



2 Cor. 3:18

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Righteousness by Faith

David Clayton



One of the most thought-provoking definitions of faith is found in Hebrews 11:1. Paul begins this great chapter by saying,

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. (Heb 11:1)

Not many people would have described or defined faith in this way. Probably the popular definition would run something like this: “faith is believing something with all your heart even when you cannot see it.” There is merit to that definition of course and that is why Paul’s definition is so intriguing. Why did he choose this definition which is so evidently carefully thought out and precisely worded? The very fact that it is so unorthodox compels us to take notice.

Recently I asked myself a question which helped me to come to grips with Paul’s definition of faith and to grasp the true impact of this verse. The question was, “how do you know that you are in Christ and that you have received the holy spirit?” I mean, there were no tongues of fire as at Pentecost, there

was no speaking in other languages, there has not been any healing of the sick or raising of the dead. How do I know? What evidence is there that I am in Christ and have received of His life? This question was not mine originally. As I have spoken on the subject of what it means to be in Christ and rejoiced in the truth of complete salvation in Christ more than one person has asked me, “where is the evidence?” So I had to face the question, what is your proof? Where is the evidence indeed?

FAITH IS THE EVIDENCE

Paul’s unusual definition seems tailor-made for just such a question. “Faith,” he says, “is the evidence ...” But what does he mean by this and does it make sense? When we speak of evidence we mean demonstrable and tangible realities, we mean measurable facts which may be put on display for all to examine. In stark contrast Paul speaks of “things not seen.” Faith is the evidence of *things not seen*. Here we have a contradiction. In today’s material world of statistics, data, facts and figures we find ourselves bemused by Paul’s statement and credit it to first century mysticism. But Paul is not speaking figuratively or symbolically. What he is saying is that the true evidence of spiritual realities (including the new birth) is not what we see, feel or are able to measure. It is not what other people can assess or examine. The true proof, the substance, the evidence, is faith itself.

In this definition of faith, is Paul speaking of a person’s own personal faith?

Does this definition encompass the question which I asked myself, “how can a man really know that he is in Christ?” Does it answer the question of what evidence a man should look for as testimony to his position in Christ? I believe that Paul’s definition of faith covers this question. A person needs to look for no evidence as to the fulfillment of God’s word other than the fact that he believes it. All the evidence to the contrary in the entire world cannot overthrow the faithfulness of God’s word. Our eyes, our feelings may tell us otherwise, but the word of God is the truth, regardless. It is the statement of how things really are. When we believe, then that is the evidence. Faith is its own proof. When a man believes then he knows it is so and no evidence in the world can be stronger than that or can overthrow such proof. So a person will rejoice with all his heart in what he believes even though all the evidence in the world seems to contradict what faith proves to him to be true.

We read in 1 John 3:9,

Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed

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Open Face is dedicated to the promotion of the truths committed to the Advent movement, as believed and taught by the early Adventist pioneers. In particular to the restoration of those truths which have been cast down to the ground and trampled underfoot by the papacy, and adopted by her daughters.

Our purpose is to motivate our readers to commit themselves wholly to the task of personal preparation for the coming of the Lord, and to the taking of the final warning message to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

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remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. (1 John 3:9)

What should a Christian do when he reads this verse? Well, he may say, "since this is so, then I must endeavour not to commit sin," and he sets out to try not to sin with all his might. Does this man believe the word of God? Another man may read the same verse and say, "since this is so, then sin is no longer my problem." He is filled with joy at the realization that in Christ he has been set free from sin and he goes about rejoicing that he has been delivered. Which of these two responses is the response of faith? Which man really believes the word of God?

Faith is the evidence, faith itself is the proof. The fact that I do truly believe God's word is all that I need. To require further evidence is to demonstrate that I do not really believe and is the surest guarantee that I will not have the promised blessing.

A GIFT RECEIVED BY FAITH

So in the light of this, what is the true significance of the term, "Righteousness by Faith?" Here is how Paul describes this blessing:

Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: (Rom 3:22)

God's word tells us that this righteousness comes upon all them that simply believe, and that it is by the faith of Jesus Christ. The verse is very clear and in fact the entire passage from which it is taken is equally plain. When a person believes in Jesus Christ, when he believes in the gift of God then at that very moment he receives that gift. Righteousness is purely and entirely the gift of God bestowed upon all who simply believe. Paul says it as plainly as words can say it (Rom. 4:4,5).

The real question is, how long does it take to receive this gift of righteousness? This is the thorny question which often causes much debate and difference of opinion.

- a. Is this gift of righteousness instantly imparted to a person the moment he believes so that he is instantly transformed from a sinner into a saint? Is he immediately made into a new creation? Have old things indeed passed away and all things become new?
- b. Or is it that when he believes, God begins the work of making him righteous so that in the meantime he is only partially righteous, partly a sinner and partly a saint?
- c. Is it that he is instantly regarded by God as righteous while in actual fact he is not really righteous? (this would suggest that God accepts what is not really true).

If righteousness is by faith and only and purely by faith, and if it is wholly and entirely the **GIFT** of God, then the question is, why would God fail to give this gift **immediately** to a person the moment that he believes? It could only be either that God is unable to give it immediately or that He is unwilling to

give it immediately. Neither of these suggestions make any sense. If righteousness is one hundred percent the gift of God, then it seems reasonable, logical and biblical to accept that God does give this gift in its entirety to a person the moment that he believes.

INSTANT RIGHTEOUSNESS?

But let us examine another objection. Is it possible for righteousness to be just instantly placed upon a person so that he instantly changes from bad to good? Can a person's character be transformed in a moment so that the habits of a lifetime are erased and new attitudes immediately implanted? We must not answer this question on the basis of our own experience but on the basis of the word of God. This word is very clear and leaves no room for misunderstanding.

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (2 Cor 5:17)

In many places where the Bible speaks of the righteous life of the born-again Christian, of the life of victory over sin, it does not present this victorious life as the result of hard struggles with sin or as the result of a process of developing righteousness. No, righteous living is presented as the fruit of a single decisive and revolutionary event in the life of the believer, the result of a single action at a specific point in time. Let us look at a few examples of this.

(Rom 6:3-7) Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? (4) Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. (5) For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: (6) Knowing this,

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The Rest Which Remains

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (30) For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (Mat 11:28-30)

It was Jesus who spoke these words and since the time when He spoke them, many well-meaning persons who have not understood the gospel have had to ask themselves the question, “what did He really mean by these words?”

Jesus’ promise was, “I will give you rest,” and the question is, when Jesus promises rest, what is the problem from which he is seeking to relieve us? Obviously the opposite of “rest” is “work” or labour. What is the difference between rest and work?

Work is an activity. Work requires effort, energy. Sometimes energy of the mind as well as of the body. And rest? **Rest** is the opposite isn’t it. Rest is non-activity, it is a state of relaxation.

Let us consider still another question: Can a person who is working be resting at the same time?

Strictly speaking we cannot work and rest at the same time, and Christians who find that the effort to serve God is a hard job and a constant strain may know that they have not experienced the rest promised by Jesus and that they have not found the true gospel.

Jesus’ appeal is to those who are “heavy laden.” What does this mean? It suggests that these persons are carrying loads and of course they are bound to be tired! Is Jesus here talking about people who are out in the field carrying sacks of potatoes on their

backs? Is he talking about this kind of load? What is it that has burdened these people and made them “heavy-laden” and in what are they labouring?

Clearly they are labouring in trying to be righteous! That is what their hard work is all about. The burden which they are carrying is the burden of sin and guilt, it is the weight they bear as a result of the knowledge of their wretched sinfulness and failings and they are labouring hard in trying to get rid of that burden, to somehow obtain righteousness.

Jesus says, “come unto me all you who are working and are under this load, and I will give you rest!” So then if you claim to be a Christian but yet you find yourself in this heavy labour to achieve righteousness, the fact is, you have not yet found what Jesus has to offer!

Again he says, “Take my yoke and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart and you shall find rest unto your **souls!**” This makes it clear that the part of us which is heavy-laden is the soul. That is where we need rest. Jesus continues by saying, “for my yoke is easy and my burden is light!”

A yoke is an instrument which binds one to another in such a way that it compels him to travel in the same direction as that other person. It is not just cows on which a yoke is put. In the wicked days of slavery, when slaves were being transported they often led them in a line and put a yoke around their necks so that no slave could get out of line. Each one had to follow where the one in front of him led. This is the main reason for a yoke, its main purpose is to bind one person to another so that where one goes the other must follow. Jesus says, “you are

working hard and you are carrying a heavy load, what you must do is to take my yoke, bind yourself to me because the yoke I give you to wear is easy and the burden is light and if you take it you will find rest for your souls.”

In Isaiah 11:10 it says,

And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. (Isa 11:10)

His rest shall be what? GLORIOUS! The one who comes from the root of Jesse will give rest to his people and that rest will be glorious.

THE OBSTACLE TO REST

Now let us turn to the book of Hebrews and see what it says concerning this rest which Christ gives.

Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, (8) Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: (9) When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. (10) Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. (11) So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) (Heb 3:7-11)

God said the Jews could not enter into His rest. That experience of rest which Jesus promised was not attained by them because their hearts were hardened.

Further on it says in chapter 4:1-3,

Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. (2) For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

(3) For we which have believed do enter into rest . . . (Heb 4:1-3)

Now what are some of the things that can stop us from coming into that rest which Jesus promised? It is evident that one of the problems is unbelief. But I would like to suggest to you that another serious hindrance (which is really linked to unbelief) is **LABOUR!!** If we are working how can we rest? Struggling in labour, to do things ourselves will certainly prevent us from experiencing that rest which Christ promised and we will see in just a moment that the greatest reason for unbelief is this labour.

In verses 9-10 it says,

(Heb 4:9-10) There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. (10) For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

Those who are doing their own works cannot have God's rest. The one who has entered God's rest has ceased from **his own works**. It does not mean that works will not appear in you, but you certainly will not be the one who is working. Somebody else is going to be working in you to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:13). You won't be working and that is why the burden is lifted off your back, that is why the yoke is easy, because it is not your problem anymore. Somebody else is dealing with that problem and that is the reason why you are able to rest.

THE STRUGGLE ENDED

In the J.B. Phillips translation of the New Testament, Romans 10:4 reads as follows:

"For Christ means the end of the struggle for righteousness-by-the-Law for everyone who believes in him." (Romans 10:4 - Phillips)

Hallelujah! Christ is the end of the struggle for righteousness by the law. When you have come to Christ the

struggle is over, Christ brings it to an end.

Now it is interesting that Hebrews 4:11 says that we should **labour** to enter into God's rest. Is there a contradiction here? How do we labour if we are resting? How do we work so that we may not work? It is evident that the word "labour" as used here means, "be diligent," "seek earnestly," because one of the things that the Bible does say is that he who seeks will find. But there is a difference between seeking the right way and seeking in the wrong way. In labouring here, what is it that we are seeking to do? In this case, we are "labouring," we are seeking to find Christ, whereas before, we were labouring to do good, a different thing entirely. Fighting to do good, is labouring to be righteous by our own works - a vain effort. But fighting to find

Christ is what all of us must do because when we have found Him we have found wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, eternal life, the fullness of the Godhead, perfection, - all that we need.

So in one stroke we have everything we have been working for and couldn't have, Christ is the end of the struggle for righteousness by the law."

Let us recognize something before we go any further. What we are talking about is not how we are **forgiven**. All of us are very familiar with that process and that is what most Christians are concentrating on. That is probably the reason why we have become a people who are content to live by sinning and repenting, sinning and repenting, sinning and repenting on and on as a way of life. Because we know how to be forgiven, we simply repent and

then God forgives and washes the slate clean. Amen! Back we go to sin, shortly we return to confess again because we have done it all over in just a few hours!

We have not applied the gospel to the lives we live and that is the problem why we have all laboured under this heavy burden and been so dissatisfied. But the gospel is a complete thing, it is not any half-done thing, it's not any partially done work. God is able to set us free. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation! It is the power of God! And so Paul could say I am not ashamed of it (Rom. 1:16).

What we are dealing with is the issue of the life we live. God does not say, "O.K. see, I have forgiven you, I have given you a push start, now go and finish it. Now you go and live a good life because you see I forgave you." He doesn't do that. We think actions cannot justify us, but actions can sanctify us. That is foolishness! The same process by which we received Christ is the same process by which we walk all the days of our lives right into the kingdom.

BY FAITH ONLY

In Galatians chapter 3 Paul writes,

O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? (2) This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? (Gal 3:1-2)

Now this is an interesting question. What is Paul saying? The fact is that these people were filled with the spirit, isn't that right? Paul was saying, "how did you get the holy spirit, was it by keeping the law or was it by believing?" What is the obvious answer? Evidently it was by believing, it was not by anything they did. He says "you silly people, how did you receive the Holy

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Righteousness by Faith

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that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. (7) For he that is dead is freed from sin.

Notice that our freedom from sin is accomplished by one thing, that is, the fact that we died with Christ. Our old man was crucified with Him, the body of sin is **destroyed!!** How is it then possible for sin to still be living in me? The logical conclusion is, he that is dead is **freed** from sin. The question is, do we believe it? In this passage we are not delivered by hard work or by a process of character development, but simply by an act of death experienced by faith.

(Col 2:11) In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

Here again we see that the sins of the flesh are "put off" by a single action. It is by the circumcision which we receive in Christ. This circumcision consists of putting off, getting rid of, the

body of sin (the carnal mind). When we entered into Christ the experience not only gave us the fullness of the godhead, but it delivered us from the fullness of carnal humanity.

The symbolism of circumcision is graphic. In circumcision, that which was the cause of potential impurity and disease was cut away and cast off forever. The same thing happens in this spiritual circumcision accomplished in Christ. The carnal mind, the old man, the body of sin, is taken away in Christ. Cut off and cast aside, so that the thing which causes spiritual impurity and disease is removed.

(1 John 3:9) Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

Again we notice the extremism of the word of God. There is little room here for misunderstanding. Not only is it difficult for a person in Christ to sin, but it is impossible. While His seed (God's seed, God's life) remains in him he **cannot** sin. What is it which gives him this life which sin cannot touch? Is it hard work? Is it diligent effort? Is it much struggling? Is it the long drawn-

out process of character development which **finally** gets him to the place where he cannot sin? Absolutely not. It is the simple fact that he is born of God and that the seed of God is in him. This and this only is what destroys the power of sin in him and produces the righteous life and character of God. Again we see that this is not something which requires long drawn-out and agonizing struggles, but simply the faith which believes and accepts the word of God and by which we receive the gift of the new birth, the new existence in Christ.

THE PLACE OF HUMAN EFFORT.

How then do we reconcile this with the undeniable fact that there is effort, strife and struggle associated with the life of the Christian? What is the place of these endeavours if it is faith alone which may lay hold on these gifts of God? Why do we need to fight if righteousness is wholly the gift and the work of God? Let us answer this question by examining an event in the life of Christ.

When He came down from the mount of transfiguration with Peter, James and John, Jesus was faced with a situation which would have embarrassed His cause had He not arrived on the scene at that moment. A man had brought his demented son to the disciples with the request that they deliver him from demon-possession, but all their attempts at casting out the devil had failed. We can only imagine how hard they must have tried. Possibly they rebuked the devil with stern commands, lifted their hands to the skies, called upon God and maybe even retired to the side to pray, but all their efforts were vain. The devil mocked all their attempts to cast him out and only displayed his power with greater ferocity as they commanded him to depart.

Jesus' frustration with His disciples was expressed in His disappointed

WOVEN IN HEAVEN'S LOOM

Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided can make us meet to appear in God's presence. This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul. . . .

This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us. . . . Everything that we of ourselves can do is defiled by sin. But the Son of God "was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin." . . . By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God's commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, **the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life.** This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness. Then as the Lord looks upon us He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah. (COL - 311)

words,

. . . O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. (Mat 17:17)

Immediately He rebuked the devil who speedily departed. The bewildered disciples sheepishly asked Him, “why could not we cast him out?” Notice the answer of Jesus:

And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. (21) Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting. (Mat 17:20-21)

Now look at what Jesus said. Examine the reasons which He gave for their failure. Firstly He says, “because of your unbelief,” and this is easy for us to understand because it agrees with His first words to them, “O faithless and perverse generation.” Obviously their problem was lack of faith. Faith is what pleases God, faith will move mountains, nothing is impossible to those who truly believe.

But then Jesus continues by saying something which at first sight seems to contradict everything which He said before. “Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by fasting and prayer.” What is His point here? What really was the problem which the disciples had, was it lack of faith or was it lack of fasting and prayer? Jesus rebuked them for a lack of faith and then stated that such a devil could only be cast out by fasting and prayer. Did He contradict Himself? Of course not.

FAITH REQUIRES WORK

The fact is, there is nothing, absolutely nothing which God requires from a surrendered soul except faith. Faith alone pleases God, faith is the hand which lays hold on God’s power and

casts out demons. Fasting and prayer does not cast out demons. So what then is the purpose of fasting and prayer? When we examine these statements of Jesus carefully we come to the realization that while fasting and prayer cannot move the hand of God, it is a means of STRENGTHENING FAITH! It is a means of producing that which alone may please God and receive His blessings. As Ellen White said,

“Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him.” {SC 93}

So while faith alone pleases God, efforts need to be made to maintain faith. Our focus is not always perfect. Living in fallen, weakened flesh with impaired faculties in sinful circumstances, the fight to maintain the focus of faith is a fierce struggle. Faith alone pleases God, but the maintaining of that faith requires diligent effort. Peter’s aborted walk on water illustrates that lesson graphically. Therefore Paul admonishes us, “fight the good fight of faith (1 Tim. 6:12).” Fasting and prayer is one of the things which helps us in turning our focus away from the trivia of earth and towards the things which are real and eternal. There are other things which are equally helpful. There is Christian fellowship, Bible study etc. None of these things have saving merit in themselves, none of them obtain God’s favour. Faith is what pleases God and is the only thing which may obtain His blessings, but these other things are helpful because they assist us in obtaining the one truly necessary thing, that is, faith.

So this is where our input comes in. The fight against sin is not ours. It is a conflict which has been already fought and won. The life of victory is a gift, freely bestowed on all who will **BE-LIEVE**. Our challenge is to believe. This is our fight, this is where fasting

and prayer come in. They are aids in our quest to believe.

Perhaps we have always fasted and prayed. We have always read our Bibles, attended worship services and laboured diligently in witnessing to others. So did the Jews who crucified Jesus. It is possible to do all the right things for all the wrong reasons. In these religious exercises they endeavoured to ***purchase*** the ***gift*** of God by their religious services and diligent endeavours. It profited them nothing. Because their concepts were wrong, that which should have been the means of establishing their faith became the means of obstructing it. They became so absorbed in and so dependent on their religious rituals that they could not see beyond the forms to the reality and so it became impossible for them to obtain true righteousness which is wholly a gift of God, received **ONLY** by faith.

Today we need to be careful that we do not repeat the mistake of the Jews. There never was and never will be a time when we can contribute any thing to our salvation. Justification is God’s gift, sanctification is God’s gift, glorification is God’s gift (Rom. 8:30; 1 Cor. 6:11). It cannot be a gift if we must work to obtain it, or if we must make a contribution towards it (Rom. 4:4,5). All God requires is that we accept the gift by faith.

Let us recognize brethren, that our problem all along has not been a lack of labour, discipline, striving or effort. How we have laboured and struggled! It has not brought us one step closer to perfection or heaven. God said it in 1888 and He continues to remind us today. It is “**RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH.**” Let us labour therefore to enter into God’s rest by faith (Heb. 4:11) and let us cease from our own works as God did from His (Heb. 4:10)



Are You an Evolutionist?

A.T. Jones



The following article is an extract from a sermon prepared by A.T. Jones for the Week of Prayer meetings of 1899. It was published in the Review and Herald of Feb. 21, 1899. We encourage you to read the message in its entirety.

From what I have read, you see that whoever lets any time pass between the word spoken and the thing done, is an evolutionist. The word of God to you is, Man, "thy sins are forgiven thee." Woman, "thy sins are forgiven thee." [Elder Corliss: "Didn't it say, Thy sins shall be forgiven?"] No, sir. "Thy sins are forgiven thee"--present tense, with an emphasis. "Thy sins are forgiven." I thank God this is so, because the creative energy is in that word "forgiven" to take away all sin and create the man a new creature. I believe in creation. Do you? Do you believe in the creative energy that is in the word "forgiven" spoken to you? Or are you an evolutionist and do you say, I cannot see how that can be, because I am so bad? I have been trying to do right, but I have made many failures. I have had many ups and downs and have been down a good many more times than up. If that is what you say,

you are an evolutionist, for that is evolution.

Many people have been longing and longing for a clean heart. They say, "I believe in the forgiveness of sin and all that and I would take it all, if I was sure that I could hold out, but there is so much evil in my heart and so many things to overcome that I do not have any confidence." But there stands the word, "Create in me a clean heart." A clean heart comes by creation and by no other means; and that creation is wrought by the word of God. For He says, "A new heart also will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you." Are you a creationist now or are you an evolutionist? Will you go out of this house with an evil heart or with a new heart created by the word of God, which has in it creative energy to produce a new heart? It speaks to you a new heart. To every one it speaks just that way, and ***if you allow a moment to pass between the speaking of the word and the new heart, you are an evolutionist. When you allow any time to pass between the word spoken and the fulfillment of that thing in your experience, then you are an evolutionist.***

There are those in this house who have said, Yes, I want it. I am going to have it. I believe the word will accomplish it, but they have lengthened out the time until the next meeting and on and on, passing over years, and so they are just this much evolutionists. "While so many are hovering about the mystery of faith and godliness, they could have solved the matter by proclaiming [speaking abroad, telling it out], "I know that Jesus Christ is my portion forever." ***The power to produce this is in the word of God, and when this is accepted, the creative energy is there producing the thing that is spoken. So you can settle the whole matter of the mystery of faith and godliness by proclaiming that you know that Christ is your portion for-***

ever.

There is a mystery in how God can be manifest in such sinful flesh as yours. But, mind you, the question is not now about the mystery; the question is, ***Is there such a thing as creation? Is there such a thing as a Creator, who can create in you a clean heart? Or is the whole thing simply evolution?*** Just now and among Seventh-day Adventists, the question from this day until the end of the world must be, Do you believe in the Creator? And when you believe in the Creator, how is it that He creates? Of course you say, it is by the word of God. Very good. Now does He create things for you by His word? Are you a creationist for the other evolutionists and then an evolutionist for the other creationists? How is it?

Another thing. The word says, "Be ye clean." He said, back yonder, "Let there be light, and there was light." He said to the leper, "Be thou clean," and "immediately" he was clean. He says now to you, "Be ye clean," and what now? Every one of you—what do you say? [Voice: "It is so."] Then for your soul's sake put yourself upon that creative word. Recognize the creative energy in the word of God which comes to you in the Bible, for this word of God in the Bible is the same here to you today that it was when it spoke into space the worlds on high and brought light out of darkness and cleansing to the leper. That word spoken to you today, if received, creates you new in Christ Jesus. That word, spoken in the dark waste and void space of your heart, if received, produces there the light of God; ***that word spoken today to you afflicted with the leprosy of sin, if received, immediately cleanses you.*** Let it. Let it.

How shall I be clean? By the creative energy of that word, "Be ye clean." Therefore it is written, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have

spoken unto you.” John 15:3. Are you? Will you from this moment be a creationist? Or will you go on being an evolutionist?

See what a blessed thing this is. When you read the word, receive the word, and think upon the word, what is it to you all the time? O, it is creation! The creative energy is in you producing the things which the word speaks, and you are living in the very presence of the power of creation. Creation is going on in your life. God is creating in you righteousness, holiness, truth, faithfulness—every good and gracious thing.

And when this is so, your Sabbath-keeping will amount to something, because the Sabbath is a memorial of creation—the sign that He who observes it knows the Creator and is acquainted with the process of creation. But as certainly as you are an evolutionist, your Sabbath-keeping is a fraud.

Unless you recognize the word of God day by day as a creative energy in your life, your Sabbath-keeping is a fraud, because the Sabbath is a memorial of creation. It is “a sign between me and you, that [by which] ye may know that I am the Lord your God,” the Creator of all things.

In the second chapter of Ephesians, eighth to tenth verses, we read, “For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

You need not expect to get any good works out of yourself. You have been trying. The evolutionist tries and is always trying without accomplishing it. Why go about trying to do good works, when you know you fail? Listen. There will never be any good thing in you of any kind whatever from now till the world’s end, except it is created there by the Creator Himself, by His word, which has in it the creative energy. ***Do not forget that. Do you want to walk in good***

works when you go out of this house? It can be done only by being created in Jesus Christ unto those good works. Stop trying. Look to the Creator and receive His creative word. “Let the word of God dwell in you richly,” then those good works will appear; you will be a Christian. Then, because you live with the Creator and are in the presence of the creative energy, you will have that pleasant, quiet peace and genuine strength and building up that belong to a Christian.

When He tells you that “we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them,” then recognize the Creator, recognize only the good works that are created in you, paying no attention whatever to any work that is not created there, because there is nothing good but what is created by the Lord.

Now you are created new in Christ Jesus. He says so. Thank Him that it is so. What! Will you be an evolutionist on that verse? That is the present tense, “We are his workmanship.” We are created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Are you? The word is spoken. ***It is the creative word. How much time are you going to allow between that word of God and your being created new?*** Of the creation in the beginning, you said that any man who allows even a minute to pass between the word and the thing is an evolutionist. What are you now as to this word of God, which creates men in Christ Jesus unto good works? Are you an evolutionist here? Come, let us all be creationists.

Do you not see that in this way it will not require a long, tedious wearing process to be made ready to meet the Lord in glory? So many people are looking at themselves. They know that, in the nature of things it must take them an exceedingly long time to get fully ready to meet Him. ***If it is done by evolution, it will never be done. But when it is done by creation, it will be both surely and quickly done.***

That word I have before referred to is the word everyone here may take to himself. “While so many are hovering about the mystery of faith and godliness, they could solve the matter by proclaiming abroad [by telling it out], ‘Jesus Christ is my portion forever.’”

Do you see how much we have been evolutionists? shall we quit? Come now, let us be creationists and be done with it. Let us be Sabbath-keepers truly. Let us believe the Lord. He speaks forgiveness. He speaks a clean heart. He speaks holiness; He creates it. Let Him create it in you. Stop being an evolutionist and let that creative word work for you, let that creative energy work in you, that which the word pronounces, and before you leave this house, God can get you ready to meet Him. Indeed, in that very thing you do meet Him. And when you have thus met Him and do thus meet Him every day, are you not then ready to meet Him? Do you believe that? ***You believe He made the worlds when He spoke, that light came by His word when He spoke, and that the leper was “immediately” cleansed when he spoke, but with yourself you think considerable time must elapse between the time when the word is spoken and the fact is accomplished. O, why will you be an evolutionist? Creation, creation—that is the thing.***

You and I are to call people to the supper; we are to say to all people, “Come, for all things are now ready.” ***How can I call to a man that all things are now ready, when I myself am not ready?*** It is a falsehood to start with. My words will not reach him. They are but an empty sound. But O, when there is in that call the creative energy of ***the word that has made us ready, that has cleansed us from sin, that has created us unto good works, that holds us as the sun is held in the course which God has marked out***—then when we go forth and say to the world lying in wickedness, “Come, for all things are now ready,” they will hear. They will hear in the call the tones of the voice of the Good Shepherd, and will be cheered to come

to Him for creative energy for themselves, to make them new creatures and prepare them for the supper to which they have been called.

This is where we are in this world's history. God's mark is being set upon the people. But remember, He will never set His mark upon one who is not cleansed from every defilement. God will not set His seal to something that is not true, that is not good. Would you ask Him to set His seal to righteousness that is altogether unrighteousness? You would not have the face to do that. You know that He is too righteous to do such a thing. Then He must cleanse you so that He can put His seal to His own work. He cannot put His seal to your work. His seal belongs only to a document which

He Himself has approved. Let Him write His character upon your heart and then He can set His seal there. He can write His seal of approval upon your heart, only when His creative word has accomplished its purpose in your heart.

You can see in what a Presence we are; you can see in a measure how long it would take half to exhaust such a subject as this. But, brethren, when we do stop, let us stop in the presence of creation. Let us be no more evolutionists. ***Let not a moment pass between the word of God spoken to you and the accomplishment of the thing in you. Thus, living in the presence of creation, walking with the Creator, upheld by creative power, inspired by the creative energy—why,***

with a people such as that, God can move the world in a little while.

If at the beginning you thought this was a queer subject for such an occasion as today [it was the closing service of the week of prayer] ***you can now see that it is a strictly present truth.*** There are only the two ways. There is no halfway ground. ***Every man and woman in the world is either a creationist or an evolutionist. Evolution is infidelity; it is death. Creation is Christianity; it is life.*** Choose Creation, Christianity, and Life, that you may live. Let us be creationists only and creationists forever. And let all the people say, Amen (Review and Herald, 2/21/1899)



AN ENCOURAGING LETTER

As we pursue truth we often find that we do not always see things the same way as others do. Sometimes it is because we really are on different sides of the fence, but quite often the problem is that we have not closely examined what the other person is saying. Again it may be simply that one person is emphasizing one aspect of truth which another feels should not be given such prominence, or perhaps the objection is based on misinformation. Whatever the reasons, it is always heartening when we find that there are those who are willing to read carefully and to consider prayerfully before coming to a final conclusion and even more encouraging when we find a spirit which is willing to reconsider even after having made a first decision. The letter which follows is from one such person and after reading it you will understand why we were much encouraged when we received it. May God help us all to be true Bereans in our approach to truth. We did not obtain permission to print this letter so we have withheld the name of the person who wrote it.

Dear David,

First of all I want to ask that you please disregard my letter which I wrote a couple of weeks back, asking that you take me off your mailing list! I do want to receive your paper. The last one I received was your Nov. 2005 one, so please be sure I get the next one! Thank you.

I reacted much too hastily and I regret it. I really had read very little of the paper and decided that I was not going to read it and didn't want it any more. Well, praise the Lord, my son did read the whole paper and I reconsidered and did likewise and as I carefully and prayerfully read, I saw deep truth and beauty in the study that you presented.

Praise God! Praise God! May He lead us ever onward and upward in Christ Jesus and give us the strength and courage to stand in Him. For that is surely the only place that we can stand for truth.

May God bless you

Quotes to Ponder

Be careful, exceedingly careful as to how you dwell upon the human nature of Christ. **Do not set Him before the people as a man with the propensities of sin.** He is the second Adam. The first Adam was created a pure, sinless being, without a taint of sin upon him; he was in the image of God. He could fall, and he did fall through transgressing. Because of sin, **his posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience. But Jesus Christ was the only begotten Son of God.** He took upon Himself human nature, and was tempted in all points as human nature is tempted. He could have sinned; He could have fallen, but not for one moment was there in Him an evil propensity. He was assailed with temptations in the wilderness, as Adam was assailed with temptations in Eden.

Bro. Baker, avoid every question in relation to the humanity of Christ which is liable to be misunderstood. Truth lies close to the track of presumption. In treating upon the humanity of Christ, you need to guard strenuously every assertion, lest your words be taken to mean more than they imply, and thus you lose or dim the clear perceptions of His humanity as combined with divinity. His birth was a miracle of God; for, said the angel, "Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great and shall be called the son of the Highest; and the Lord shall give unto him the throne of his Father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing that I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

These words are not addressed to any human being, except to the Son of the Infinite God. **Never, in any way, leave the slightest impression upon human minds that a taint of, or inclination to corruption rested upon Christ,** or that He in any way yielded to corruption. He was tempted in all points like as man is tempted, yet **He is called that holy thing.** It is a mystery that is left unexplained to mortals that Christ could be tempted in all points like as we are, and yet be without sin. The incarnation of Christ has ever been, and will ever remain a mystery. That which is revealed, is for us and for our children, but **let every human being be warned from**

the ground of making Christ altogether human, such an one as ourselves: for it cannot be. The exact time when humanity blended with divinity, it is not necessary for us to know. We are to keep our feet on the rock, Christ Jesus, as God revealed in humanity.

I perceive that there is danger in approaching subjects which dwell on the humanity of the Son of the infinite God. He did humble Himself when He saw He was in fashion as a man, that He might understand the force of all temptations wherewith man is beset.

The first Adam fell: the second Adam held fast to God and His word under the most trying circumstances, and His faith in His Father's goodness, mercy, and love did not waver for one moment. "It is written" was His weapon of resistance, and it is the sword of the Spirit which every human being is to use. "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me"—**nothing to respond to temptation.** Not one occasion has been given in response to His manifold temptations. Not once did Christ step on Satan's ground, to give him any advantage. Satan found nothing in Him to encourage his advances." {13MR 19.3}

"The enmity put between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman was supernatural. **With Christ the enmity was in one sense natural; in another sense it was supernatural,** as humanity and divinity were combined. And never was the enmity developed to such a marked degree as when Christ became an inhabitant of this earth. **Never before had there been a being upon the earth who hated sin with so perfect a hatred as did Christ.** He had seen its deceiving, infatuating power upon the holy angels, and all His powers were enlisted against it." {Lift Him Up 28.3}

"The Saviour took upon Himself the infirmities of humanity and lived a sinless life, that men might have no fear that because of the weakness of human nature they could not overcome. Christ came to make us "partakers of the divine nature," and **His life declares that humanity, combined with divinity, does not commit sin.**" {MH 180.5}

"Christ had two natures, the nature of a man and the nature of God. In him divinity and humanity were combined. Upon his mediatorial work hangs the hope of the perishing world. **No one but Christ has ever succeeded in living a perfect life, in living a pure, spotless character.** He exhibited a perfect humanity, combined with deity; and by preserving each nature distinct, he has given to the world a representation of the character of God and the character of a perfect man. He shows us what God is, and what man may become—godlike in character." {GCB, October 1, 1899 par. 20}

A New Home Soon

For the past two years the Restoration Ministries Publishing department has been operating out of rented premises. Before that we operated from the homes of Brothers David Clayton and Howard Williams. As we have endeavoured to produce booklets, tracts, audio and video tapes etc. we have felt the need of a permanent place from which we could operate. This is necessary to store materials and equipment as well as so that we can organize things in a way which will enable us to work more efficiently.

When we first started publishing we never had any expectation or ambition that the ministry should be any more than simply a little publishing project operating out of a room in my (David Clayton's) home. However, as the Lord has increased our responsibilities and challenges, it has become evident that it is His will that we should expand our operations. Among other things, we recently made an arrangement with a local cable provider to obtain the use of one channel for our exclusive use. The coverage of this provider is not very large since he operates only in our local town and environs, but still, it will probably

give us a potential audience of more than two thousand people (rough estimate). However, there is another cable provider in the Kingston area who is interested in receiving our sermons (he already aired a few which we supplied him dealing with the subject of the godhead). He has a much wider coverage. For several years we have been interested in preparing a series for lo-



cal television but for one reason or another we were not able to get off the ground. We hope that this start with the cable channel will give us the springboard to move on to national TV before too long. Anyway, the point is that one of the things which has become necessary is that we should have

a room dedicated to audio and video production.

In light of all this we are happy to report that some months ago Brother Howard Williams donated a space large enough to put up a building with floor space of 1200 square feet. We have already started work on this building and have put the walls up and put on the roof. The outside walls still need to be rendered, the floor needs to be tiled, the ceiling needs to be done and the plumbing and electrical work need to be done. There is still a lot of work to be done but the progress so far has been encouraging.

When this building is finished we will have one large room for the office area and to display and store our publications, another for the printing equipment and materials and another dedicated to audio/video production.

We just wanted you to know what has been happening here and to let you know that we do appreciate your prayers. A special thanks to those of you who have been instruments in the hand of God in enabling us to get this far.



REMEMBER

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April 13-17, 2006 (The Easter Week-end)

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There never was a time in the life of any man when of himself he had power to resist temptation. We cannot do it. That proves that we must have a life different from our natural life in order to resist sin at all. That must be a life that sin has never touched and can never touch. Repeat the glorious words over and over again, "His life is mine, I cannot be touched by sin...." (*E.J. Waggoner - Studies on Romans no. 9*)

The Rest Which Remains

Continued from page 5

Spirit?" And that is the question I want to ask us all. How do we expect to receive the Holy Spirit? Is it by gradually becoming better, by fasting and praying and similar works for days and weeks and months and years until heaven knows when, or simply by faith? How do we expect to receive it?

Again he says in verse 3,

"Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"

When he says "the flesh" what is he

referring to? He is referring to works! He is saying, "you began by faith, why have you gone back to works?"

In verse 5 he goes on to say,

"He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?"

How does a man perform miracles? Many times we have heard the arguments: "Well we don't see anybody raising the dead, we don't see anybody healing the sick, we don't see anybody prophesying, what is the reason? Is it that we are not righteous enough, we are not holy enough, nobody is dedicated enough?" Paul says, "you foolish people, don't you know it was just

by faith that these things were done? It was not by any work on your part, it was just by faith, you silly people!" And two thousand years later we are still in the same hole! Striving to become righteous enough so that we can one day perform a miracle, so that God can use us.

But the wonderful truth is that through faith we have already reached the pinnacle of human existence in Christ Jesus! What a privilege God has given to His sons and daughters, what a wonderful thing it is to know that we are complete in him.



Open Face

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