ranks of Christian adults. God is not pleased when we boast and brag, and do things that provoke jealousy. Quite the contrary, for he desires to lead us to a place in him, where we will realize that we do not have anything to boast about. Therefore, if you can understand my little illustration, you will realize that when God passes out the suckers, he makes sure that we all get one, and he makes sure that they are all just alike. We are still on the thought of doctrines; we will all understand them the same way when the Holy Ghost gets through

teaching us. Jesus said, "He will take things of mine and show them unto you." He will guide us into all truth if we have a love for truth.

### **LED BY THE SPIRIT**

Brothers and sisters: I know most of you have heard different ones quote the verse in Romans 8:14, and apply it to the supernatural leading of the Lord, but I want you to know that the verse applies first to being led to truth. "FOR AS MANY AS ARE LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD, THEY ARE THE SONS OF GOD." Some people quote that verse so proudly, once they have experienced the thrill of being forewarned, or guided by the spirit of the Lord. It does make you feel good, but it should not make us brag, for God, many times, will do a thing like that to get our attention, but that in itself is not God's ultimate goal in dealing with us. His first goal is to lead us into truth, for he (the Holy Ghost), is the spirit of truth. Will you just try to imagine what it would be like to take an hundred people and try to blend them together in fellowship when every one of them is believing something different. Instead of having true fellowship together, they would each one be trying to convert the others to his particular way of thinking. True love, and true fellowship cannot be cultivated in such an atmosphere. That is not the way God leads his people to truth. That is man's carnal way of (as many would say), witnessing for God, but let me tell you this, a true witness for God will be found leading a hungry soul to truth, instead of promoting his man made doctrine. John said, "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments." How can you get them to love one another, when they cannot stop trying to force their



little ideas off on the other person? It just goes to prove that there is a carnal nature in humans that, unless it is harnessed by the Holy Ghost, it will cause divisions and separations. Such is the case, not only in religion, but in politics and society in general. Some people just feel like they have to be different, and many times they refer to their being different, as being led by the spirit of God, and therefore they hold themselves up as being the sons of God. There is nothing to be said against a person being led to do certain things, as long as it does not go contrary to revealed truth, but Jesus taught that a person should not exalt himself, (Matt. 23:12, "And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.") and I believe that if we are truly led by the spirit of God it should have a humbling effect upon us, rather than make us proud and boastful. There is one thing sure; time will tell who is truly being led by the spirit of God, for their life will prove it. When the Holy Ghost is permitted to lead us into truth, our lives will be such that we will be able to stand against all the fiery darts of the wicked. We will not have to throw up our hands in despair when the adversary attacks, for the truth has made us free. We are not free to be proud, haughty and high-minded, for if we are like that we are no free at all; we are still in bondage.

### **ENDURING TO THE END**

Let us look once again to 1 John 5:2, "By this we know that we love the children of God, (How?) When we love God, and keep his commandments. 3, For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: (Now look at this next part, brothers and sisters), and his commandments are not grievous." I do not find this blessed precious way to be

hard. When the Bible says in Matt. 10:22, that, he that endureth to the end shall be saved, it does not mean, he that endureth ridicule and persecution from the devil, brought on by the world. God has so ordained it, that we can enjoy our salvation. I find it to be wonderful. It is true many times, as we walk down the street we will notice someone looking at us a certain way. They do not say it with words to you, but they might just as well have, for you recognize by their glance out of the corner of their eyes as you walk by, and you know that look of scorn; therefore you know that something was said about you. Actions speak louder than words, but just be thankful to God if that is all the persecution you ever get; and be thankful for the truth that keeps us from being bothered by those who react to us in these ways. They think we are very odd characters, but we can truly say that salvation is something to enjoy. Praise God, his commandments are not grievous. Verse 4, "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world, even our faith." We have read many scriptures that point us to this truth, but here it is; John said it, if we are really and truly born of God, we will keep his commandments, and we will overcome the world. Now let us back up to chapter 4, and read verse 7, where we see the picture painted from the opposite side. John seemed to feel that this subject of truth and love was important enough to justify his approaching it from every angle. You just cannot separate love, as it is talked about here, from other chapters. Listen how he words this. 4:7, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." If we love God we are going to keep his teachings. Then we can say, "if we love God and keep his teachings, we will love one another, for that is part of his teaching."

## **LIVE WHAT YOU PREACH**

What we really need to do, in the light of all that has been said on the subject, is to examine ourselves. Can we really see each other as souls that the Lord Jesus died for at Calvary? Are we able to see the grace of God extended to lost mankind? Do we feel that we are better than someone else? If so, do we know the other person's circumstances? Brothers and sisters: we are, what we are, by the grace of God. Let us not boast, nor be filled with pride, as the Scribes and Pharisees were in the days of Jesus' ministry on earth. The apostle Paul said, "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." What do you think he meant by that statement? Simply this, it is easy to memorize, and speak the right words, but if you, yourself, do not become a partaker of the gospel that you preach, you will wind up like some preachers that Jesus referred to in the 7<sup>th</sup> chapter of Matthew, verses 21-23, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Some of you may say, "Bro. Jackson: how can that be? How could they cast out devils, and perform wonderful works, if they are not genuine ministers of God?" Jesus said it would be that way, and the apostle Paul believed that a thing like that could happen, or he would not have said what he did. Please do not let these remarks confuse you. We are not saying that a person who is truly born of the spirit could lose his salvation. That will not happen. What we are saying though is this, if all you have is

just the right words, without the experience of God's work of grace in your heart, to give you this love that John wrote about, you cannot claim the benefits that go with that genuine born again experience. As for the apostle Paul saying what he did about being a castaway, he certainly was not concerned about losing his salvation experience with God. The main point that we should catch from what he said is that keeping our body under control is the natural thing for a child of God to do. It requires some extra attention at first, when we first become Christians, but as we walk with God from day to day, a life of godliness becomes natural for us. When we love God, we love his ways, his people, and his word.

## **ALL THINGS COMMON**

For too long now love has been preached as a separate thing, apart from the whole teachings of the word of God. Also, for too long, people have thought that God is going to perfect those with this teaching of love, regardless of what the rest of their teachings may be. But you will not find that to be following a true pattern of the scriptures. You will find (if you care to search it out), that the early church all believed and taught the same thing. You will not find where anyone tried to build a larger congregation than anyone else had. That kind of a thing is carnal. We ought not to want anyone in our assemblies that the Lord has not brought in, and if God sets them in, then what do we have to boast about? As we look back to the book of Acts, we cannot help but realize that, in order for it to be said that they had all things common, they all had to be believing the same thing. That remained so, as long as those apostles of

the Lord remained alive, and where they could hold a line on the word of God. Of course we realize that as they left the scene, the enemy (with his false teaching), moved into the churches, but in the early years of that first church age God kept it pure, and set an example for us to look back to. If anyone dared to bring a strange or contrary teaching into the church, the Holy Ghost immediately reached out to discipline and correct it. Why? Because the church of God was not to be a great body of people with a plurality of ideas. Jesus taught those apostles, and early disciples, for over three years, and he did not have to change his teaching, nor take back anything that he had taught, for he taught everything perfect the first time, and every time. God was setting in motion a plan of love, whereby he would bestow love upon all who would receive it, and they, in responding, would return love to God, and love each other. Love cannot have its liberty among a group of people where there are ever so many ideas, and opinions floating around. It is not that God cannot love. He loved us first, before we ever knew him, and as we said before, God is longsuffering but he will not tolerate people's strange revelations forever. He is one, his word is one, and his purpose and objective is one. Therefore, when a person speaks, by the unction of the Holy Ghost, he will speak in harmony with revealed truth every time. That is why the early church all believed everything the same way. Those who taught them were unctioned by the Holy Ghost, the spirit of truth. Yes, God can love a human soul no matter where that individual may be, but the recipients of that love must allow themselves to be led out of the confusion, and into truth, or they, themselves, will never be able to genuinely express that kind of love to others. Every church group in world religion has some common ground of belief where, as long as they remain in that area they get along together alright, but when each one begins trying to teach his own interpretation of the

Bible, right then, the fire begins to fly. What you see then is not divine love. It is human emotions being turned loose to battle for self. It works the same way with a bunch of gangsters and hoodlums. They can get together, and get along with each other very well as long as they stick to their common ground, (money), and only talk about how to pull off another bank robbery or a holdup somewhere, for a monetary gain, but when the job is over and human feelings begin to be expressed, they will usually wind up having a big shootout. That is the way our human, inherited nature, responds; it is self oriented. That is why we maintain that a person can only express divine love when their life is built upon, and motivated by truth. "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." This scripture deals with the real person that we are. We may not all like to eat the same food, or go to the same places that others may go, but we will all believe the same truth, or believe alike, about what is truth, and we will love each other regardless of our human likes and dislikes. I hope you can see the difference, for John is actually dealing with a situation where a man or woman, as far as outward signs, and actions go, has accepted his teaching, and has been faithful in church attendance and activities, yet as they come down, almost to the finish line, there are just certain people that they cannot accept. They just cannot accept them as a child of God, and will not accept them as being worth anything. They just absolutely ignore, and shun them, and will not have a thing to do with them. This is where the person that we really are, will begin to contaminate the love of God, "For he that LOVETH NOT KNOWETH NOT GOD: for God is love." This is my illustration of what I believe John was writing about. In other words, if you are unable to love a human soul that the Lord Jesus has already died to redeem, then you have no

right to be professing to know God, for if you knew God you would love as he loves: for God is love. 4:9, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. 10, Herein is love, not that we love God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

### **JESUS DIED FOR ALL**

When Jesus Christ came into the world to take our place, and die at Calvary, he did not die, just for the good people. What I mean is, he didn't die just for the good sinners, but he died for the crooks and thieves, the ill famed women, and the family abusers, and the lowest of the lowly. His love caused him to take the place of everyone, and he died, showing no partiality nor respect of persons, for the sacrifice that he offered up to God, covered the sins of all lost mankind from every age of time, before and after Calvary. As Isaiah was inspired to speak, "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows: Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Yes, he loved us so much that he took our very faults and failures upon himself and bore the penalty for them to the cross. He bore them in his flesh. His spirit was undefiled. Take his disciples, (the twelve that he chose), if he had looked upon them, with all their faults and failures, the way natural humans look upon each other, (strictly from the standpoint of natural carnal nature), he would

have sent every one of them back home. Look what Peter did, denied the Lord and cursed, but Jesus was looking beyond all that to the time when Peter would repent, get hold of himself, and be a genuine instrument in the hands of God. If I had been in the place of Jesus, or maybe some of you, we might have said, "I am done with Peter, a man who acts like that will never be worth anything," but look what Peter did the moment he heard the cock crow, he went out and wept bitterly. What was he doing? He was repenting. He was not bragging about what he had done. He was crying out from the depths of his soul, OH GOD, FORGIVE ME, I am sorry for denying the best friend I ever had. He never denied him again after that. That doesn't mean that Peter was free from human faults, but from that time on, we see him in the scriptural records, doing what Jesus had called him to do. On the other hand, if he had failed to repent, and just gone on his merry way, I seriously doubt that Jesus would have sent him word (after his resurrection), that he would meet them in Galilee. These are the things we must look at if we are to get a proper understanding of God's personal dealings with the individual self that we are. God does not evaluate us on the basis of what we were guilty of doing when we were wallowing in the gutters of sin and debauchery. He evaluates us on our ability to receive truth, love truth, and follow truth. He knows if we will allow truth to have its perfect work in us, we will fulfill his word. 11, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." All of this is attached to the fact that, all other phases of his word are avenues that lead from the hub, which is truth and divine love. It is just like a big old wagon wheel; when you look at that wheel, the hub seems very small, compared to the whole scope of the wheel, but it doesn't take a person very long to realize that the whole activity and usefulness of that wheel is built around the hub, so is it with love and truth. You may fly around this world a

hundred times, and preach to millions, but if the center of it all is not divine love and truth, you are destined to wind up with the feeling that it has all been in vain. When the pressures of this life finally catch up with you, and you come to realize that all you have done has been with a wrong motive, and that you, yourself, do not have that essential ingredient in your own life, what will you do?

### **SOWING AND REAPING**

We have observed through the years, that those who just never seem to get understanding of the true plan and purpose of God, usually just drift along until something grabs their attention and leads them completely away from truth. That kind of thing is not limited to the person who sits out in the pews, it happens to preachers as well. It will happen to anyone who does not cultivate truth. God has a law of sowing and reaping, working in every phase of our life in this earthly journey, and it works the same way as sowing and reaping a natural crop. We sow the seed, we cultivate the soil, and in due time we have a full grown crop, with increase. On the other hand, if we plant seed, (no matter how good the seed may be), and fail to cultivate the soil, you will usually find that the crabgrass and weeds will choke the life right out of your crop, whether it be beans, corn or whatever. Jesus expressed it in the parable of the sower, found in Matthew 13: 18-23, I will not read it all, but the 22<sup>nd</sup> verse reads like this, "He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; (TRUTH) and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful." There we see what Jesus said would happen to a person

who received truth, and then allowed other things to keep him from following it. Without cultivation, the thorns choked it out, it could not bear fruit. On the other hand, look what he said about the person who received seed in good ground. Remember it is only good ground if it is properly cultivated. That will apply naturally, or spiritually, either one. It applies to both. 23, "But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." That brings us to another point in dealing with the Christian life: that is, growth in the realm of the spirit, or spiritual side, but first, let me say this, you will notice that it is necessary for a person to understand truth, in order to grow spiritually. Now, to consider this spiritual growth, it is necessary (when we receive truth), that we cultivate the ground (this physical body), and make it a fit place for truth to abide, and bring forth an increase. When we love truth, and live truth, we gain more truth, and since we know that the scriptures declare that God is love, and God is truth, the more truth we have, the more of God we have, and when we have more of God, we have more of the Godlike kind of love. I will go ahead and say this though, there are some of you who have the idea that a person starts out as a thirtyfold Christian, and works his way up through sixtyfold to become a hundredfold. That is not true at all. A thirtyfold Christian will always be a thirtyfold Christian, and likewise, a sixtyfold will always be a sixtyfold. They will all believe the same doctrine, and the thirtyfold will have the same revelation as the hundredfold, but when it comes to bearing fruit (the fruit of the spirit), you can be sure that they will not bear fruit beyond the measure of the grace of God in their lives, and their ability to see ways to yield themselves unto God. What I am saying is this, the bride of Christ will have thirty, sixty and hundredfold Christians in it, and the

hundredfold person will not be any more perfect before God than the thirtyfold, for God will not expect any more from a person than they have the ability to give. What God does require though, is that each one of us yield ourselves unto him according to our ability to do so. That is the reason Jesus said, "Unto whom much is given, much is required." We must realize that all we are, and all that we have in this life comes from God; therefore we must make the best of what we have, and never find fault with God because we feel that we should have been given more.

### **MEASURING SPIRITUALITY**

Remember, our greatest goal in life should be to have the love of God perfected in us, regardless of our abilities. In the 12<sup>th</sup> verse of 1 John, chapter 4, where we have been reading John says, "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." That applies to every born again child of God, and it is not hinged on how much ability we may have to bear the fruit of the spirit. It is all hinged on obedience. It is just like the parable of the householder in Matthew, chapter 20; the laborers which were hired early in the morning had the opportunity and responsibility of working a full day, and were required to do so. On the other hand, the laborers which ere hired at the eleventh hour only had opportunity to work one hour, but that is all that was required of the; their reward was the same as all the others. They did all that they were expected to do; therefore they received equal reward, and because they received the same as all the others, some of the first bunch complained, but the householder replied that he had paid every one of them all that they had any right

to expect. I find the same grumbling among Christians. Some who have been Christians for years seem to feel that they have seniority rights with God, and many times they just cannot understand how God can bestow upon a new Christian, the same gifts and benefits that they have. Instead of rejoicing because another soul has received the grace of God, many times such people will feel hurt. Brothers and sisters: that kind of attitude is carnal. Such a person ought to realize that they are actually finding fault with the Holy Ghost when they act like that. As I said earlier, some of those same people measure the spirituality of others by how much they jump, shout, dance, and speak in tongues. You will hear them say, "Bro. Or sister so and so is not very spiritual, you never see them do anything." They seem to feel that if a person is not doing something all the time, they are just not spiritual. I would hate to think that God measured his children like that. I love to see people get happy and dance, shout, or anything else that God would be in, but that is not God's yardstick for measuring spirituality. If God measured people like that, then he would have caused every revelation that has been restored back to the church, to come through the snake handlers; they play with snakes, lay on the floor, climb the walls, jump, dance and shout all night long, but tell me, what revelation has been restored to the church through them? You will find that spirituality lies within the life of those who are consistent in the life they live, and how they treat the word of God. Some of the time they may shout, but there may be a lot of times that they will not. We ought to learn to appreciate what God does for others, just as much as we do, what he does for us, and vice versa. I am aware of what happens to a true revelation many times, when it winds up in the midst of a people that has not learned how to conduct themselves. They will wreck it up just like a bunch of six year old's playing with a new car out here on the highway.

Before long it is so battered up that it is hard to recognize.

### **AS HE IS SO ARE WE**

May God bless you now, as we try to bring this little message to a close. I hope that it has helped some of you to see that divine love and truth cannot be separated, for, as we said in the beginning, if you try to separate them, to take one without the other, you do not have either one. We will move on down to verse 16, "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love: and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." Seeing that verse in its true meaning, we will have to say, if a soul is truly dwelling in the love of God, and God in him, then you can be sure of one thing; that soul is yearning for the truth of God's word. 17, "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world." How is he? We cannot read that verse without this question coming to our minds, but first let us see who John is writing to, then we will consider the part of, how he is, and whether it applies to us or not. Let us go back to the gospel of John where I will read 4 verses from the 17<sup>th</sup> chapter. Remember, Jesus is praying to the Father (the great eternal spirit), right before he entered the garden where he was arrested. We hear him in verse 6, saying, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy WORD. 8, For I have given unto them WORDS which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." In these verses we find out what he has manifested to those whom the Father had

given unto him, (his name and his words), and that they received his words. Then in verse 17, we find him saying "Sanctify them through thy TRUTH: THY WORD IS TRUTH." From these verses we learn that Jesus has manifested the Father's name to a number of disciples which were chosen before, and that he has committed the Father's words unto them, and they have received them, and that those words were truth that would sanctify them. Now that we know what THEY received, and we know beyond any shadow of doubt that the prayers of Jesus were answered, let us see if it applies to us. Verse 20, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which S-H-A-L-L BELIEVE on me through THEIR WORD." Now with these things in mind, let us turn back to 1 John 2:21, where John says, "I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth." In this we see that John is writing to people who know the truth, the unadulterated truth that was preached to the disciples of that first age. Therefore, if you believe that truth, (as they preached it), and you are abiding in that truth, then the things that John wrote to believers is for you. Let us read a few verses from chapter 3, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 2, Beloved now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Notice this next verse now. 3, "And EVERY MAN (PERSON), that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

### **SONS OF GOD - WHEN?**

Remember now, John did not write that letter to carnal church members. They have no part in it. This letter is written to the only kind of Christians that John knew anything about, namely, those who received, loved, and abided in truth. To him, there was no other kind of Christians. Therefore, "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." Jesus sought to walk in the perfect will of God, by allowing the word of God to live and dwell, and flow through him. He said nothing of himself, only the will of God. This then, caused him to be the WORD lived and expressed in human flesh, and through human flesh. As he is so are we in this world. Are we ready to try and make an application of what we have been studying? Suppose you go to one of these charismatic meetings where you have Baptists, Catholics, Methodists, Lutherans, and on and on we could go naming denominations that would be represented in such a gathering. We know that those who enjoy these meetings, all believe in divine healing, receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and speaking in tongues as the evidence that they have received. In those things they can usually agree, but you let some person stand up in one of their meetings, and start preaching Jesus' name baptism in water, or the oneness of the Godhead, and ever so many other Bible doctrines that we could mention, you would have a fight on your hands. You would hear them screaming, "That is of the devil, throw him out, all he does is cause trouble and division." Then you would have some preacher stand up, when things have quieted down enough and say, "Now brothers and sisters, we may not all believe the same, doctrinally, but that is not the important thing; what really matters is that we all love each other, for God is love." Tell me, can you apply what John taught to such a people as that? You know you cannot. Ask yourself this question, is Jesus the Christ of this

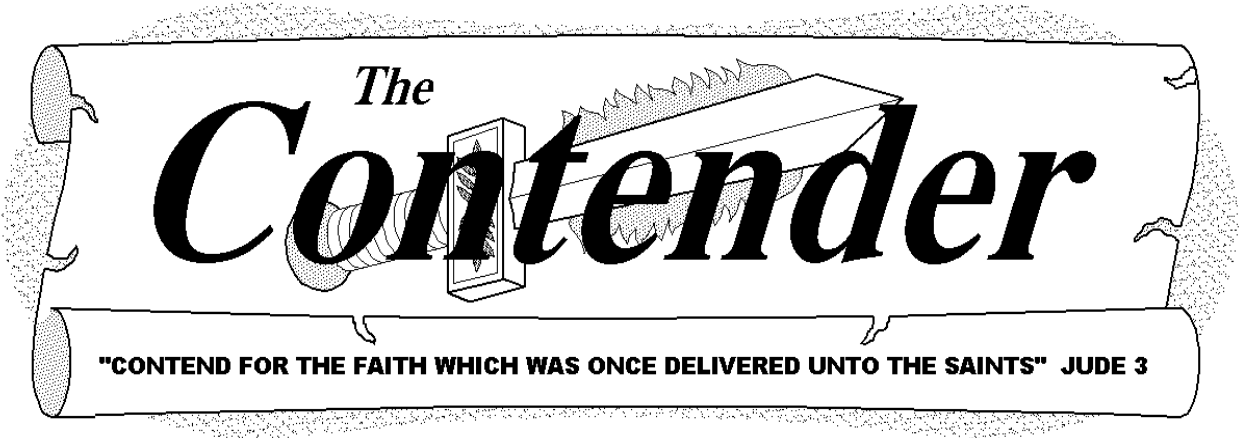
confusion? If we are to be like him, what will he be like when he comes? Out of all those denominations, who can tell me which one of them Jesus is like? "Beloved, NOW ARE WE THE SONS OF GOD." Remember, God's family is not divided up into groups, some believing one thing, and others something else; they are all one, with one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. 18, There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." When people reach a true understanding of what truth is, and how to allow truth to take their lives and cultivate in them the life of Christ, God's love is thereby perfected.

### **TWO SPIRITS - ONE RIGHT - ONE WRONG**

All this fuss about doctrine has caused many preachers to stop preaching and teaching doctrine altogether, but I preach it, because doctrine is to the word of God, what steel framework is to a tall building. What did Isaiah have to say about how the Jewish nation would be, leading right up to the first advent of Christ? Remember, Isaiah prophesied these things more than 700 years before Christ, but listen to verses 8, 9 of the 28<sup>th</sup> chapter. "For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean. Whom shall he teach knowledge? And who shall he make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts." In other words, doctrine is to be taught to those who have a desire to grow up in God. Is that not what the apostle Paul taught in Hebrews? Is that now what he



taught to the Ephesians? Paul knew how to feed milk to a new convert, but after they had been converted for a while, he intended to feed them some meat of the gospel. In this day and how when the spirit of antichrist is working right in this message of truth, taking statements, phrases, and quotes, and promoting this love for the brethren, many people are being drawn away from the truth, because that spirit is so close to the truth that they have not stopped to consider the difference. Some of them are trying to use the same love that the prophet messenger to this age, projected to the denominations, to accomplish the same thing, but it is for self, and not for God. That is why I have said before, and will say again, the true children of God will understand the message, and because they understand it, they will see the right spirit, and they will love one another with the right spirit. You watch what happens where quotes and statements are pushed at people continually. You will see friction that will cause division, and form little clans, that, in the end, God will scatter them just like chaff in the wind. I do not want to be caught as chaff. I want my soul to be anchored in the word of God. Brothers and sisters: in closing, I just want to say once again, let us love God with all our hearts, and love each other with an unselfish love, giving truth an opportunity to work its perfect work in us, and before very much longer, he will come and catch us away for the marriage supper. Amen



*The Contender* is published 8 times a year (excluding the months of March, June, September and December) by Faith Assembly Church, P.O. 2368, Clarksville, Indiana 47131-2368, a non-profit corporation, and is mailed free to all who request it. Published at Corydon, Indiana.

© 2018 Faith Assembly Church. Only by special permission from the author, may any part of this paper be reproduced.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to:  
The Contender, P.O. 2368, Clarksville, IN 47131-2368.  
*This edition was put in this format in January 2018*

**OFFICERS**

- James Allen .....Author, Pastor
- Raymond M. Jackson.....Author, Founder, Pastor
- Louis B. Turner.....Editor, Retired
- Charles Paisley.....Editor
- David Jackson.....Copy Layout
- Ramona Barber.....Contender Secretary
- Naomi Elliss.....Secretary – Treasurer