

The Contender

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

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God Is Filling The Tub, Part 2



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The title of this message may sound strange, but if you followed along with us this far, I believe you can see that what we are dealing with really points to the necessity of us getting ourselves cleaned up, spiritually speaking. Your flesh can be perfectly clean, and your inner man be in bad need of cleansing. Now I do not mean to insinuate that

you are not children of God; but I do mean for every one of us to realize that God expects more out of us than just going to church regularly. Of course, there are always some that are lazy about putting forth the necessary effort it takes to be in church regularly, but what we are dealing with in this message, goes much beyond what is looked upon as being a good Christian. We must somehow catch a vision of what God is really after, and then be willing to yield ourselves to the leading of His Spirit, so He can obtain what He is after. When His plan of redemption is finally completed, He will have a great family of redeemed children that will be exactly like Jesus. No, our facial features will not have to be like His; but our inner being will be like Him; and it will be because we have been washed by the water of the word of God. A lot of people have the idea that since God made man, they are just what He made them to be. But I would like to remind you that God did not put all of those attributes in you.

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From the cradle to our present day, we have accumulated attributes that God is not pleased for us to have. Our way of looking at things and our ways of doing things is completely contrary to the way God wants us to be; therefore His word is designed in a way that it will change all of that before we get out of here. The first thing it did for us was cancel out the sin of unbelief, when we became a believer. That is justification. The change is to the inner man. Your hair, teeth, eyes, and all such like are not affected one bit. Our physical change will take place in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, whether we are in the grave or still alive, it will make no difference. But that day you become a child of God, He goes to work on your old nature; and you need never feel that you are too old to make any other changes. You would just be cheating yourself. People who feel that they already have everything God has to offer, have stopped moving with God. That is how denominational churches were formed. God would give a

revelation on certain Bible truths, and for a while, a certain element of people would really grow with it. But the time would come that God would move on to something else, and they would stand flatfooted, holding on to what they had, but refusing to accept anything else. A condition like that can only last so long before the life of God leaves it completely, for God always has something else that he wants to add to every person's experience.

THE CHRISTIAN WAY

In the first century of Christianity, when the Spirit of God reached down into the pagan world and began lifting those pagan sinners up out of their former ways of life, and giving them the same experience those Jewish disciples had received, He immediately went to work on them, to give them a full revelation of truth, and get their lives cleaned up. There was no such thing as Baptists, Methodists, Catholics, nor anything else; they were all Christians. Paul summed it up in a few short words in his epistle to the church at Ephesus, saying, verse 4, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, and in you all." Therefore this denominational confusion over

religion was not even in the picture. No matter where you found Christians, they were all believing the same thing. Why was that so? Simply because the ministry of that hour all had the same revelation and objective. They sought nothing but the perfect will of God in the life of every believer. Remember now, I am speaking in general terms; still remembering that there were little differences like those in the Corinthian Assembly, (which we looked at earlier) but a few words from the man of God, got all of that straightened out. As we have said many times, as long as that first century ministry was alive, the Church moved with the Spirit of God, and shined a great light to the world, and the purpose of these various epistles was to help the individuals see their place in the body of fellowship, and to know how to avoid the devil's traps, as they sought to glorify God in their lives. In other words, they were Christians before they had any of these epistles to read. But look at what is called Christianity today; They all have the complete Bible, both the Old and the New, and still do not have the revelation those early Christians had. Do you know why? Because most of what is called "The Church" today, is not the Church. They are following everything else but revelation truth. Brothers and Sisters: the world is in a mess today. It is a miserable place to live; and it is not going to get any better; but the true children of God do not have to drift with worldly trends, they have something in them that

should cause them to want to be separated from what the world is doing. Denominational church members read these epistles and argue and fuss about them. But when the true child of God reads them it creates a desire within his, or her heart; to want to get in the tub and get cleaned up. Every last one of us are well aware of the fact that our flesh is still too much in control; and the only way to remedy that, is to allow this word of God to do its work in us. Only then will we be able to love life, and see good days, like Peter was saying in Chapter 3, verse 10, because loving life in that sense, can only be realized in its fullness as we walk obedient to our heavenly Father in this life. We will learn to be wise, and avoid creating problems, as we learn to control our tongue. Naturally no true child of God enjoys creating a problem and stirring up strife among the brethren; but we have to agree with James; a run-away tongue will do it every time. It is our responsibility to cultivate a peaceful atmosphere, no matter where we are, if we want our fellowship with our heavenly father to be sweet; for HE will not dwell in the midst of an uproar. Peter, speaking of the man who would love life, and see good days, said in verse 11, "Let him eschew evil, (that means shun it) and do good; but let him seek peace, and ensue it." That word ensue, means strive to obtain. Our world leaders talk of peace every opportunity they have; and some of them are willing to go to great lengths

to work out a peace plan; but the world will never have peace until the Prince of Peace Jesus Christ, sits on His throne in Jerusalem ruling the world. However every true child of God has the ability within them to enjoy a peace that the world can never know; and they can create an atmosphere of peace, even in the midst of great turmoil. Modern day philosophy promotes the idea of telling people off, every time they cross your path and rub you the wrong way; but the word of God teaches us that God expects just exactly the opposite out of His children. Did not Jesus say, 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? You can search the Bible from front to back, and you will not find God putting His approval on anyone's untamed emotions. Whenever a person yields to emotions, they are temporarily out of control; and usually do things, or say things that they end up sorry for. It just simply does not pay to explode over every little thing that comes up; and certainly a Christian person should have better control over their emotions.

WHAT REALLY MAKES US BETTER PEOPLE

One thing we need to remember, as we read these epistles, is that they were every one written to Christians. If it seems that I overemphasize this, it is because people have such a tendency to read certain verses, and feel that they were written to the man of the world, to show him how to be a better person. There is only one thing that can make the man of the world a better person, and that is to obey Acts 2:38, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." When you obey the first half of that verse, and then receive the gift of the second half of it, you then have something inside of you, that will make you a better person. Therefore God does not say to the sinner man, Speak no evil; for in the sight of God, all his ways are evil. But to the Christian, who still needs to grow in these areas, He says, "For he that will love life, and see good days, LET HIM REFRAIN HIS TONGUE FROM EVIL, and his lips THAT THEY SPEAK NO GUILE." Evil in this sense would have to pertain to worthless or hurtful words that we blurt out at times. I am sure the translators could have used a better word to express what Peter was getting at; for the word evil, as used here, does not carry the same meaning as it would if it were speaking of the evil that is in the world. You also have the word guile, used in that same verse; and it simply means, Do not speak deceitfully. Guile, deceit, cunning, and

subtlety, all come from the from the same root word; and we all know what these other words mean; so what Peter is saying, is, Do not allow your feelings to cause you to speak in an un-Christ-like manner. We are not immune to the devil's devices; so we have to watch our step; and refrain our tongue from speaking in the wrong way; if we have any desire to fulfill the purpose of God in our lives. Uncontrolled emotions cause hard feelings and bitterness, when there ought to be sweetness. All of this comes under the word guile, so be assured, Peter was talking to you and me, when he said that. We are living in a day when people have such a tendency to overreact to almost everything; it really behooves the child of God to exert every effort to keep his, or her emotions under control. This is not presented to us as an option; it is an obligation we have. We all know the pressures of life are greater than they have ever been before; but that does not relieve us of our responsibilities as Christians. Somewhere there has to be a noticeable difference between the Christian man and woman, and the man and woman of the world.

CHILDREN WITHOUT CORRECTION

Let me say a word to you Christian parents, while we are talking about overreactions. It is one thing to speak a word of correction to your children; but the way some of you overreact is another thing altogether. In other words, Christian parents are obligated by God's word to bring up a child in the way he should go. Now that does not mean that you force him to be a Christian, it means that you are to instill in his mentality, certain principles of life that will save him from a lot of pitfalls, if he will take heed to them. As Christian parents, that should be uppermost in our minds, to teach our children godly principles, even though we cannot make Christians out of them. We hear something about child abuse on the news almost every day now; but that all comes from a condition that has been cultivated (at least in its present day proportions) by women giving up their role as a mother, and turning their little children over to babysitters, while they seek a career in the business world. You just simply cannot go against a law of God without it having some serious side affects. PLEASE! I am not talking about women who have to work. God knows all about that. It is just that we are living in a period of time when too many women have gone to work, that did not have to go to work. Their very wrong motive in doing so has brought on a condition that Satan works in for all that he is worth. Children are growing into adulthood, never having had the

benefit of a mother's advice. (They just simply do not get that from a baby sitter.) Therefore they are now bringing little children into the world, and without the slightest knowledge of what is right and wrong themselves, there is no way they could teach their children properly. Fifty years ago, people who did not even profess to be Christians, taught their children according to Bible principles; and now, Christian parents are neglecting to do that: so it is no wonder we hear of child abuse, more and more all the time. People are bringing little children into the world; but they do not know how to correct them. They do not know how to control their own emotions; therefore when a child gets to jumping up and down, screaming, they let it go so long and then they lose all control and abuse the child. Let me give you an example. A young child, standing on a chair, making a noise that is pestering daddy: he lets it go until he can no longer stand it, and then loses all control. He turns, slaps the child, knocks her off of the chair, and breaks her arm. In the eyes of the law, that is child abuse, and the man is in trouble. Parents ought to be able to correct their children, even if it requires slapping their cheeks; without the law getting in on it. But when you wait until you are out of control yourself, before you start correcting them; it can very well end up like this. Another man slapped his little girl, and his fingernail punctured her eye and blinded her. Is that correction? No. That is overreacting

because of being out of control. God will never honor that kind of correction.

CHRISTIANS OUGHT NOT NEED PSYCHIATRISTS

Some of you may think I am spending too much time on this; but if there ever was a time when people need to learn how to correct and how to be corrected, it is now. As Christians, we are obligated by the word of God to learn from our heavenly Father how to conduct ourselves, lest we find ourselves reacting the wrong way within the Christian family. A thing like that can cause an injury that many times is very hard to heal up; and we have to go down life's pathway haunted by the feelings of what we have done. In other words, we could compare our tongue to a little paper match. As long as the match is in that little book it is harmless. But you tear it out and rub it the wrong way, (so to speak) and you have a blaze that could burn a house down. That is why James spoke as he did about the tongue; there is just no limit to the amount of trouble an unbridled tongue can cause. Sure, we all know Christians ought not have that kind of trouble; but do not forget, we are still just mortal beings whose pathway the devil stalks constantly. Being saved and born again some 30

years ago, does not make you immune to his devices. He stalks my pathway, trying to catch me off guard; and I know this, if he will do me that way, he will you too. Brothers and Sisters: These warnings and admonitions are not written in the scriptures, to make us go through life afraid: they are there to make us alert. We do not have to be afraid of the devil: we just have to be on guard against him. God will not stand screaming at us though, like a lot of earthly parents do their children, never letting them have a minute's peace. Constantly screaming at your children can turn them into nervous and unstable little beings, and cause their minds to be so confused they do not know which way to go. Eventually they see daddy and mommy as just something to be afraid of. If you do your children like that, do not come crying to me when they run away from home to get away from all of that. I firmly believe in parents correcting their children; but I do not believe you have to beat them half to death, nor scream at them constantly. Dad can say, Son, don't do that; in a calm voice, and if he keeps on doing it, and you know he heard you, then it is time for a little persuasion. I will give you a little illustration of what I mean. My dad never gave me any whippings in my life; but he had his own way of correction. He would say, Junior, don't do that; and if I did not listen to him, he might say, Junior, what did I tell you? Then if I did not listen, he would get me by the ear, and turn me around.

He knew just exactly how much pressure to put on it, to get my attention without injuring me. More than anything else, it hurt my feelings, but it let me know for sure that he meant what he said. Then he would say, now go and behave yourself. But if an hour later, he saw me doing the same thing: this time he did not use the ear twisting method, he would thump me on the head with one finger, and it felt like I had been hit with a ballpen hammer; and it would hurt for an hour. Saints: you do not need psychology, you just need some common sense; and a controlled consistency. When you tell your children something, they ought to know you mean what you say, and yet they should not have to be afraid you will lose all control, and conduct yourself like a crazy person. We live in a sick society; where even the psychiatrists need a psychiatrist; but the true people of God have something in them that is greater than anything the psychiatrists have to offer. That is the reason the apostle Paul could say (Phil. 4:13) "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." As I said earlier, God does not require you to do something that is impossible. Anything He tells us to do, he will enable us to do it, when we get our own thinking in line with His.

SOME YIELD TO **CARNALITY**

Through the years we have all enjoyed the many things that God has revealed to us by his Spirit. Things like serpent seed, the godhead, proper water baptism, the seventy weeks of Daniel, the great tribulation, the Antichrist, and even the Millennium; but in order to be ready to meet the Lord when He comes, we are going to have to apply these simple, basic principles, that are laid out so clearly in the New Testament Epistles. When I see people who have been Christians for years, still falling into the devil's traps every time they turn around, I always think of what the apostle Paul wrote to the Hebrew Christians. Starting in verse 12, of chapter 5, he said, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, (IN other words, you have been Christians long enough by now, that you ought to be able both by word, and by example, to teach others.) Ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; (basic truths and doctrines) and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat (these revelatory truths of the Bible, that we know so well) belongeth to them that are of full age, (mature Christians) even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." If we want to refrain from speaking guile and evil; it means we are going to have to take charge of ourselves; and make sure we are

following the examples Jesus set for us, instead of looking at our brothers and sisters, and demanding that they obey the word of God. What right do we have, to point the finger at someone else, if we are not obeying the word of God ourselves? Are you listening to me? You may think what I am saying is not for Faith Assembly, but I assure you, it is. The word of God does not have one standard for Faith Assembly, and another for everyone else. We all have the same standard of righteousness set before us; and God is not going to accept anything less from any of us. The only thing is, Faith Assembly should be setting an example for those who are new in the faith; for we have had every opportunity given to us to follow God in the full truth of His word. People in denominational churches jump from one church to the other, every time something is preached that they are not prepared to accept. But you who have been led by the Spirit of God to come here, should realize by now that we are not here just to play church. We are here to be washed by the water of God's word; and dressed in a robe of righteousness by a revelation of that word. God's word requires something out of us, as we sit under the revealed teaching of it. We cannot just ignore the first principles of the word of God, and yet expect to be looked upon as spiritual people. Well, you may fool a few people for a while; but God knows the truth about you, and spiritual people who have an opportunity to

observe your everyday life will know also; so really, you are fooling no one but yourself. This evangelist told of a condition that existed in the little country Pentecostal church close by. There were two certain sisters in the church that had allowed some condition to get them to the point where they could no longer look at each other, nor speak to each other. As they continuously yielded to carnal feelings, they got to the place where one sat on one side of the church and the other one on the other side. Then one particular night when the Spirit was really moving in the service, one sister was sitting over on her side praying, and the other one, feeling that she was under the anointing, thought she had really received a revelation from God; and she determined to show the whole church what a fool the other one was. (Saints, I am telling this just to show you how Satan will set a trap for you, and you will fall right into it, if you fail to apply the word of God to your life.) They both had long hair, as was to be expected, so this one got up, acting like she was in the Spirit, and came around the front of the pews, and as she did, she blurted out for everyone to hear, The Holy Ghost tells me that the hair you have on your head is not your own hair. It was all fixed up in a nice neat bun, and she thought it was a wig she was wearing; and that underneath she had short hair. The other sister looked up and replied, if that is what the Holy Ghost has told you, then you are free to examine for

yourself. At that she went over to the sister and started scratching and pulling, with hairpins flying everywhere, trying to pull off a wig, but it wouldn't come loose. Finally in humiliation, she stopped, and the other sister sitting there with her hair hanging down her back said, Your holy ghost lied to you. What a shame! Yet that very spirit that caused such a carnal display, is still around today, looking for other Christians that will yield to their carnal feeling, and bring embarrassment to the rest of the assembly. I have never been against people doing anything the Holy Ghost tells them to do, for I know He will not tell anyone to do anything wrong. What troubles me is to see people doing carnal things, claiming the Holy Ghost led them to do whatever they are doing. Bro. Jackson: Don't you believe it is possible for a person to make an honest mistake? I will just say this, If you are spiritual enough to expect to be led by the Holy Ghost in some particular manifestation, you should be spiritual enough to discern plain carnality, and you should be able to examine your own attitudes and motives, and see if your heart is clear in the matter. After you make those simple checks, if you still believe the Holy Ghost is leading you to do something, or to say something, then obey Him.

THAT SPECIAL KIND OF LOVE

I just want to read this verse 11 again, and then we will move on. "Let him (the one who desires to be found in the will of God) eschew evil, (shun it) and do good; (If we see a problem situation, and we are unable to do anything to get it corrected, then shun it. Do not get involved, just for the sake of having something to say in the matter.) Let him seek peace, and ensue it." When we grow to the place where our uppermost thoughts are upon what will most please God in our lives, then many of these things that have seemed like problems in the past, will suddenly disappear. Naturally we cannot expect to enjoy peace, without the presence of the true love of God in our hearts; therefore our first concern should be to cultivate that love. Let us just go to the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians, where Paul deals with the true love that only the children of God can possess, and see just exactly what he says about it; and about the absence of it. In verse 1, he starts right out saying, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not (The King James is translated charity, but I am going to insert the word love, as we read this; for that is what the word charity means, in the Bible.) Love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." In other words, a lot of people are able to say all the right

things, and sing like a lark, but their heart is still void of that love of God that would cause them to be just as concerned for the welfare of others, as they are of their own. "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not Love it profiteth me nothing. (I particularly want you to pay attention to these next two verses.) LOVE SUFFERETH LONG, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, IS NOT EASILY PROVOKED, THINKETH NO EVIL: Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." I will stop reading there; because verses 4 & 5 actually contain what I wanted to emphasize. Love suffereth long, and is not easily provoked. Brothers and Sisters: If every child of God would just cultivate this love in their lives, most of the problems in our midst would soon cease to be. For first of all it would take a lot more to get us upset, and then if we did get upset, we would not stay that way for the rest of our life. Children of God should not have to be on pins and needles every moment they are together, afraid someone will get offended. "Seek peace, and ensue (pursue) it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are

open unto their prayers; But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." In the broader sense, every true child of God is called righteous, or a righteous one; but in its stricter usage, the word or term applies to those who are willing to allow the Spirit of God to lead them to do everything right, and it is expressed as righteousness. It applies especially to those who will do good out of a pure heart, even when they feel that they have been wronged. As I said earlier, just having your doctrines straight is not your final state of perfection. Doctrines will separate you from world religious systems; and get you into a place where you can be taught properly; but you can have right doctrines, and still have an awful bad attitude and outlook concerning the total plan and purpose of God. Furthermore a lot of people who seem to harp on doctrines most of the time, only have the understanding of them in their head; they do not have them by revelation. That is why from time to time you get to looking around and miss someone that has been coming regular for a long time; their belief has changed, so they have to go where it is accepted. People like that can be so full of love for you today, and the next time you see them, they may completely ignore you; and all because they are believing something they know you will not accept. Saints: That is not the kind of love Paul wrote about in the Corinthian epistle. This love that is longsuffering, and not easily provoked, is not in every person who

carries a Bible and claims to have a revelation. They talk about it, and they want it coming their way; but they themselves do not have it, and it will do no good for you to hold these scriptures up to them and say, You have got to love your brother. If they had that kind of love, they would not have to be told to love their brother. Let me say another word about doctrines also. There is a modern philosophy in the world today, whereby people say, We do not need doctrines; they separate. Doctrines are supposed to separate. In the days of the apostles, it was doctrines that separated the belief in Jesus Christ from Judaism; because it was Jews that first received the gospel. Then when Gentiles believed the gospel, the doctrines they believed by revelation were the same as what the Jewish disciples believed; and those doctrines separated them from paganism. Furthermore those who were true believers, never were found back out there fellowshipping with those pagans, in their pagan temples. Did not Paul write, Light cannot fellowship with darkness? He said, "What concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" The old saying, Birds of a feather flock together, is still true today, even in the midst of this great ecumenical religious gathering in the world today; for that ecumenical spirit on them, has made them all into the same kind of

birds. Some of you may not like to hear me talk like I do about these systems of religion out here in the world today; because you have friends and loved ones that are in them, and it may seem good to you that they no longer fight each other. But what you need to realize is that their gathering together in this ecumenical move, is simply forming an image of the old Roman beast, to fulfill the 13th chapter of Revelation. Thank God for the knowledge that the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and that His ears are open to their prayers; for in this evil age we have much to pray about. Remember though, the face of the Lord is against them that do evil, no matter who they are. He will not condone wrong doing, just because a person seems to be able to justify what they are doing. When we miss the mark, He expects repentance; not excuses. When we offend a brother, or a sister, He expects us to apologize and ask their forgiveness. It may be hard to do; but every true believer is going to learn to do those necessary things before they get out of this life. Would you earthly parents not demand the same thing of your children? Shame on you, if you wouldn't. We all want our children to be civilized, and conduct themselves in a proper way, so how much more does our heavenly father expect us to conduct ourselves in a proper manner. He does not stand over us with a whip in His hand, but He does stand in His word waiting for it to be quickened to

us. When it is; it is just like a finger pointing right at us.

DO NOT BECOME A JUDGE

Some people feel that the pastor of an assembly should stand at the door and screen everyone who comes in. Are they dressed properly? Is the women's hair too short, or the men's hair too long? Have they had a bad attitude about something, and all such like. But I say this, if they are true children of God, and they have been sitting here for a while, they know what they should do and if they choose to do otherwise, I leave them in the hands of God. He knows how to deal with His children. If your heart is not right, me forcing you to meet certain standards is not going to accomplish anything for the glory of God. Remember: His ears are open to the prayers of the righteous, but His face is against them that do evil. When you do wrong, and refuse to do anything about it, God is forced to whip you. The sad part is, a lot of people are getting whipped, and they are so wrapped up in fulfilling their own will, they do not even recognize the fact that their heavenly Father is whipping them. They go around blaming the devil for the things that are happening to them. We are going into the 12th chapter of the book of Hebrews for a few verses, just to

refresh our minds on what Paul wrote to those Christians about the chastening hand of the Lord. But before we do, let me say this, I have heard people say, Well, not everyone is going to make it. Naturally we all know that; but in reality, when you start playing around with that kind of philosophy, you are walking on very thin ice yourself. Do you know why? You will start judging all who do not measure up to your standards, instead of trying to help them get straightened out by then. Brothers and Sisters: we are not in this plan of God because we saved ourselves. His grace reached down to us; and lifted us up to the place where we are now. Therefore if any of us make it in, it will be because he has enabled us to do so; and not because we have been so good ourselves. The great commission is, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." When you have done that, you leave the results of it in the hands of God. He is the only one that can see far enough down the road to know who is going to make it, and who isn't. No matter how far people may be missing the mark today, if correction is administered properly, they can straighten up. Therefore God requires us to do whatever we can to help them get straightened out, rather than give them a fast ticket to hell. Anything else on your part is just plain selfishness. It may very well be that you will have to separate yourself from certain ones from time to time, when you have tried to help them, and they continue going

the wrong way; but you still have no right to judge their final standing with God. Whenever you take it upon yourself to become a judge, you have lost your vision of how you are to be a light to the world. I do not mean to dwell on the conditions that are prevailing in the realm of religion; but since they are on the news every time you turn on the television, I cannot help but use these preachers to illustrate something to you. Even in the light of what some of them have done, there is no possible way for me to know for sure what their eternal destiny will be; for Jesus is still on the mercy seat, and all things are possible with God. I know for sure that they are not apostles of Jesus Christ; and I know that they are not ministering to revealed saints of God; but beyond that, I am going to leave them alone, and pass no judgment upon them.

SPEAKING A FEW WORDS OF WISDOM

I will direct your attention to an incident recorded in the scriptures, where one apostle of Jesus Christ rebuked another one because he was misbehaving himself. I am referring to the incident recorded in the 2nd chapter of the Galatian epistle, where Paul rebuked Peter. A lot of people read that, and say those apostles did not

believe alike. But that is not the case at all; for doctrinally they believed exactly alike. This incident was not because of a difference in doctrine, but because of Peter's attitude about eating with Gentiles there in Antioch, when certain Jews from the Jerusalem church came down one day. Before that, Peter had been with Paul, Barnabas, and other brethren, eating with the Gentile Christians, and talking about the good things of God. But when certain brethren from Jerusalem, that somehow still had a question in their minds about whether these Gentiles were clean or not, came to Antioch: Peter, knowing how they felt, began to withdraw himself. He did not want to take a chance on them returning to Jerusalem, and telling the others that Peter was down at Antioch eating and drinking with Gentiles; so he began to draw back and separate himself from them, and all the time Paul was watching what was happening. He says he rebuked him to the face, right in front of them all; but I do not believe he did it as soon as he noticed it happening. I believe he watched the situation for a while, until he knew for sure that it was getting out of hand. Then when he felt it was time to speak, he said to Peter, (Gal. 2:14) right in front of all of them, "If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" That was Paul's way of saying, Peter, you have been eating and drinking with these Gentile

believers and living just like them, so why will you suddenly jump over and take sides with these Jewish disciples, who believe the Gentiles should be forced to live like the Jews? Well, Peter was a true son of God; so he took the rebuke as correction for his error and continued serving God in his apostolic calling. But tell me, Who can correct Oral Roberts, Jim Bakker, Jimmy Swaggart, Jerry Falwell, and men like that? In the eyes of the world, they are at the top of the ladder, and there are none to correct them. Nevertheless God has been talking to them, and they did not know His voice; so He is tearing their platforms to pieces. You may say, Not all of them. But I say, Just wait a while. For that which is not built on a solid foundation cannot possibly stand forever. No matter how holy they may seem to be, when they divide the great god of all creation into three separate persons, and maneuver His word to make it say what they want it to say, their doom is pending. God is ONE sovereign Spirit; and Jesus, who is the Christ, is the Son of that ONE Spirit, and He (Jesus) is the only person in the Godhead, and if you do not yet know that, in this late hour of time, you do not know God; you only know some things about Him. You can read the many stories in the Bible, and learn a lot about how God has dealt with mankind through time; but if the Spirit never opens your understanding and gives you a revelation of the Godhead, you do not really know Him. On the other hand, if

you do know Him, and you do wrong, chastening is a sure promise of His word. The tragic thing about Christians doing wrong, is that they usually cause someone else to do wrong also. Barnabas was the one that actually first brought Paul to Antioch after the Gentiles received the gospel, and Peter's influence over him even caused him to start withdrawing from the Gentile believers. No it didn't affect their salvation. They were still sons of God; but God could not use them while they were like that. Thank God for men who will obey Him, and be instruments in His hands, to help others get straightened out. It says in Proverbs, A wise rebuke is more valuable than jewels; and Peter knew that rebuke was from the Lord, and not just from Paul. Saints: A few words of wisdom spoken at the right time, can save others a lot of heartache and grief. We just have to be sensitive to the leading of the Lord, to know when to speak and what to say.

GOD'S CHASTENING ROD

Let us look at these scriptures in Hebrews now; where Paul has quite a bit to say about the chastening of the Lord. In chapter 12, the last half of verse 5, we find this, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of

Him: (In other words, Do not give up, be thankful He loves you enough to correct you.) For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? (You may find a lot of children in this modern age that are completely without correction. But they do not fit into the image Paul was portraying here.) But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, (all of God's children) then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of Spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness. (Whatever HE does in the way of chastening, will always work for our spiritual profit; for He does not chasten us just for the pure pleasure of whipping us.) Now no chastening for the present (at the time we receive it) seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peacable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Back there sits my little mother, listening to this. I will never forget the way she dealt with me for playing hooky from school one day. We walked 3 miles to a little country school house. But I had a cousin that

lived close to the school, and he had a bunch of rabbit snares set. So this one day, when school let out for morning recess he said, Do you want to go with me to look at my snares? I thought we would just be gone a few minutes, so I said I would go. We went around the edge of the woods, looking at the snares and ended up back at his house. He went on into the house and while he was in there, the bell rang at school. I thought to myself, I am not going back to school unless he does, and he didn't go, so there we were. We played around there the rest of the day, and I just went back to the school grounds long enough to get my coat. I walked all the way home thinking no one had paid any attention to what I had done. When I got home, mother never said anything about it; so I thought everything was all right. But I found out later my sister had told her about it. The next morning she fixed my lunch, I got dressed and ate my breakfast and was getting ready to go out the door, (she had already sent my sister on out) and she met me there, grabbed me by the arm, and reached behind the door and got a sassafras switch and started in on me. I didn't have to ask what it was all about, I knew why I was getting it. Finally she said, You are not going to do that any more, are you? I put my hand back there, but one swat across my hand hurt worse than what I was getting, so I just had to let her go ahead and strike my legs until she felt like the job was done. Did it raise welts? Of course it did. Parents get into trouble

with the law for doing that today, but back then the law enforcers believed in that kind of correction also. Well it hurt my pride; it hurt my feelings, and it hurt my legs; but I got the message: I wasn't supposed to skip school, I want you to know, I never did skip school again. Do I hate my mother for it? No. I am thankful she did it. No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous. I couldn't laugh about it; it hurt too much for that. Did I cry? Of course I cried. I walked a long way before I started to get over the feeling of that whipping, but by the time I arrived at school, I had already begun to realize, Mother did right. There was no reason for me to expect that I would ever get another whipping for that; for that one was enough. It was grievous, nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peacable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. I just told you of that little personal experience, really to point out the truth of what Paul is saying here. Some will accept chastening and learn from the experience, both naturally and spiritually, while others seem to require constant correction, to keep them in line. Nevertheless God does not whip every person who goes to church somewhere; that is saved only for His true children who at times need correction. That is why a lot of people can go to their denominational churches, and everything always seems to be just fine with them, they do not have a Father's correction. The true believer has times when he, or she

feels like they are being spanked; but at the same time, they realize that the Father is working on them; to make them what they ought to be. Hallelujah! I'm glad He does not give up on us. When you have that feeling of correction though, Paul says in verse 12, "Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed." In other words, Do not go around pouting, and feeling sorry for yourself. In the natural, we can go around snubbing, trying to find some justification for our actions, and that very attitude keeps us from being alert, and many times causes us to stumble over something and hurt ourselves even more; so do not let that happen when your heavenly father whips you. When a person is cast down in spirits, many times they portray that dejected feeling by the way their hands hang down and the way they walk; so Paul says, Lift up those hands which hang down, straighten up, and watch where you are going. Brothers and Sisters: No matter what happened, nor how severe the chastisement may have been, if we will just straighten up, take on a right attitude and do right, time itself will bring healing where there has been hurt.

HOW TO FOLLOW THE WAYS OF PEACE

We now come to verse 14, which says, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, **WITHOUT WHICH NO MAN SHALL SEE THE LORD.**" We are to have an attitude of peace at all times, with unbelievers as well as with believers. Some people who are supposed to be Christians, cultivate an attitude that is completely contrary to the new nature they are supposed to have. They seem to say by their very attitude, Bless God, I am a Christian; I don't have to take anything off of anyone. If I don't like what I see or hear, I will just tell them about it. Some of the attitudes you see out of people who are supposed to be Christians, in grocery stores and restaurants, is pathetic. They have a hard, disgusted look on their face, and their impatience is expressed in various ways, none of which fit into this verse of scripture. Do people actually think these admonitions are written only for those Christians who choose to obey them? No. They are written that every true child of God may know what their heavenly Father expects out of them. Even if you are treated badly, or even ignored, when you go into a restaurant or a store of some kind, you, as a Christian, still have an image to uphold. Do you feel that Jesus would make a scene, under the same set of circumstances? You are the one who

chooses to go to these places, so if for some reason you feel that you are not treated properly; it is better just to go some place else, rather than to express your feelings about them. Following the ways of peace requires some cultivation on our part; for natural circumstances will certainly go the other way every time. Out here in the world, people will spout off at you sometimes just simply because they do not like your looks. Are you supposed to spout back? Not if you desire your life to please your heavenly Father. If He does not give you words of wisdom, that could help the situation, then just keep quiet, and go on your way. None of us enjoy being verbally abused; but when you stop to consider the fact that their words cannot harm you, but your words can harm you, the true child of God will want to keep his words in control. What if you could cut such a person down to size with words spoken back to him? What have you actually accomplished when it is all over with? What image have you exemplified? Satan enjoys having Christians display his attributes, just as much as Jesus enjoys having them display His; so which one do you want to please? The choice is always yours.

WHAT ABOUT THOSE ROOTS OF BITTERNESS

The last half of verse 14 speaks of holiness. How many of you remember what I always stress about this thing of holiness? Is it something you put on when you want to impress someone? Or is it something you have within, that expresses itself openly for all to see? True holiness is only from within. It starts with a right type of attitude. You do not wear it; you live it. When you see people who look holy from their outward appearance, but will bite your head off at the snap of your fingers; their holiness does not radiate from a holy spirit within; it comes from their self will. What they express depends completely upon how they feel. But what does that verse say? Without the kind of holiness Paul was speaking of, a person will never see the Lord. That is just another way of saying, A lot of people who look so holy at times, have never been born again by the Spirit of God, and without that new birth, you will certainly not see the Lord. Oh you will see Him one day, when he comes in wrath, taking vengeance on all ungodliness; but you will never see Him in the way Paul was meaning. What you need to understand is that a make-believer (a tare) can put on a holy front; but they cannot be holy; and a truly holy person, (one who is truly born again) can still act unholy at times, if they fail to cultivate right attitudes and motives in their lives. That is why in verse 15, Paul says, "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you,

and thereby many be defiled." It is our own individual responsibility to examine our thinking, and our attitude about things and people. The devil will confront you in some of the most unexpected places right in a place of business, or even in church, and really put your true nature to the test. It is at times like this, that what we have rooted deep down within us shows. We either exercise self control, or we over react. Therefore if we do truly desire to walk in the wise ways of the Lord, we will be sure to cultivate those virtues of God in our every day lives. If we fail to do so, look what can happen, "Lest any ROOT of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled." Remember, he is talking to believers; not the man of the world. Christians are defiled by a root of bitterness. Do you know what that terminology really points to? Let me direct your attention to the very soil of the earth that roots grow beneath. You do not see the roots that are lying there beneath the soil; but when conditions are right, they will put forth something that will let you know what kind of life is in them. Brothers and Sisters: Bitter feelings and bad attitudes do not grow on your forehead; they lie within your spirit, just like natural roots lie beneath the soil. But any root that has life in it, when the time is right, will sprout, and shoot forth something that will express the kind of life it has. If it is saw briar roots, then eventually you are going to see saw briars growing; and oh what a nuisance they are. The only thing you

can do, if they get started in your yard is to dig them up by the roots, for as long as that root is there, you are going to be troubled by them. Well that is exactly the point Paul is making here, if you have a root of bitterness in your soul and fail to do anything to uproot the thing, it is there to defile any time opportunity presents itself. It is up to me, if I know there is something like that in me; to let the Holy Ghost dig it out. If you have a root of bitterness, and instead of allowing the Spirit of God to dig it out, you nurse it, go to bed thinking wrong thoughts, and get up still thinking like that, you are watering the thing; rather than trying to kill it. The thing that defiles is not that you have these thoughts about the wrong people; but the fact that you have them at all, and do not take the necessary steps to get rid of them. Furthermore as I keep stressing, Do not ever get to feeling like you are immune to Satan's traps; for that is when you have a good chance of falling into one of them. A good soldier is always alert, knowing that his enemy is likely to pull a sneak attack.

VENGEANCE BELONGS TO THE LORD

We have had things happen right here in the assembly in past years, that God allowed just for the purpose of

working on me; for we all have to be tested, just like Jesus was. One such incident, many of you will remember; even though it took place 11 years ago. A young man in the church at that time, had a dream, in which I was supposed to get killed. One Thursday night right back there in the back of the church, he told me the dream, and said, Bro. Jackson: I believe something is going to happen, and I may not be seeing you any more. I knew what He meant by that statement, he thought I was really going to get killed. I just simply shook his hand and said, no doubt there is. They (he and his family) left here after that, and they have been all over this area for miles around, believing that something was going to happen to me. I have seen him three times since then, and after almost eleven years, I am still alive. But just to show you how things work out, a few weeks back, he was involved in a terrible accident down in Kentucky some place, and almost got his back broken. With no insurance, and his car torn all to pieces, they are left in a very bad condition. It just simply reminds me of something in the Bible, Romans 12:19. I will read verses 17 and 18 also, to get the setting for such a statement. "Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceable with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." You would have to know

the whole story to understand completely why I make this application here; but the point is, When people allow themselves to be used of the devil against you, if you will conduct yourself properly in the sight of God, he will fight your battle for you. We do not have to avenge, nor vindicate ourselves, he will do it in due time. People play with feelings, and sometimes these feelings get anointed and produce a wrong kind of life. Well Bro. Jackson: Would you help the young man if he were close by? I would certainly not do anything against him; but we need to be led of the Lord on what we do in every situation. Many times we can actually interfere with something God is doing; while we feel that what we are doing is a good thing. This whole incident came about over something from the word of God; therefore I just simply leave it in the hands of God. I do not owe the young man any kind of apology; and neither do I take any delight in seeing calamity befall him; but I do believe that it is a dangerous thing to take an open stand against the truth of God's word. Bro. Jackson: Don't you believe people are entitled to their own ideas and opinions? In politics, yes. But when it comes to the word of God, if two people disagree on the revelation of it, at least one of them has to be wrong. It is possible for both of them to be wrong; but if they are disagreeing on it, they cannot both be right; for God does not speak with a forked tongue; (as the Indians used to say) so

that what He says can mean one thing to one Christian, and something else to another. Naturally I am talking about doctrinal teachings of the Bible; for personal convictions many times are influenced by the particular culture of the various nations of people.

WE MUST HEAR FROM THE HEAD

Look back at verse 16 and tell me if that verse leaves any room for brethren to disagree on the scriptures. "Be of the same mind one toward another. (That is the same thing Peter wrote in his first epistle.) Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits." That one little verse has a tremendous lesson in it. First of all, true brethren of the family of God should be of the same mind. But as I said earlier, that is not something that happens instantly as soon as we get saved. We have to be getting something from the head (Jesus Christ) in order to be of the same mind. Nevertheless a man who is not getting it from the head, has no business trying to teach the word of God. Anyone can read the Bible, and even learn to quote a lot of it from memory; but unless they are in close communion with the head, they are not likely to get the same picture from what they read. That is why there are so many different

religious beliefs in the world today. People read the Bible and they know that what they have read is the word of God; but to a great majority of them, it is only the written word; and it takes the quickened word in order to have the thoughts of the head. It is amazing how many different ideas can come out of the same verse of scripture when people are just interpreting it according to their own ideas. Then you have a lot of people who will go to a Bible school and study theology, but when they come out of the school, all they have is some other man's theory as to what it means, and that is not from the head either. Bible school is not the answer for a soul that is truly hungry for the word of God. We have to get to the place where we are willing to empty ourselves of theories and say, Lord I am depending completely upon you, I can read the letter but I need you to interpret it for me, so that it can become a part of me. Saints: When we really get to the place where we can see each other as Jesus sees us, then we can be of the same mind. Just think for a minute how worthless we really were, before the grace of God reached down and brought us into His love. We were stubborn, self willed, rebellious, independent, and conceited, and hard to get along with. We had our own ideas about religion; but knew nothing about true Christianity, and the plan and purpose of God. I said earlier that every one of us were represented in the crowd that stood there that day, watching Jesus die on that old cross.

Some of them were taunting Him, you saved others, save yourself. Some stood in bewilderment, asking in their hearts, What harm did He really do? Everything I ever heard about Him was good. Is that really necessary? Nevertheless none of them dared to let the rest of that crowd know their true feeling, for fear of their own lives. Jesus knew it would be like that though. That is why He told His disciples, The hour will come that you will all be scattered, and you will leave me alone: yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. He saw the weakness of every human being, and in that time of suffering found it in His heart to look down upon the crowd and say, Father, forgive them; they know not what they do. As far as the literal act of condemning Him to death: Yes, they did know what they were doing. But when you consider the real purpose of it, and the motives of the main instigators, their reasons would have been varied. The crowd was motivated by the spirit of the devil, but in reality, they were fulfilling the very plan of God. Jesus therefore, knowing that the will of the Father was being accomplished, did not resist them; but went willingly to the cross. Paul's revelation of the total plan of God caused him to write in his letter to the Hebrew Christians, "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking to Jesus (12:2) the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set

down at the right hand of the throne of God.” He (Jesus) was not happy, hanging there in shame and agony; so that happiness couldn't be expressed on His face. He was in too much pain for that. But deep down within, He was looking beyond all of that, to a time when some of those very people standing around there, would reign with Him in the Millennium. Instead of looking at the present circumstances, and thinking about the fear and cowardice of His disciples, He was looking on out ahead at how this very event would be the means of many of those lives being changed. He knew the scriptures, and knew what must be accomplished before the Father could put a new covenant into effect. Therefore in the midst of all the pain and suffering, was a joy deep down within his soul, because of knowing the outcome of it all. You may look at one another even today and say, we are in a mess. But if you will ever allow the Spirit of God to cause you to see, as He sees us, you will see a different picture altogether. For He sees us in the finished product. He knows what each one of us are to look like; and He knows just exactly how to apply the scriptures, to make our lives conformable to that image. That is why the little song “He’s still working on me,” is so appropriate; we have the assurance from His word that He is not finished with us yet. We are not satisfied with ourselves; we want to learn more, and be more like Jesus. But we can only learn, as the Spirit of God

opens the scriptures up to us. We can read them and we should be faithful to do that, but we have to wait for Him to show us how to apply them to our lives, lest we be out of season, as so many are today. Therefore no matter how unprofitable we may look in our own eyes, if we are true children of God, He sees us in our finished state, and works everything toward that end. Even in our worst times, He still loves us. He cannot be pleased with everything we do and say, but He loves us just the same; and that very love He has for us, is what causes Him to chasten us, when we get too far out of line. We must try to see the whole picture as a faithful Father dealing with His children, and teaching them family responsibilities.

SOME CHOICES PEOPLE MAKE

When the Lord dealt with Saul on the road to Damascus to arrest Christians: He not only turned his life around and called Him to be the apostle to the Gentiles; He took him out into the Arabian desert, away from everything that could distract, and revealed to him what those scrolls he was so well versed in, really pointed to. When he came out of that school, he knew for certain what the true plan and purpose of the heavenly Father was; and he

knew he could never return to any part of his former way of life. IN the 3rd chapter of Philippians, he tells something of his life as a Pharisee, and then says this, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Therefore in Romans 12:16, where he says, "Be of the same mind one toward another," it is not just an idea he had, he knew that is what the Father was leading us toward, a time of perfect unity. We do not see everything in the scriptures alike and come into perfect unity, just at the snap of our fingers; but as we yield ourselves to the Spirit of God, and allow Him to teach us, that will be the end result. A true revelation of His word will not only cause us to be of the same mind; but it will also cause us to realize that our heavenly Father is no respecter of persons. He does not put the dignitary ahead of the factory worker, in the kingdom of God. Therefore Paul says, "Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate." How many times do we humans get completely carried away, when some celebrity type person comes around? You hear people say things like, Oh if we could

just get Doctor So and So, or some other great person to come to our church, what a blessing it would be; and all sorts of statements like that. Denominational church systems thrive on such things as that. But that kind of spirit has no place in the true church of the living God. Doctors, lawyers, judges and movie stars, may read better than a lot of us; but no matter how well you are able to read the Bible, if you do not have the Spirit of God to quicken it (make it alive) in you, all you can do is place a carnal interpretation on it. Important people such as this, like to be seen in church now and then; but they do not bother to locate a Bible believing church where people are led to repent of their carnal ways, and follow revealed truth from God's word. What most of them are looking for, is a large congregation; well stocked with other professional type people. They are looking for social fellowship, (so to speak) rather than spiritual fellowship, that could enrich their soul. That carnal spirit on them is no respecter of persons either; it will grab a preacher, just as quick as it will a businessman. Why do you think Oral Roberts joined that big Methodist Church some years ago, after being raised in a Pentecostal Holiness church in Oklahoma? That spirit got hold of him and started him on the road to shame. As a child growing up, he had tuberculosis. I have heard his testimony, how he would have those coughing spells and spit up blood, and how God healed him of it,

and also of stuttering, and how his own mother said to him, Oral: Don't ever become big. Stay humble. Well there was a time when he had the anointing of God on him, and he truly was a blessing to a lot of people. But when he came face to face with a Bible truth, and knew if he preached it, he would cut himself off from a certain class of people whom he depended upon for much of his financial support, he chose the broad way, where many go in, rather than the straight and narrow, that only a few find. When he met Bro. Branham, he recognized that there was something about him that was different, and it greatly influenced him, but somehow he could not bring himself to take the route of that little man, so he began to seek out those places where he could mix with high professional type people instead. It is sad to say; but he does not condescend to men of low estate. Instead of the janitor, and the factory worker, he sees the lawyers, the bankers, and people who can afford to support his great programs.

BEING RESPECTERS OF PERSONS

Faith Assembly: Let me say to you right now, No matter who comes through those doors back there, even if it is someone with twenty million

dollars: treat him like a Christian should treat people, but do not be guilty of taking him by the hand, giving him special recognition, and seating him in the best seat. In the eyes of God, his bank account is not worth two cents spiritually. In here, we will look at each other through truth, and anyone who cannot stand that, cannot stay here very long. I do not want it any other way, because in the end we are going to be robed with the same type of garment, or we will not be acceptable to God; and that robe of righteousness cannot be purchased with money. It is made up of humbleness, meekness, and a proper attitude toward God and man. On the other hand though, when Paul said, "Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate;" he did not mean that we should get out here in the alleys and crawl with the drunks, and ride the rails with the bums. It simply points to the fact that Christians cannot be respecters of persons, because of their station in life. We must make a place for anyone who will follow Jesus in truth, regardless of their wealth or lack of it. The last part of that same verse says, "Be not wise in your own conceits." Our own human wisdom is not worth two cents in the kingdom of God. Everything that is built upon man's wisdom, will come to its end. We are living in an age of materialism; when the wisdom of natural man has almost reached a summit. Yet when it comes to spiritual things, these smart men are like little children; for it is

impossible to know God through that kind of wisdom. When Jesus walked on earth in human form, He sought out fishermen, tax collectors, and such like, and said to them, Follow me. He wasn't looking for men of great wisdom; nor of great wealth; He was seeking out some men of that day who would believe the word of God; and that is what we should be doing also, here in the twentieth century, if we expect to be used of God. He will let men build great kingdoms, through that of their own wisdom; and He will let them do it in the name of the Lord; but the day always comes when those kingdoms are cast down, and these who have all their faith and trust in them, are cast down with them. Those who trust in their own wisdom, always have to have some kind of a gimmick, to keep support for their programs coming in. But that which is built by the leadership of the Spirit of God, never has to be dependent upon man's devices for support. I have always said, God will support His work, (that which He authorizes) and will pay His bills, so his true ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ do not have to become beggars.

THE MOST EFFECTIVE PREACHING ONE CAN DO

Coming back to verse 17 again, let me say this, We use examples to emphasize certain points where men who claim to be servants of God have proved by their own deeds and attitudes, that they are servants of their own selfish desires and lusts; therefore I must keep reminding you, that these Epistles were written to true children of God. None of these instructions and admonitions are for makebelievers. When Paul said, "Recompense to no man evil for evil," he was speaking, or writing to true believers. Before we came to know the Lord, someone could do us wrong, and we might lie awake at night for weeks, thinking up some way to pay them back. So Paul is saying, You are now children of God, and he has said that He will fight your battles for you; so don't do that anymore. "Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." Naturally the first application of that is among the brotherhood; but it should reach beyond that, to all that you come into contact with. I have lived in the Elizabeth area all of my married life. I know a lot of the older people around the area; and they know me, and as far as actual persecution, I have never been persecuted by any of them. I have been persecuted more by the people of this Bro. Branham following, than I ever have anyone else, anywhere. When it is necessary for me to go among them, I talk to all of them and treat them as I like to be treated. I do

not try to preach the Bible to every man I meet, I just try to preach to them by the way I live; and by the way I conduct myself in their presence. I have mentioned this at other times, when we would be on this subject; but I am going to tell it again, because it illustrates what I am endeavoring to get across to you. One day when I went into the store to buy something, there was a certain man in there, and we talked to each other for a little bit. Then when I went out to my car, he was standing out there talking to another man, and as I came around my car, I heard him say to this other man, if there is any such thing as a Christian in the world today, that man is one of them. I do not tell that, trying to prove what a good fellow I am, but to show you that it is better to let people see something in your everyday life, than it is to preach to them every chance you get, and then have them see something out of you that speaks contrary to what you preach. People check your attitude, your facial expressions, and all sorts of things when you do not even realize they are paying any attention to you. Therefore if you present yourself before people according to these instructions Paul is giving here, sooner or later God will cause them to acknowledge that there is something different about you, than just the average person of the world they see out there. If we determine in our hearts to live peaceably with all men, and do not try to avenge ourselves every time something goes a

little wrong, God will be on our side. He will pay back those who deliberately do us wrong, in due time. But if we try, through some underhanded way, to make someone's life miserable, because maybe they have done us wrong, then do not expect God to take your part. He will probably let the situation get even worse, until we learn to be guided by His word. Now I realize some of you may feel that I am picking on you, because of some situation in your lives; but let me assure you, I have no personal pick on any of you. The Holy Ghost has been dealing with me concerning these scriptures; and when He deals with me like that, I know it is for some reason. There is a need somewhere out there that He wants to minister to. Time is too short for any of us to ignore what the Spirit of God is doing on our behalf. If anyone who is a true child of God should take the attitude, What I am doing is my business; and you have no right to meddle in it; Let me remind you, that if what I am presenting to you is truth for every one of us, God is going to put a thorn in your bed, rocks in your shoes, and a very bad taste in your mouth, until your attitude changes.

DOING GOOD TO OUR **ENEMIES**

Verse 20 says, "Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." That has a certain application; but it does not apply to every situation. A lot of Christians in the world have enemies, for one reason or another, and this scripture is applicable, to keep us from becoming hard hearted, and enjoying seeing them suffer hardship. But according to what John wrote in his 2nd little epistle, verse 10, you should not try to apply what Paul says here, to the person who comes to your door preaching and teaching contrary to what you know to be revealed truth. Such a person is your enemy all right, because their doctrine is antichrist, whether they consider themselves to be your enemy or not. So let me read to you what John wrote there. "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, (the doctrine taught by all those apostles of Christ) receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: (God bless you) For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." Some think so; but that in no way contradicts what Paul taught. Paul would be the first to tell you not to give any place to antichrist teaching. He even went so far as to say, in his Galatian Epistle, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received from us, let him be accursed. He is certainly not telling anyone to feed such a man as that. Neither should we stand in the doorway and call him a dog, nor hate him. Just simply say, Sir:

I do not believe that; and I am not going to argue with you, so it will be better if you leave right now. You do not have to be hateful about it, nor get angry; just be firm. There is no reason to get mad, and scream, and act ugly. Oh yes, you could do that, and that would not mean that you were not a child of God, just because you act in an un-Christ-like way; but if you are a child of God and act like that, He will not let you get by with it forever. He will lay the chastening rod on you, before you go too far. As for the part about heaping coals of fire on the head of your enemies, by giving them what they are in need of: That was Paul's way of saying, Be compassionate at all times, and God Himself will see that the bills are paid. If someone is your enemy for some reason that is beyond your control; you still obey the word of God, with a Christ-like attitude and a pure motive, and let God Himself heap the coals of fire on their head. Be sure you take no delight in what befalls them though, or God may just let a little of what He has for them, be reversed, in order to teach you a lesson. The way you really defeat the devil in situations such as this, is just simply obey the word of God, do good, and say nothing. The devil causes people to do things against God's children, trying to get them to act ugly and make fools of themselves; so if we will conduct ourselves in a proper way, God will put coals of fire upon them, somewhere down the line.

BEING OF SAME MIND

I am going to relate a little incident to you, for whatever it may be worth. Several years ago, I was asked to come up to a little Methodist Church in the community where I was raised, and speak, in a little Memorial Day service, in the afternoon. A certain woman of that congregation considered me to be a renegade, because I had left the Methodist Church; and when she heard that they had asked me to preach in that service, her very words were, Indeed he will not stand in that pulpit. She was a woman of great influence wherever she was, and no doubt would have caused trouble; but God heard what she said, and knew exactly what was in her that caused her to be like that, so here is what happened. She had some Hereford cows out in the pasture field, and looking out the window, she noticed that one of them had just given birth to a little calf. She rushed out there to get a better look at the calf; and it's mother turned on her, knocked her down, and gored her into the ground. Before anyone could get to her, she had crushed ribs, a punctured lung, and was bleeding at the mouth. They rushed her to the hospital, where she was placed in the intensive care unit; and no one delivered the message to me that I should not come, so I went on and preached. She recovered from the

ordeal; and I never did feel hard at her for saying that, when I heard about it; but it did let me know one thing: If we open our big mouth and say something in the wrong way, God hears every word of it, and He will put you right where you are supposed to be. We had better take heed to these warnings, and save ourselves a lot of trouble and heartache. Before we exercise such dogmatic authority, we had better check up a little on our motive. If we fail to, God will do it for us, and we may not be very well pleased with the results. I just used this little example, hoping to show from it, that when God is forced to pay a bill, He pays it in full; He does not need our help. On the other hand, if people will just live right, and let Him run the business, the picture is beautiful. There are, of course, certain wrongs that we are commanded to do something about. But we are obligated by the same scriptures, to all be of the same judgment. You cannot have a congregation of 300 people, giving out 300 different ideas about how to handle the situation. The mere fact that you are a Christian, does not mean that your every word is God inspired. If that were true, there certainly would never have been a need for the scriptures we have been looking at. It is possible to have the mind of God on matters that have to be dealt with; and God expects us to have; but the only way, is to earnestly pray, and determine not to do anything until we are all of the same mind. There have

been a lot of churches split up, simply because decisions were made without first seeking the mind of God in earnest prayer.

OVERCOMING EVIL WITH GOOD

It is fitting, that the words in verse 21 should follow all that has been said before that; because they bring our thinking right back to the reality of what can happen to us, if we fail to take heed to the other. Notice, “Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” What does that mean? Simply this, If you feel that someone has done you wrong, don’t let it get you down; and don’t let it keep you from conducting yourself in a Christian manner toward that person. We are all human; therefore it is normal, and natural, that some things can make us feel terribly bad. But if we think on it day and night, cry about it to everyone who will listen, and never take steps toward getting over it, you are doing just the opposite of what this verse tells you to do. Some people can get hurt over something someone else does, or says: and every time they meet you, they will tell you what a hard time they are having, because So and So, did such and such. Brothers and Sisters: You will never move on with God like that. Don’t you think God

knows all about your situation? Sure He does. But as long as you live with it, walk with it, sleep with it, and do not try scripturally, to get it resolved, He will not do one thing about it. Some people seem to feel that there is virtue in calling attention to the wrong someone has done them; and they will play it for all they feel it is worth. But the real truth is, they are cultivating an attitude that is completely contrary to the scriptures; and they leave no place for God to work in their situation. Then, instead of gaining spiritual virtue overcoming by the word of God, they end up completely sapped; feeling like even God has forsaken them. Are you listening to me saints? I am not preaching this message to the drunks down on skid-row; I am preaching to children of God, (the bride of Christ) the very things Paul preached to those of his day. Our spiritual growth is not determined by the way we hold on to things, as much as it is by the way we find a place to lay them down scripturally, and forget about them. Only when we know in our hearts that we are doing our best to live by the scriptures, can we have complete peace in our hearts toward God. Just like Peter wrote, in the 3rd chapter of his 1st epistle, it’s the answer of a good conscience before God, that makes the difference. You cannot have true peace, and true fellowship with the Father, as long as you knowingly neglect to do those things His word tells you to do. Just reading these verses here in Romans, causes me to

remember the many times I have heard people literally wish for the return of the days of Ananias and Sapphira, there in the 5th chapter of Acts. Bride saints have no business wishing that the Holy Ghost would kill everyone in the Church who does wrong. That is completely opposite of the nature we are supposed to be cultivating in our spirits. Ananias and his wife Sapphira, went to the grave, simply because they agreed together, to lie about something they had done. What they had done was not sinful in itself. They sold a piece of property, and instead of bringing the full amount and giving it to the apostles, for distribution among those that had a need, they kept back part of the money and brought the rest, giving it as though that was all they received from the sale. There was no law requiring them to give it all, but the fact that they lied about it, desiring recognition for doing something they had not done, displeased God; and He struck them dead in their tracks. He just simply did not want a spirit like that, being cultivated in that early church that was so pure and clean. Neither does He want it in the church today, but if He started killing everyone who does something wrong, there would be no such thing as perfecting the saints. You would either be perfect already, or you would be dead. I hope you can see the difference between then and now. The church started out pure; and it was the purpose of God to keep it that way, as they went forth taking the gospel into all the

world. But here in the end time, when the Church is being restored to that Apostolic image, it is a matter of cleaning up the lives of individuals who make up the body of believers called, "The Church," rather than killing them because they are not already pure. Lying to the Holy Ghost is always a serious matter; but no matter what we know about certain situations, and about things that people who are supposed to be Christians, are doing, if our hearts are right, we will not desire to see God strike them down dead. "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." No matter what someone may do, when God gives you a chance to do good toward them, that the opportunity is given; it may be just to test you, to see if you will obey the scriptures. Be spiritual minded about this though; you know God does not want you to uphold, nor try to bless someone who is in moral error, or anything like that. These scriptures are pointing to things people do that offend each other, and make life miserable for each other, and the party that does the offending, may not be a Christian; so he, or she, cannot be expected to obey the scriptures. But you, the child of God, are obligated to obey the words of your Father, if you want to have the kind of fellowship with him, that being His child entitles you to.

THE LAW OF LOVE

What we have been made partakers of as children of God, is that same kind of love he had for us, that reached down into the gutters of sin and degradation and redeemed us. The very fact that we have the Spirit of God in us, gives us the potential of being molded into the very image of His only begotten Son. Therefore what we are supposed to be cultivating, is those attributes that reflect Him, rather than those carnal attributes of our old nature, that are still present. Look in chapter 13, verse 8, and following, as Paul continues on. "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." Now some will say, Bro. Jackson: Does that mean we should not buy things on credit? No. That is not what Paul is talking about. Being able to buy on credit has helped most of us get started housekeeping, or helped us attain something else, long before we could ever have saved enough to pay cash for it. There are some things that could be said about people who go to extremes buying on credit, and end up losing everything, or else end up taking bankruptcy, but that is not what Paul is dealing with here. What he is saying is, do not refuse to pay that which is due. You can pick that up by reading the preceding verses. I did not read them, because we are looking at what Paul said about love. He goes on in verse 9, and says,

"For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Do you see the point here? All of these acts are against one's fellow man; therefore he who loves and respects his fellow man, will not commit such deeds against him. He will treat others as he expects to be treated, or as he desires to be treated. Brothers and Sisters: I hope you can see that these things we are talking about are things that will change our nature; not our doctrine. We should have our doctrines straightened out by now; and be ready for our final washing. People who are still in confusion over doctrines will not submit themselves, to be washed by the water of God's word; they are too busy arguing and fussing with each other. The real, refined fruit of the Spirit, can only be produced in our lives, as we submit ourselves more and more to these principles in the scriptures, that work on our nature. All of our decisions in life are based upon what is inside of us, motivating us. Therefore the more we yield to the Spirit, to be led of Him, the more we will make decisions that are compatible with the scriptures. Verse 10 says, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Bro. Jackson: Why is there so much said about the

law? We are not under the law; we are under grace. No, we are not under the law of Moses; as you see recorded in the 20th chapter of Exodus; that was for Israel. But do you think God changed his mind about how he wanted His people to live, just because He made a new covenant with man, called grace? He expects all who are true partakers of this marvelous grace, to fulfill the righteousness of the law, without being forced to keep the letter of it. Name one of the ten commandments in the 20th chapter of Exodus, with the exception of Sabbath keeping, that a true Christian can ignore, and go contrary to. This law of love that Paul is speaking of, will encompass all that God is after when it is properly applied; so it is the fulfilling of the law. "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." If Paul could say that, then, how much more should we be saying it today, knowing that the coming of the Lord is so close at hand? The world is full of people today who will say, Oh, you Christians have been saying that for years, and He hasn't come yet; so what makes you think His coming is so close at hand now? Looking for the return of the Lord has always been the true Christian's heartbeat. Believing that He could come at any time has caused them to want to be ready to meet Him. Therefore they went to their graves, in a state of readiness, and when the rapture does take place, they will have

their part in it, for they will precede those saints who are still alive at that time. But you scoffers who would say such a thing, were also mentioned in the scriptures. I will just read the first 4 verses of the 3rd chapter of 2nd Peter, and let you see yourself in prophecy. "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of us the apostles of the Lord and Savior: Knowing this first, that there SHALL COME IN THE LAST DAYS SCOFFERS, walking after their own lusts, And saying, WHERE IS THE PROMISE OF HIS COMING? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Though all true Christians have looked for, and desired to see the coming of the Lord, there has never been a time in the history of the New Testament Church, when the prophecies of the scriptures were fulfilled to a point where He could come, until now. There are a few things left to be fulfilled yet; but they could all be wrapped up in a very short order; and people who do not know their scriptures, will not even know what is happening.

WORLDLY STYLES AND HABITS

We can truly say now, as we return to Romans 13:12, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. (Why? Because we are children of light.) Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying." These are the things we see going on in the world today; strife, rioting, and demonstrations of every sort. They have to shoot them down with water cannons, to break it up; and at times, with real bullets. All because we live in a world of untamed people; who conduct themselves more like animals, than they do something created in the image of God. But to the child of God, Paul said this, "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." Our human nature is always concerned about making provision for the flesh; and all of that has its place. But the sad thing is, Too many people get so wrapped up in doing that, they forget all about God, until they end up in some kind of trouble. Then they will cry, Preacher! Pray for me! The devil is trying to destroy me! The devil is always trying to destroy the true people of God; but he gets blamed for a lot of things we bring upon ourselves,

through our lack of dedication to the things of God. That is why, as the Lord began to deal with me on this message, I started feeling such an urgency to warn our young people about some of the trends they are drifting into; wearing all that makeup, and worldly styles of clothing, and all such like. Please! Young people of Faith Assembly: I am not picking on you. But if you keep it up, the day will come when you will remember the things you have heard; and you will be so sorry you failed to take heed, but it will be too late then, to avoid the heartache and misery you are experiencing. You will wish a thousand times you had never started out on such a road of life, trying to keep up with the world. But do you know what happens? Once you compromise, and lose your testimony, you are on a road of ruin. People you are associated with, stop thinking of you as a Christian, and expect you to do anything anyone else does. Is that what you really want? The choice is yours. If you intend to live for God, it is not something you can put off until a more convenient time, without getting into more trouble than you can handle. There is only one picture God will ever look at you through, He does not have a dozen different standards for us to follow or pattern after. If you think you can dress like the world, and do the things the world does, and still please God, you are absolutely wrong; and you will pay for every bit of it. That is why some people's flesh is always paying some kind of bill, they

have neglected God in times that would have made a difference. If you pattern your life according to what you see on television, that call themselves Christians, you are still following the trend of the world; for that is what most of them are following. You simply cannot see a true example of a Bible believing Christian, out there where the blind are leading the blind. Bro. Jackson: You ought not say that. Brothers and Sisters: There are some things that I have got to say; to give our young people a chance to make right decisions in the days ahead. This world is full of deceivers, parading themselves around in a cloak of religion, while their hearts are far from God. Do you want your children to follow Oral Roberts, Jimmy Swaggart, or Jim Bakker, just because I failed to tell them the truth? But Bro. Jackson, they are men of God. Can you prove that to me by the Bible? They are going against just about everything I ever learned from the Bible; and even if their motives were right, their doctrine is still antichrist. They have no revelation of the godhead, their water baptism is not scriptural, their concept of the rapture and of the great tribulation is about as far from the revealed scriptures, as it could possibly be, and their concept of Christianity, seems to be that they can do almost anything anyone else does, just as long as they believe in Jesus and support their programs. If what they promote and stand for is Christianity, they had to get it somewhere other than from the

Bible. The Bible teaches that believers in Jesus Christ are to separate themselves from the world; and be a holy people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” (1st Cor. 6:17 & 18) Then in 1st Peter 1:14-15, Peter said, “As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.” That means all ways of life, not just the way you talk. If you want to support those TV preachers with your contributions, and sit home on Sunday and watch them perform, help yourself. But do not stop me on the street and tell me what a wonderful work they are doing; for I already know what they are anointed for. God uses many vessels in His separating process; so just because a man seems to have an anointing, do not think he is necessarily called to minister to the true bride of Christ.

IS IT WRONG TO SWIM?

Every last one of these great TV evangelists refer to themselves and those who follow them, as “The

Church,” but I am going to say something plain enough for you all to understand it: They are NOT “The Church.” They never were the church, and they never will be. The 17th chapter of the book of Revelation tells us where all these religious systems came from. If Catholicism is the great Whore John wrote about, (and we know beyond a shadow of doubt that she is) she has some harlot daughters out here somewhere, so who do you think those harlot daughters are? The Reformation brought many of them out from that old system the Bible calls a whore; but when they came out, they brought her main doctrines out with them. Therefore they are no more holy than she is, and they are not going to be converted. Instead, they are all returning home, and going to bed with mama, and they think it is wonderful that Catholics and Protestants can all pray together, and sing together. It doesn't matter whether you are in Heritage USA, stripped off almost naked, or in a Catholic convent wearing a long robe, if what you pay your allegiance to is antichrist, your soul is naked before God, and you are none of His. No Holy Ghost Christian woman is going to put on a bathing suit, and get out here in a mixed crowd swimming. It's not the swimming that is wrong in the sight of God; it is exposing your nakedness. You may laugh at me for being so old fashioned; but one thing is sure, my old fashioned ideas come from the Bible, and I do not feel that I owe any of you an apology

when I tell you that God will not accept your loose ways of life. You do not have to listen to me, but the day will come when you will wish that you had. Only then, it will be too late; your life will already be wrecked, and what you have invested your faith in, will not be there to help you. If you have to swim, then go find you a place to swim. But if you are going to strip down half naked, do not take a crowd with you. Are you listening to me? I know what I am talking about. The time has come that judgment must begin at the house of God; just like the Bible says, people who are true children of God, have a right to be warned about those that would lead them astray and cause them to miss God. But, if after they have been sufficiently warned, and the right way shown to them, they choose to follow worldly trends, you just have to leave them in the hands of the one who knows what it will take to jar them to their senses. Sometimes people have to get out here and wrap themselves around a telephone pole, or half drown, or lose something or someone that is precious to them, before they will ever humble themselves before God, and do right.

EARTHLY KINGDOMS **CRUMBLING**

I am going to tell something now, as we near the end of the message, that I have been holding back until last. I might have thought it was because of what had come out in the news, if I had heard all of the news, but I had not. (This message was preached in April, 1987) Two weeks ago on Wednesday, it came out in the news that Jim Bakker had resigned the PTL, because of his scandal. I thought, How shocking that is to his followers and supporters. I came to church on Thursday night, and just made some little reference to it. I had not heard the Thursday's news, so I did not have that on my mind. I went to bed Thursday night, and it wasn't a dream, but when I awakened Friday morning, I knew God had been working on my mind. It was just like a picture had been stamped there. All day long, these scriptures just turned over and over in my mind. All I had to do was just pick up the Bible and re-read them. I could see people in a different way, a way I had never seen them before. It gave me a feeling in my heart that I had to preach this message, no matter what you may think. All I asked of God was that he would give me the grace to preach it in a way that you would know I love you, when it is all over with. I never want any of you to feel that I am picking on you; nor do I want anyone to get the idea that I am trying to drive you away, for I am trying to help you. All day Friday, I was like that, and just simply prayed, God give me wisdom to know how to present this to the people. I went to bed

Friday night, and way in the night, I went into a dream. I could see myself standing out in the night; and looking off into the distance, I could see city lights. Then I became aware of voices. Some sounded like people making merry; and others sounded like they were crying. Some were not too far away; but others were in the far distance. All of a sudden, out in front of me, but off at some distance, a huge ladder appeared, reaching from the ground, all the way into the heavens. The whole scene was at night; but down that ladder shined a beam of brilliant white light, and it only shined right around the base of the ladder. Up and down that ladder, beings were ascending and descending, and I could hear conversations being carried on; but I only understood three phrases of what was being said. I understood this, "The time has come, all things shall be shaken, and none shall escape." Now look what has happened in the last two weeks. Oral Roberts announced that the dog track man gave him a check, that put him over the top; but now he is being sued. Listen to this. "TV evangelist Oral Roberts has been hit with a law suit accusing him of raising eight million, seven hundred thousand dollars, by portraying God as a black-mailer. The suit filed in the U.S. District Court on Friday, by Aerospace engineer Douglas Cogshall, and Russell Richardson of Garret, seeks to force Roberts to return donations to everyone who wants their money back. In January, the evangelist announced

that he had received the eight million dollars.” People have sent me newspaper clippings from many parts of the country, showing how the different editorial columnists have portrayed this incident. I also have a copy of Newsweek magazine with Jim and Tammy Bakker on the front cover. Pardon my expression, but she looks like a witch. I am not calling her a witch, but when I see her, I am reminded of how a witch is always portrayed. It is sad, brothers and sisters, when people who are supposed to be Christians, present to the world an image like that. As I opened the magazine and started reading, one after another of these big evangelists are after each other, for one reason or another. Jimmy Swaggart is facing a ninety million dollar lawsuit, and as you read through the pages, and see what is going on among those big religions celebrities, you would have to be a fool to close your eyes to all of it and still look at them as God called, and anointed to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Their platforms are being shaken to pieces, and thousands are having their hopes dashed to the ground. Yet in spite of all that some of these men seem to be guilty of, they have an element of people that completely overlook their unscriptural ways, and still support them. Nevertheless I do feel that there are yet a few people left out there in all of that mess of religion, that God has purposed to do something for; therefore he has to let the image of

whoever they have been following, be marred to the point where these will begin to seek God for the true way. As I said earlier, Who can correct Oral Roberts? Who can correct Jimmy Swaggart? Jerry Falwell may be able to sit at the head of the PTL ministries, but he has no authority to correct any of these other preachers; even if his own life and ministry is above reproach. Furthermore, this being the end time, when the apostolic gospel has already been restored back to the Church, God is not going to send a Trinitarian preacher out to try to correct any thing. What could he turn anyone back to? Jerry Falwell is of the Fundamental Baptist belief, and some consider that to be a special brand sanctioned by the Lord to stand above all the rest. But regardless of how holy they may appear to be, their doctrine is still trinity, so they are not “The Church,” either. If there are any souls left in those systems, that are to be in “The Church,” God will do something to get them out of there, before the end of the age. They cannot be made ready for the rapture, while sitting under that antichrist teaching. Do not get offended, because I call their doctrine antichrist. What else could it be, if it is different than what the apostles of Christ taught? None of those apostles ever believed that Jesus was the second person of the godhead. Every last one of them knew He was the ONLY PERSON of the godhead. They did not have to argue back and forth about eternal security of the believer, nor

about predestination, nor sanctification, nor the baptism of the Holy Ghost; they knew perfectly well where every scriptural doctrine belonged. Well, what about these preachers who have not been involved in any type of scandal, and seem so sincere in what they are doing? Brothers and Sisters: I have been accused of preaching against preachers; and I grant you, there are times when it seems like I am doing that. But what I am really doing is revealing the error of their teaching, or something about them, that innocent souls have a right to know. I don't just go around meddling with their affairs, just for lack of something to do. Furthermore I never say anything about any of them, that I cannot stand on the scriptures, and say to their face. I have been called of God to stand for truth, and help people who are hungering for truth, to find it, and sometimes that requires revealing that which is not according to present day truth.

HOW SOME PREACH AGAINST SIN

Many of these preachers who seem to be so anointed of God, are actually fulfilling the words of Jesus in the 7th chapter of Matthew. I may have mentioned it earlier; I meant to. But in

the 21st verse, He said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, (Notice now.) 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, (or say unto them) I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Now why do you suppose He will call their seemingly good works, works of iniquity? Because they were self motivated, doing what they were doing, though good it may have been, for their own selfish interests, building their great empires, and making a name for themselves, instead of being called of God, and led by his Spirit. It is not a case of Him knowing nothing at all about them; but simply that they never had that intimate relationship with Him, that true servants of God have. They are performing a service for God; separating make-believers from the true Bible believing Christians; but their reward is going to be something much different than what their deceived minds have imagined. That is why I always pray, God help me to preach only what you want preached, and help me preach it in a way that the saints will know I am not deliberately trying to hurt them. Correction must always be administered in a way that those who need correcting, will take it seriously, without feeling that the

preacher dislikes them, and am just picking on them. I have heard preachers say, Bless God, I believe in preaching hard against sin. Well, I believe we should preach the whole gospel; and that includes preaching against sin; but I have never felt led, just to dwell on one or two certain sins all the time, like some do. When people are bound by sin: truth is the only thing that will ever set them free. Scolding alone will never do it. People need to be motivated to yield themselves to the wooing of the Spirit of God that can give them a higher purpose in life. I read a tract one time, how a certain evangelist went into a certain city, to hold a revival. The first night he really preached hard, covering the whole category of sinful things people do. In his heart he felt, Boy I really scolded them tonight. He went back to the motel and knelt down to pray, feeling in his heart that he had really put sin in its place, in that very first service, and he prayed like that, Lord, I really skinned them tonight, didn't I? Then in his sleep, he had a dream in which he heard himself saying that, and do you know what happened? He heard a voice from above say, But who will heal their wounds? That awakened him, and he had to get on his knees again, and repent to God for preaching with the wrong motive and attitude. There is nothing wrong with preaching against sin, unless we are doing it with the wrong motive; just wanting to see someone squirm. God does not honor

that kind of preaching. But on the other hand, if the same sermon is preached, by the leading of the Holy Ghost, for the purpose of trying to help people get their lives straightened out, God is going to cause it to have an effect. It will accomplish some purpose of His.

MOCKERS IN THE LAST DAYS

Let us go to the little epistle of Jude now, before we end the message. This little epistle is only one short chapter; but you have to recognize that it says a lot in its few words. The first verse lets us know that it is written to those that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called. It was from this little book of the Bible that we came to call our paper, "The Contender," for in verse 3, Jude says, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly **CONTEND FOR THE FAITH**, which was once delivered unto the saints." That is what we are doing; contending for the faith which was delivered, (by who? The very apostles of Jesus Christ) to the saints, in that first age of Christianity. Verse 17 is where I want to direct your attention to, for these last few comments. "But, beloved, remember

ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers (when?) In the last time, (That is now; in our day.) Who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.” This word, mockers, does not point to someone deliberately mocking and making fun of God, and of Christian people. It is speaking of imitators, who would be on the scene at the end time, pretending to live a Christian life, but secretly living like the world. Millions are sitting at home, watching these men on TV, really believing in their hearts; I am a child of God because I have done everything Bro. So and So said to do. Surely, they have repeated a little prayer, and they send their money to the man, or men they are following, and that is as far as their vision goes. They will sit right there, until the man they are following, goes off, and then they will put on their big old ear rings, paint up their faces until they look like a circus clown, put on their lib suits, or their bikini bathing suits, and away they go. Don’t talk to me preacher, I’m as good as you are. But the question is, Are you prepared to meet God, if your number comes up today? The rapture of the Church may be another ten years away; or even longer, but the death angel will overtake a lot of people before the dawning of another day, and any of us could be among that number. That is why the Bible says, Today is the day of salvation. Today is the day we need to make everything right with God; then

whatever number of days He gives us, from now on, will be days of inner joy and peace, as we have the answer of a good conscience before God.

SCRIPTURE IS BEING FULFILLED

I know this message will fall on a lot of deaf ears; but I also know it is going to help some people get their lives in line with the word of God; because God gave me the message to preach. This is not my normal kind of message; you all know that. I have to be pushed, to preach like this; because some always take things the wrong way, and I can’t stand to hurt anyone, if I can help it. But first and foremost, I am a servant of God; and if he deals with me to preach a message, I have to preach it, believing that he will use it to help my brothers and sisters of the faith. It hurts to see a worldly spirit tugging at you young people, but just fussing at them all the time is not the answer. We cannot put them into the kingdom of God, and neither can we take them out. God has to deal with their hearts just like He did with ours, lest they turn out to be make-believers also. They turn on the television and see Tammy Bakker painted up like a clown, they see Richard Roberts, and his dancers, swinging and swaying with their little gospel rock songs. Then, one night last

week, it showed a large auditorium in Texas, where a group of young people, hundreds of them, were caught up in a crazy, Jesus in rock music. Some of those playing the music, looked more like animals, than they did human beings, and their music was out of the pit of hell; yet because they were throwing Bibles to the crowd, that was supposed to make it a religious, God sanctioned affair. It seems that some people take great delight in being deceived. Deep down in their hearts, they know they shouldn't follow some of the things they do. But Satan is very cunning; and he gives them just enough Bible, to make them feel religious, and not enough to cause them to see the error of their ways. Everything that is taking place, is in some way fulfilling the scriptures. The world is full of mockers, (imitators) that put on a religious mask, and appear to many, as though they have put on the Lord Jesus Christ. But when you and I put on the Lord Jesus Christ, it changed our lives completely; so that we no longer walk after, nor desire to walk after our former ways of life. These who walk after their own ungodly lusts, have not experienced that change, so notice verse 19 now. "These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit." The word sensual, lets us know that their separation is of the natural mind, and not because they have been led of the Spirit of God; therefore they are makebelievers. They have a spirit motivating them; but it is not the Spirit

of God. "But ye, beloved, (This is for Faith Assembly. We need it as much as anyone, anywhere.) Building up yourselves in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, KEEP YOURSELVES IN THE LOVE OF GOD, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." That simply says, Do not take the attitude, I am saved and filled with the Holy Ghost, so I will just sit down and wait for the Lord to come. No. Pray in the Spirit, and be just as fervent in prayer as you were the first time you ever really got serious about praying, knowing that eternal life is our reward.

BE LED BY THE SPIRIT

These next verses require us to be wise. "And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." When you see some people being carried away by certain wrongs, that scripturally you know Holy Ghost filled saints should not be involved in, you become deeply concerned. You do not jump on them, and drive them farther away from where they ought to be; you do everything possible, to exercise Christian influence over them. Try to help them see where their present trend will lead them to. They may not listen to you; but if you say it

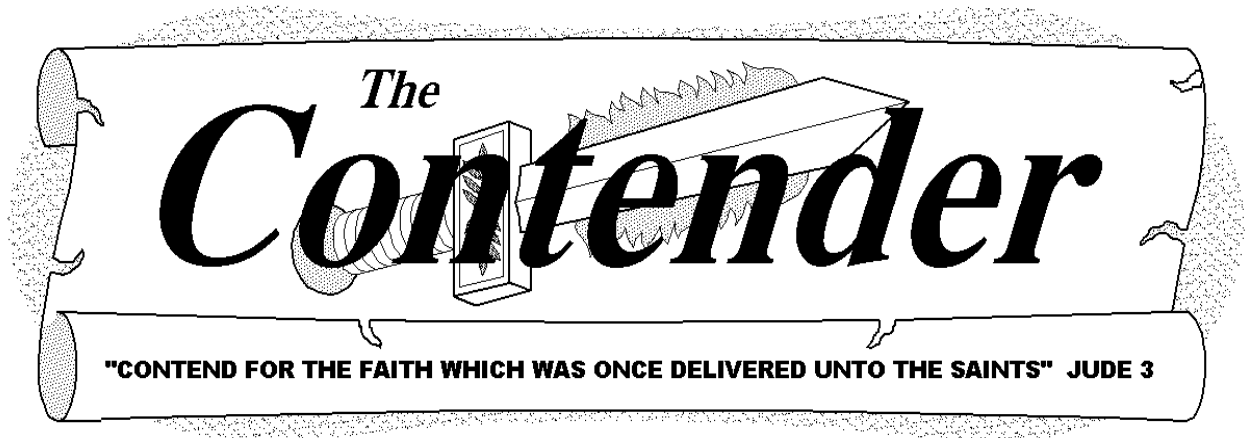
right, out of an honest heart and pure compassion, you will not have to answer to God for it yourself. Not all, but some will be snatched from the clutches of the devil, when we ourselves obey the scriptures, out of a pure heart. How are we to know which ones we should speak to? That is why we need to get alone and pray. Those who just go around looking for trouble, always ready to hand out advice, make a big mess, more times than they ever pluck someone from the clutches of the devil. In some situations, you are only required to pray, for God has another vessel whom He will use, to do the talking, to that person. A lot of Christians are out here trying to pull tares out of the fire. That's not what this scripture means. This only applies to true children of God, who have been snared by the devil, and drawn off course. The fire is not a literal fire, and it is not suggesting that a true child of God could end up in hell. It symbolically speaks of a Christian who has been caught up in a trap of the devil, through some fleshly weakness, and being a Christian, is tormented because of it. Some people who get caught in a trap of the devil, are just waiting for someone to come along, and give them the help they need; and others, who for some reason have become rebellious also, will have to be whipped real good, before they will ever get straightened out. But regardless of what it takes; God knows how to get us into the place where we belong, and in his time, He will do

whatever is necessary. That is where our faith lies, knowing that He is faithful. Hallelujah! I love Him.

THE TUB IS FULL

Brothers and Sisters: I am a human being, just like the rest of you. God gives me these messages; but he does not tell me exactly what words to use; therefore these are my own words of expression, as I deliver to you what He has laid upon me. Theological scholars would find all kinds of mistakes in my grammar, and they would certainly disagree with what I teach; but this message is not for them; it is for all who cherish truth, and desire to meet Jesus in the air, when He comes for His bride. Therefore in closing, let me say this, we are living in a world that is fast plunging toward a terribly dark hour of time, so may we, the children of light, get in the tub and receive whatever washing by the water of God's word, is necessary, to make us presentable to Him. The tub is full, the temperature is just right, so may we take a good bath in his word, let me say once again, before I close, God has a five fold ministry in the world today; and there is no reason for anyone to think they should look to only one man for the word of God. The thing to be concerned about is whether all of them have the same revelation of the

scriptures or not. Do not ever allow yourselves to be so foolish as to believe God would call five men to minister to the bride, and give them five different revelations of His word. No. God's true ministry in this end time will all be preaching the same revelation. Not quoting each other, but in their own words, painting the same picture. May God bless you. Amen.



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