

CHRISTADELPHIANS SELF-CRITICIZED

In the latter part of February, Brother E.W. Farrar sent a "letter out to several brethren and sisters, in Canada and U.S.A. from East, West, North and South", asking them for a brief and publishable reply to this question: "What worries you most about Christadelphia today?"

(Brother Farrar had seen, in "one of the national magazines", a like question answered concerning "America".)

In kindly offering for publication the replies he received, Brother Farrar also included, in his letter, "some comments and suggestions", one of which was that the readers might be invited to "submit their thoughts on this subject".

What worries you most about Christadelphia today?

What worries me most, is the general apathy, smugness and self-complacency of Christadelphia today. Gone is the crusading spirit of bygone days. Our attitudes are more passive than active and we seem to be content to perform a minimum of effort in maintaining the Lightstand.

We are losing our identity because we minimize, rather than emphasize, the differences between ourselves and the world in which we live.

Bro. Paul L. Safford, taken from the compilation of his writings -
"Consider your Ways"

THE SANCTUARY-KEEPER



*A Magazine for the Exposition and Defense
of The Holy Scriptures*

Fellowship

**CONSISTENCY IN FELLOWSHIP
APPLICATIONS**

**AN APPEAL TO REASON ON APOSTOLIC
FELLOWSHIP**

**THE LAW OF UNCLEANNESS AND THE NEED
FOR SEPARATION**

EDITORIAL FLYLEAF

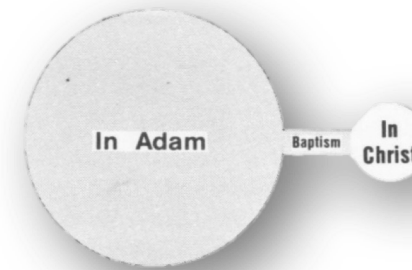
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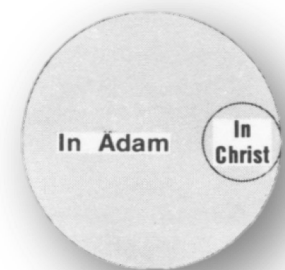
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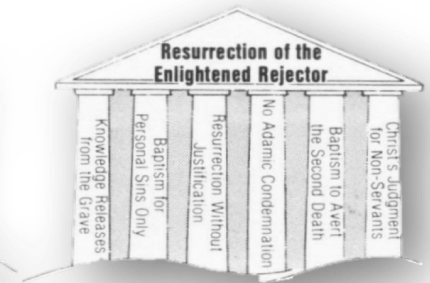
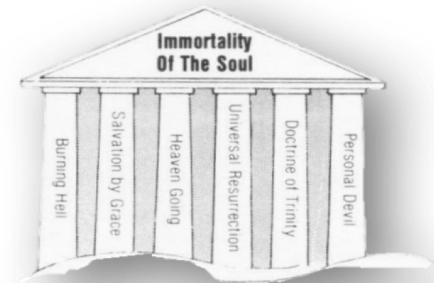
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**Federal Relationship
Unamended Teaching**
 EITHER in Adam OR in Christ



**Federal Relationship
Amended Teaching**
 In Adam WHILE in Christ



THE ORIGIN AND EXTENT OF THE KINGDOM OF MEN

In taking a general survey of the contents of the Book of Daniel, it may be seen that two great powers are the principal subjects of its predictions. The one is styled the KINGDOM OF MEN (Dan. 4:17) and the other the KINGDOM OF GOD (Dan. 2:44; 4:3; 7:27)...It will be seen that the Kingdom of men has been diversified in its constitution, extent and throne since its foundation by Nimrod to the present time. It has nevertheless been the same Nimroudian kingdom with Babylon and Assyria for its characteristics. (Exposition of Daniel, pp. 7,8)

THE FEET OF THE IMAGE

While the head, breast, arms, belly, thighs, legs and toes have all existed, the feet have not yet been formed; so that it has hitherto been impossible for the colossal image to stand erect as Nebuchadnezzar saw it in his dream...It is therefore, the mission of the Autocrat (of Russia) to form the feet and set up the image before the world in all its excellent brightness and terribleness of form; that all men subject to the kingdom of Babylon may worship the work of its creator's power. (Exposition of Daniel, p. 87)



THE SANCTUARY - KEEPER

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"Ye shall keep the charge of the sanctuary, and the charge of the altar"

Num. 18:5

"Ye are...an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices."

I Peter 2:5

"Thou hast kept My Word and hast not denied My Name" - Rev. 3:8

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INTRODUCTION TO THIS ISSUE

WE begin this issue of the SK by stating the obvious - the Unamended Community is divided, and it would appear irreparably. Not only is it divided, but it is marked by a dramatic shift in the very spiritual foundations that have characterized it since the revival of the Truth in the 19th century.

What is the problem? We certainly could speak of the various falsehoods that have been introduced into the Unamended community - NASU & UA08, ecumenicalism, theistic evolution, eternal life now & kingdom now heresies, as well as general Laodiceanism and worldliness. But these are only pieces of a much larger issue; the fundamental disagreement over the Doctrine of Fellowship by which such falsehood is either tolerated or rejected. With the rise of latter-day doctrinal and moral challenges to the Household, two

completely divergent understandings and applications of how to deal with error (or not to deal with it) have been made manifest.

On one side is the general view held by the majority. That being the espoused tolerance or ignoring of error in order to preserve fellowship ties; convinced that matters of fellowship can only be resolved by Christ when he returns.

We stand on the other side in opposition, as the minority view. It is our belief that error (whether personally believed or tolerated) in fact creates a breach in fellowship - first with God and His Son and by extension between brethren. It is our conviction that disfellowship with errorists and those who support them is the responsibility of all those who claim to contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. There are two reasons for this: 1) So that the errorist might see the full gravity of his error and turn away from it, and 2) To act as a defensive measure to protect and strengthen the Household from the leaven of falsehood so that the Body of Believers is not corrupted from the purity of the One Faith, thus preserving fellowship with the Father and Son.

Further complicating matters is the view of some who claim to believe as we do "in principle" in regard to fellowship. They share with us a disapproval for the emergence of recent falsehoods, but view our application of disfellowship to both the errorists and those that show toleration towards error as "un-Christ-like", "unmerciful" and "too extreme".

The divide has become so great and unworkable over the last few years that we now in fact have a defacto division of two separate fellowships under the "Unamended" name and Statement of Faith. Due to the actions of several individual ecclesias, individuals and even a Bible School clearly defining their fellowship positions, a clear line of demarcation has been made. An effort has been made to maintain Scriptural command as followed by our early Christadelphian brethren, and to separate from the growing tide of error and tolerances being allowed throughout the general Unamended Body.

The matter is most dire as we watch an already small Unamended Community made even smaller due to general apathy and intentional delusion. There are those of us who are unwilling to follow attempts to broaden and dilute a path that will never be anything other than the "straight and narrow way." Such a critical and non-negotiable matter as Fellowship cannot be left simply as a matter of opinion or surrendered to the inconsistencies and whims of "ecclesial autonomy". Fellowship directly impacts salvation, and therefore is a matter of life and death.

Though it is clear at this point that no resolution seems attainable, it certainly remains a most pressing issue. We must make sure that, as individuals, we align ourselves with the revealed will of God.

We have dealt with issues of fellowship at great length in the SK over the last few years, but like all fundamental matters, it is important that we continue to address it. We devote this issue of the SK to the matter once again with special emphasis addressing the errors of the "Pearce/Gates", 1950's era booklet on fellowship. The paper has been revived in recent years as an instruction manual to justify Amended/Unamended unity, and to the tolerance of doctrinal error for the sake of preserving associations. The articles of this quarter's SK are no doubt lengthy, but please take the time to carefully read and consider the warnings and doctrinal instruction contained therein. - A.T.

CONSISTENCY IN FELLOWSHIP APPLICATIONS



MOST true believers of God's Word have come to the belief that the time for the return of God's only begotten Son to set up His Kingdom on Earth is nigh upon us. We try to encourage each other in these last days of Gentile times to be watchful and to live up to the requirements of our high and holy calling. There are many distractions in this evil world that we live in. We realize that these distractions are provided to hone our characters to that required by the Almighty.

As we look around the Unamended Christadelphian community in these last days, we see many distractions, divisions and other stressful situations within the very group of Brethren that should be pulling together in these last days. Most of these distractions and stressful situations arise out of a mixture of fellowship policies and fellowship applications that are found in the various Ecclesias and Bible Schools and Gatherings. Many Unamended brethren will recognize that there has been an influx of false doctrines into the Body that are in direct contrast to basic fundamental doctrines of Truth that we hold so dearly. The inconsistencies in which these false doctrines are being addressed by the Brethren is the root cause of our Ecclesial issues in these latter days.

What are the driving forces that have caused such a diverse application of Biblical fellowship practices? Some of these forces will be reviewed in the comments below. Some brethren, including this writer, believes that the Breaking of Bread service, the Memorial Service, is the pinnacle point of the aspect of fellowship. There are indeed other aspects of fellowship that could be addressed, but the comments below will be presented from the aspect of the inconsistencies of inviting/allowing erring brethren to participate in the Breaking of Bread and to sit at the Lord's Table for the remembrance of His Son's life, death and resurrection.

If we believe Fellowship means having things in common and if we believe that the Breaking of Bread is the pinnacle of a service that implies

commonality in basic doctrines, then we should be able to see that we are stating by our actions of Breaking Bread with brethren that we have things in common with those with whom we Break Bread at the Lord's Table. Unfortunately, this basic principle is not believed by all.

False fellowship beliefs

Here are some of the diverse false beliefs that have become part of the ongoing discussions regarding fellowship at the Table of the Lord.

1. Fellowship is not a first principle doctrine of Truth.
2. Fellowship in this age can only be defined by the teachings of the Apostles.
3. Brethren can break bread with errorists and not be in fellowship with them.
4. Bible Schools should have a more open fellowship policy than local Ecclesias.
5. Bible School Committees are not as aware of Fellowship issues in the Unamended Community as the Ecclesial Elders.
6. Brethren can break bread with doctrinal errorists as long as the doctrinal errorists are not on the speaking platform.
7. Withdrawals from fellowship at the Table of the Lord can only be done for actions of misconduct or immorality.
8. Ecclesias cannot tell visiting brethren that they are not in fellowship.
9. Reading an Ecclesia's fellowship policy is all that is needed in order to promote spiritual unity among attending brethren. If brethren in error partake, then the condemnation is on them.
10. Elders of an Ecclesia/Bible School do not have the responsibility to remain alert and watchful of the things that are occurring in the Brotherhood.
11. Ecclesias must maintain "Ecclesial Autonomy" in their application of their Ecclesial fellowship policies.
12. Brethren attending Bible Schools where doctrinal errorists are present and are allowed to the Table only do this once a year so there are no fellowship issues.
13. There should be no block dis-fellowship of entire Ecclesias, regardless of the belief/actions of all of the Ecclesial members.
14. Brethren are looked at as obedient servants of God even when they allow doctrinal errorists in their midst.
15. Toleration of error is not a sin.
16. We have always broken bread with the Amended.
17. Brethren of Christ cannot leave their home Ecclesia regardless if there are doctrinal errorists in their midst or not.

CONSISTENCY IN FELLOWSHIP APPLICATIONS

18. Parents will break bread with their children regardless of the presence of doctrinal errorists.
19. Brethren are acting as “police” to keep other brethren away from the Table of the Lord.
20. Brethren do not have the authority to tell other brethren that they cannot break bread at the Lord’s Table.
21. Brethren who believe that there are errorists at the Table are only required to tell the errorists that they are not in fellowship with them. If the errorists continue to break bread, then the first brother has done all that is required.
22. Every individual must use his own conscience to decide if he can break bread with errorists at the Table.
23. We all basically believe the same things so what difference does it make if we break bread with doctrinal errorists.
24. We agree with your fellowship policy but not the application of the policy.

Fellowship Facts

The following beliefs are put forth as a contrast to the preceding statements:

1. Fellowship **IS** a first principle of Biblical Truth.
2. There **IS** a sin of toleration.
3. Ecclesial Autonomy has no place for consideration in the subject of Biblical Fellowship. We all are members of the One Body and therefore must be aware of and be ready to address doctrinal errors whenever we are exposed to them.
4. All leaven should be removed from the Body of Christ.
5. We **must** withdraw from all those who believe or teach doctrinal error.
6. We **must** withdraw from all those who invite/allow doctrinal errorists to the Table of the Lord.
7. Brethren are disobedient to God’s commandments if they knowingly allow doctrinal errorists to the Table of the Lord.
8. The requirements regarding the subject of Fellowship and the Breaking of Bread are taught throughout the Scriptures and the whole counsel of God should be studied to obtain the correct understanding of this important subject.
9. Fellowship and the Breaking of Bread should only be conducted with Brethren who are like minded with each other on basic fundamental doctrines.
10. Fellowship at Bible Schools and Gatherings should not be opened to brethren who hold or teach false doctrines or to brethren who support/ tolerate/allow these doctrinal errorists to the Lord’s Table.

11. Brethren have a responsibility to watch the events in the Body and warn the Body as often as necessary.
12. The belief, teaching and toleration of false doctrine is considered evil in the eyes of the Lord and therefore we should separate ourselves from individuals who continue to practice these evil actions.

It is the belief of this writer that the latter set of statements present a more scripturally correct view of the important subject of Fellowship. I realize that many brethren may disagree with this statement. For those that do disagree, let us look at a few simple questions. Fellowship matters have been made to be very complicated in these last days. The correct approach can be summarized in just a few simple yes or no questions. Some brethren may not see the simplicity in these questions and may believe that specific circumstances define the way these questions should be answered. This is misplaced logic and reasoning. Discernment between good and evil can only have two answers. It is good and scripturally correct or it is evil and in violation of God's commandments, scripturally incorrect. Circumstances cannot add levels of gray or uncertainty to the equation of what is right and what is wrong. It is either good or it is evil. Specific circumstances of a specific event may impact how we address the situation, but these circumstances do not or should not impact the scriptural determination of good and evil. The Old Testament teachings regarding sins of ignorance teach us a valuable lesson in regard to this discussion. If an Israelite sinned in ignorance, he was still guilty of the sin, even though he may not have been aware of his sin. Once knowledge was obtained in regards to the committed sin, he still had to offer a sacrifice for the sin. The same principle is applicable to today's believers. Everything can be classified as good or evil, obedient or disobedient, right or wrong in the eyes of Yahweh. There is no middle ground. We are not commanded to discern between good and evil and something in the middle. There are only and can only be two choices. We ask our readers to keep this simple principle in mind as we consider the questions below.

Specific false doctrines that have been introduced into the Unamended Christadelphian community have been individually addressed within the pages of the Sanctuary Keeper magazine from the days of Brethren J.J. Andrew and James Stanton and continue through the current Sanctuary Keeper publication. The following questions and comments are intended to be considered and reviewed in a more global approach to the acceptance at the Table of the Lord of any brother/sister believing or teaching error subversive to the doctrines of Truth that constitute our One Hope.

As we answer these questions, we need to be able to support our beliefs from a scriptural basis. We should always be ready to give an answer for the hope that lies within us. All conversations regarding fellowship, withdrawal, inclusivity, exclusivity and the breaking of bread should be focused on these simple questions. Prove all things and hold fast to that which is true. I Thessalonians 5:21.

There is one basic fundamental question that is at the heart of any discussion on fellowship or Breaking of Bread. It doesn't matter how many personal relationships or past historical actions or writings from any brother get introduced into this subject, there is only one question that must be answered. **Is it scripturally right or scripturally wrong to break bread at the Table of the Lord with brethren who believe or teach false doctrine?** This is as simple as it gets. How one answers this question should dictate the subsequent actions that are to be taken in regard to brethren that we join with at the Table of the Lord.

If a brother or sister believes that it is scripturally right to invite or accept doctrinal errorists to the Table of the Lord, then these brethren should be able to sit down with any individual regardless of their belief or religious affiliation. These brethren are truly promoting Open Fellowship and should have no problem breaking bread with those in the Amended community, the CGAF, WCF or Methodists, Catholics, Baptists or anybody from another denomination.

If a brother or sister in Christ believes that it is scripturally wrong to break bread with doctrinal errorists, then they have two choices. The first option, which is the only scripturally correct option, is to withdraw/separate and abstain from participating in the Breaking of Bread with these Doctrinal Errorists. The second option is to knowingly continue to participate in the Breaking of Bread with these Doctrinal Errorists. Brethren who follow this second option are willfully and knowingly sinning by their deliberate disobedience to God's Word. What does God say about willful sinners? Hebrews 10:26 states – *“For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin”*.

Since God has stated that there is no more sacrifice for willful sins, then He has basically disassociated Himself from these willful sinners. Brethren who choose option one above should also disassociate themselves at the Table of the Lord with those who are willful sinners. Yahweh is not pleased with doctrinal errorists or willful sinners. How can He be pleased with brethren who welcome either the doctrinal errorists or the willful sinners to the Table of the Lord?

Supporting Questions

Our basic fundamental question as stated above has many supporting questions that should also be considered so that we can learn to be consistent in our applications of our fellowship policies. Here is a short list of these other supporting questions.

1. Is it scripturally correct to believe that there is a doctrine of fellowship and that this is a basic foundation doctrine of the Truth?
2. Is it scripturally correct to believe that individual brethren are required to discern between good and evil?
3. Is it scripturally correct to believe that brethren are to abstain from all appearances of evil?

4. Is it scripturally correct to believe that the Scriptures teach that the belief and teaching of false doctrine is considered evil?
5. Is it scripturally correct to believe that the Scriptures teach that the breaking of bread with those who hold/teach/believe false doctrine in the Ecclesia is considered evil?
6. Is it scripturally correct to believe that there is a sin of toleration?
7. Is it scripturally correct to separate/withdraw/disassociate from brethren who are deliberately disobedient to God's commandments?

Inconsistent fellowship applications

Here are some current examples of inconsistent fellowship application.

1. Ecclesia A will not break bread with visiting doctrinal errorists at the home Ecclesia of Ecclesia A. Ecclesia A has asked their members to not break bread with doctrinal errorists when their members attend Bible Schools and Gatherings away from the home location of Ecclesia A. Therefore, by their actions, Ecclesia A is stating that it is scripturally incorrect to break bread with doctrinal errorists. However, Ecclesia A has no fellowship issues with visiting brethren from Ecclesia B who does break bread with doctrinal errorists at their Ecclesia or at Bible Schools, and Gatherings. Ecclesia A is stating by their fellowship actions of breaking bread with Ecclesia B members that they are in agreement with and are at one with Ecclesia B. If it is scripturally incorrect for the members of Ecclesia A to break bread with doctrinal errorists, then why is it not scripturally incorrect for Ecclesia B's members to break bread with doctrinal errorists?
2. Ecclesia C does not accept the NASU agreement or the UA08 agreement. However, they will break bread with members of the Amended community when the Amended visit Ecclesia C. How can this be considered consistent? Ecclesias such as Ecclesia C should go ahead and declare themselves as being UA08 or Commended Ecclesias.
3. Ecclesia D declares themselves to be an Unamended Ecclesia, but they will allow Unamended brethren who teach, believe or support the doctrinal errors of the day to the Lord's Table. Ecclesia D will also invite brethren who hold, teach or believe these false doctrines to their speaker platform. How can an Unamended Ecclesia break bread with individuals who believe doctrines contrary to the principles of Truth and still call themselves Unamended? How can an Unamended Ecclesia invite doctrinal errorists to their speaker platform and still call themselves Unamended?

Scriptural commands

We would like to present several verses that speak about the reasoning of this article based on the Scriptural commandments from Yahweh.

CONSISTENCY IN FELLOWSHIP APPLICATIONS

1. Requirements to discern between good and evil:
 - a. I Kings 3:9 - *“Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may **discern between good and bad**: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?”*
 - b. Ezekiel 44:23 - *“And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to **discern between the unclean and the clean**.”*
 - c. Hebrews 5:14 - *“But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to **discern both good and evil**.”*
2. Requirements to abstain from evil
 - a. I Thessalonians 5:22 - *“**Abstain from all appearance of evil**.”*
 - b. Isaiah 5:20 - *“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”*
 - c. Deuteronomy 13:1-5 - *“If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him. And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. **So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee**.”*
 - d. II Timothy 2:19 - *“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, **Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity**.”*
 - e. James 1:21 - *“Wherefore **lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness**, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”*
 - f. Psalms 119:10 - *“**I have refrained my feet from every evil way**, that I might keep thy word.”*
 - g. Psalms 36:1-4 - *“The **transgression of the wicked** saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes. For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful. The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, and to do good. He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way that is not good; **he abhorreth not evil**.”*

- h. Amos 5:14-15 - **“Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live: and so the LORD, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken. Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: it may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.”**
 - i. II Kings 17:13 - **“Yet the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.”**
 - j. Proverbs 17:15 - **“He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the LORD.”**
 - k. Jude 1:3 - **“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.”**
 - l. I Corinthians 15:33 - **“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.”**
 - m. Proverbs 16:17 - **“The highway of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul.”**
3. Requirements to Separate and Withdraw From Evil
- a. Amos 3:3 - **“Can two walk together, except they be agreed?”**
 - b. II John 1:9-11- **“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.”**
 - c. Ephesians 5:6-7 - **“Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them.”**
 - d. I Timothy 5:22 - **“Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.”**
 - e. I Corinthians 5:6-7 - **“Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.”**
 - f. Exodus 34:25 - **“Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven; neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the passover be left unto the morning.”**
 - g. Revelation 18:4-5 - **“And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins,**

and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.”

- h. II Thessalonians 3:6 - “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that **ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly**, and not after the tradition which he received of us.” II Thessalonians 3:14-15 - “And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and **have no company with him**, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.”
- i. Proverbs 24:21 - “My son, fear thou the LORD and the king: and **meddle not with them that are given to change.**”
- j. Galatians 1:8 - “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, **let him be accursed.**”
- k. Titus 3:10-11 - “A man that is **an heretick after the first and second admonition reject**; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.”
- l. Romans 1:18 - “**For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness**”
- m. II Corinthians 6:14-18 - “**Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers**: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my 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”
- n. Acts 19:9 - “But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, **he departed from them, and separated the disciples**, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.”
- o. II Timothy 3:1-5 - “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: **from such turn away.**”

- p. Proverbs 24:1 - *“Be not thou envious against evil men, **neither desire to be with them.**”*
- q. Proverbs 14:7 - *“**Go from the presence of a foolish man,** when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge.”*
- r. Proverbs 13:20 - *“He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but **a companion of fools shall be destroyed.**”*
- s. Romans 16:17 - *“Now I beseech you, brethren, **mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.**”*
- t. I Corinthians 5:11-13 - *“But now I have written unto you **not to keep company,** if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore **put away from among yourselves that wicked person.**”*
- u. I Timothy 6:3-5 - *“If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: **from such withdraw thyself.**”*

In conclusion brethren, we need to get back to the very fundamentals of God's requirements when discussing fellowship matters including who we should invite, allow or tolerate to sit at the Lord's Table in the breaking of bread. Are our actions taken in regard to fellowship scripturally correct or scripturally incorrect? All fellowship actions that are to be made are based on how this one simple little question is answered. We must put aside our personalities, our personal relationships, our personal characteristics and try to get every brother and sister to answer the questions detailed above. Our fellowship actions in these tense times must be made from a scriptural basis. When fellowship matters are discussed, we need to address the very basic questions above. Take no other approach. Put aside all other form or arguments and reasoning. Steer the conversation back to this simple principle – Are our actions scripturally correct or scripturally incorrect?

B. Henderson

AN APPEAL TO REASON ON APOSTOLIC FELLOWSHIP

A Response to the Pearce/Gates Booklet on Apostolic Fellowship and Withdrawal



Part I Manifesting Truth in the absence of Divine inspiration or the operation of the Holy Spirit

Preface

IN the mid 1940's to the mid 1950's, there was a widespread effort in England to effect reunion between Amended, Unamended and other groups into what we recognize today as the "Central Amended Fellowship." One of the tools to effect that reunion was a booklet written by Graham Pearce and H. C. Gates entitled *"Apostolic Teaching on Fellowship and Withdrawal."* At first, the book was met with great resistance, and the brethren who wrote the book were disfellowshipped by a number of ecclesias, including their own, as reported in the Christadelphian magazine. Their views were found *"to be contrary to Apostolic doctrine and to be unworkable, tending to disrupt ecclesial and inter-ecclesial life..."*

No matter, as the "genie was out of the bottle," and their theories swept like wildfire among the liberal minded who had gained the ascendancy. "Reunion" was accomplished at last. Sadly, the mantle has been taken up by the UA'08 fellowship in North America who use this document – posted as a "resource" on their website as a "touchstone" on fellowship. Moreover, the document has also been accepted by fellow unamended brethren and ecclesias as a document that should be followed when approaching fellowship and withdrawal issues (Example, *The Judaizers, Another Gospel,* p. 248 and

p. 254). Indeed, apparently the premise is that no offense is too great and that no false teaching is too ill as to necessitate withdrawing from any individual, and that when such does occur, it's to be viewed as being "unloving," "un-Christ-like" and "being judgmental." It has been promoted as a standard to which a great majority of those claiming to be Christ's brethren have acquiesced. Regrettably, this abandonment of God manifestation through the Word of Truth and a "tipping the hat," so to speak, to "flesh manifestation" is the root cause of the widespread disruption and division throughout the Unamended community today. As such, the position maintained by Pearce/Gates and those in their support with regard to fellowship is a position with which we can't agree; neither do we believe that the principles set forth in their work can be sustained from the Bible. For this reason, a series of articles which is to appear under the title above will serve not only as a rebuttal to the Pearce / Gates document on fellowship but as a reminder as to how the Truth should be manifested among us in these last days. With this preface, we have divided Part 1 of our work into the following areas:

- Introduction concerning Truth vs controversy
- Judging with "that which is complete"
- Interpreting the Scriptures: Line upon Line
- Doctrine and Walk are inseparable principles
- Ecclesial Eldership

Introduction concerning Truth vs controversy

When controversy arises in an ecclesia, dealing with an uncomfortable situation is never an easy task. From a merely human perspective, ignoring doctrinal error manifested morally, doctrinally or with regards to fellowship is far easier than facing problems that could result in a tear within the social fabric of the ecclesia. Again, that is a merely human perspective. The social fabric of an ecclesia is a joyful byproduct of the purity of the Truth, but it isn't our overriding concern; the Truth in its purity is our concern. How then should truth be held in its purity, particularly as to the role of ecclesial eldership in the absence of Divine inspiration or the operation of the Holy Spirit? The epistle of James gives us a good start as he specifically deals with the many human traits that are apt to rise-up and cause trouble within an ecclesia.

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy (James 3:17).

This passage establishes a sound basis: The Truth must first be held in its purity without respect of persons, be they favorite ecclesial members (present or past), life-long friends and acquaintances, beloved family members, parents, children, grandchildren, even spouses; the Truth must be held higher than them all. The principles of mercy, on the one hand, and correct judgment on the other, must be fairly applied to all regardless of our all too human preferences. When we fail to do this, the Divine perspective is at once compromised, and we can't discern the Truth, becoming blind leaders of the

blind. No matter how plain the Truth may be to everyone else, the flesh will bind us in darkness. *Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye* (Mar. 7:13).

There is only one antidote to the thinking of flesh, and that is the Word: *Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you* (Joh 15:3); *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.* (Joh 17:17). Here is the antidote, but it must be applied in a manner that captures the intent of the Divine reason without purposely avoiding or “*making of none effect*” the Word by picking and choosing what we like or by avoiding that which is Complete – the complete, inspired Word of God as a whole and not bits and pieces as we might choose making provision for the flesh (Rom. 13:14). This brings us to our first sub topic: *Judging with “that which is complete”*.

Judging with “that which is complete”

One of the first objections we might hear when attempting to deal with error in the ecclesia is the age old, “*we cannot judge these matters as we do not have apostolic authority nor the operation of the Holy Spirit among us. We must let God be the Judge!*” Indeed, God will be the judge! There is no argument there, but the Pearce / Gates document on fellowship presents this type of reasoning, i.e. “*there can be no replica of apostolic arrangements,*” in the face of overwhelming Scriptural instruction to the contrary which shows how these “arrangements” are in fact our instructions. From the Old Testament to the New, the Scriptures are consistent with encouragement as to how we must act courageously in our service to Yahweh in defense of His Truth. We don’t believe that the brethren who produced the *Apostolic Teaching on Fellowship and Withdrawal* document were ignorant of these things, but they lacked Scriptural courage in preference to a skewed position on “brotherly love” taking precedence over correct doctrine. Such a position will be a shallow defense when the Lord returns.

In stark contrast with the morally rudderless and wicked society in which we live, being completely devoid of judgment, the Scriptures lay down righteous judgment as a hallmark of the faithful. Concerning the patriarch Abraham, Moses recorded by the Spirit, “*For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him*” (Gen. 18:19). The Elohim saw the righteous judgment of Abraham and his seed as deeming them worthy of receiving intelligence in matters yet to be. In Abraham’s case, this immediately involved what was to transpire upon Sodom and Gomorrah. Yet for all the faithful – those who judge righteous judgment – this would involve the revelation of Yahweh’s plan and purpose (Amos 3:7).

The prophet Ezekiel leaves no question in this regard when describing those who exercise right judgement: “*...hath executed true judgment between man and man, Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my*

judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord GOD... That hath taken off his hand from the poor, that hath not received usury nor increase, **hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes**; he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live” (Ezek. 8:8, 9, 17).

In Exodus, Moses received the Divine instructions for the Tabernacle and Priestly attire: “*And thou shalt make **the breastplate of judgment** with cunning work; after the work of the ephod thou shalt make it; of gold, of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine twined linen, shalt thou make it*” (Exod. 28:15). The breastplate was made of the same material as the ephod but was doubled to represent both Jewish and Gentile communities united as one before Yahweh in “*faith and love*” (I Thes. 5:8). The material of the breastplate was doubled so that it could be inset with twelve precious stones to reflect Yahweh’s glory, and while being of the same number as the twelve tribes, they ultimately represent the true Israel of God – those who “*shall be mine, saith the LORD of Hosts, in that day when I make up my Jewels*” (Mal. 3:17). These antitypical “Jewels” worn over the chest, figuratively representing the heart, must not be devoid of judgment as is the case with our contemporaries in and of the world. Those who are of the world are incapable of judgment, being devoid of the light of the inspired Word. We, however, who are “children of light,” must make every attempt to form ourselves and our ecclesias into the Divine mold that we may truly be in the image of God and thereby reflect glory unto Him. This fashioning process requires the ability to render righteous judgment (Heb. *Mishpat*), which means, according to Strong’s concordance:

“properly a *verdict* (favorable or unfavorable) pronounced judicially, especially a *sentence* or formal decree (human or particularly divine *law*, individual or collectively), including the act, the place, the suit, the crime, and the penalty; abstractly *justice*, including a particular *right*, or *privilege* (statutory or customary), or even a *style*:....determination, discretion, disposing, due, fashion, form, to be judged, judgment, justice, (manner of) law... measure, (due) order, ordinance, right, sentence...”

Judgment, as such, isn’t something to be avoided with the popular “we cannot judge” mentality but is something that is absolutely required by every individual believer of faith in Yahweh’s Truth and every ecclesia of Christ to discern that which is true based upon the Divine standard of the Scriptures. Without proper judgment of Scriptural matters and the resulting manifestation in individuals, the Truth is lost.

The Psalmist has the following to say about judgment:

“The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment” (Psa. 37:30).

“But judgment shall return unto righteousness: and all the upright in heart shall follow it” (Psa. 94:15).

“Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times” (Psa. 106:3).

“Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments” (Psa. 119:66).

And from the Proverbs and Ecclesiastes:

“Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path. When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee” (Pro. 2:9-11).

“To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice” (Pro. 21:3).

“Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all things” (Pro. 28:5).

“Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man’s heart discerneth both time and judgment” (Ecc. 8:5).

In the view of the writers of this treatise, Isaiah sums up the matter when he states *“Learn to do well, seek judgment...”* (Isa. 1:17).

This perspective appears to be a far cry from the present popular stance of “we cannot judge”. Much to the contrary, if we desire to be a part of the Godly seed of Abraham, we must judge all things apart from determining the salvation of an individual. If, on the other hand, we have no basis for judging among ourselves due to a lack of apostolic authority, what could Paul have possibly meant when he said that *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works”* (2 Tim. 3:16-17)?

Let us dissect this verse a little:

- *“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God”* – the Word before us is inspired by God! It was not of any private interpretation or revelation but was God-given! (2 Peter 1:20).
- *“...and is profitable for doctrine...”* – “Doctrine,” from the Greek **didaskalia**, means instruction, doctrine, learning teaching, from the root **didaskalos**, meaning instructor, doctor, master, teacher. The Spirit Word is our instructor now, not the Holy Spirit which was sent in the absence of the complete Word to instruct the disciples. *“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you”* (Joh 14:26). Never was the Holy Spirit intended to be the only source of Divine instruction for all time but was necessary for the disciples of Christ in the first century as a witness of Divine Power and for instruction,

teaching and learning with regard to all things the Lord had spoken to them – *“whatsoever I have said unto you”* – thus, making the critical connection of the Old Testament with the atoning work of Christ. These *“necessary things”* were recorded in the Gospel writings and epistles which form the complete work of Divine instruction necessary for us today. This Divine Instruction makes Divine manifestation possible.

Paul to the Corinthians wrote that when the Scripture record was completed, that which was in part (i.e. the holy spirit gifts – some having gifts of teaching, some of prophecy, some of language, some of interpreting language, some of healing, etc.), would be done away (1 Cor. 13:8-10). The spirit gifts have ceased, but the Divine instruction – the Word – has been perfected. It's our sure guide for judging all matters, *“For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world”* (1 Cor. 11:31-32). This principle is as applicable individually as it is ecclesially – we must judge righteous judgment lest we be condemned with the rest of ungodly, unthinking, perishing flesh.

If, on the other hand, we can't judge anything upon the basis that we don't have the operation of the Holy Spirit to guide us, then our teaching or believing the “Truth” is in vain. If we cannot judge, we cannot discern, for discerning is judging. We judge between the false way of the flesh and the right way of God – the former way is death, the latter way is truth and life. If reaching a position of judging and discerning the Truth as such is deemed to be “unchristian,” “uncharitable” or “judgmental,” then indeed we've joined the ranks of the apostasy. Any who think thusly ought to cease troubling themselves with the burden of maintaining a lightstand and join with the nearest Church of their liking. It would certainly make better sense if those who believe we ought not to judge anything out of kind feelings to join affinity with those who most certainly can't judge anything out of gross darkness!

- *“...for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:”*
 - Reproof (***elegchos*** – proof, conviction, evidence)
 - Correction (***epanorthosis*** – a straightening up again, rectification)
 - Instruction (***paideia*** – tutorage, education, training)
 - Righteousness (***dikaiosune*** – equity of character, justification).

Thus, the Bible in our hands is the source of evidence that we need for rectification. When doctrine or walk bends low to human reasoning, the Word is for straightening it back. The Word is our trainer and educator toward all things divine, and its ample

manifestation in our thoughts and actions will serve for our justification from sin and a guidebook for judging all matters.

Interpreting the Scriptures: Line upon Line

One of the most beautiful aspects of the Bible is that the Spirit of God, speaking through holy men of old, has woven it all together like a magnificent tapestry, line upon line, the work of a master craftsman. No part may be taken out or may take precedence over another part. All the parts work together and are inseparable. They're mutually supportive and complementary as a complete work of instruction. Problems will naturally arise; therefore, when brethren place forced interpretations upon a passage (or several) of Scripture to support their claim while insisting that other said passages don't apply in such and such a case. This is the unfortunate pattern of the Pearce / Gates document on fellowship when treating with certain passages in order to support their theory while ignoring the "whole counsel" of Scripture. The following are some examples.

In the forward of the Pearce / Gates Document, the authors state that *"The Bible, especially the New Testament, is our guide, and our aim is to follow Apostolic methods. This is right..."*.

This premise, while appearing to be logical on the surface, takes the entire document on fellowship off the tracks and down the road of humanistic philosophy. The authors unfortunately lead the reader to the position that "Apostolic methods" consist only of the writings of the New Testament – a hallmark of the Apostasy – while, in fact, Apostolic methods are founded securely upon Old Testament teaching from the Law and the prophets from which they quote often. Thus, the *"apostles and prophets"* (including Moses) together comprise the Truth as it is in Jesus (Eph. 2:19-22) – not just the New Testament. The reader should well note that there isn't a single Old Testament reference in the entire Pearce / Gates work, as if to suggest that the types under the law and recorded experiences of the prophets of Israel have nothing to say on the principles of "fellowship." Quite to the contrary, the apostolic writings, when taken as a whole, are perfectly consistent with the Old Testament. However, if the authors had gone to Moses and the prophets for instruction, they would have been soundly defeated in their thinking, and perhaps this is the best explanation as to why they avoided the first thirty-nine books of the Bible.

The types under the law concerning leaven (Exod. 12, 13 and 34; Lev. 2, 6 and 10), leprosy (Lev. 13, 14; Deut. 24), clean and unclean animals (Lev. 13; Deut. 12, 13 and 14), sin in the camp and its effect upon the whole (Example: Achan – Josh. 7), laws concerning defilement and necessary steps for cleansing and atonement (Example: Miriam - Num. 12), the specifications for all the elements (oil, incense, etc.) and methodologies for their strict utilization by the priesthood (Example: Nadab and Abihu - Lev. 10), just to name a few of the obvious. These overwhelmingly teach that sin (doctrinal or moral), left to its own way in the camp - typifying the ecclesia of God – is that which

separates man from Yahweh and will eventuate in death and destruction if not corrected and atoned for, or cast out and withdrawn from. Some of these examples will be explored more thoroughly later on.

Given the above, we must insist that any attempt to frame arguments on fellowship upon a “New Testament only” platform devoid of the whole counsel of Scripture, as indeed the authors of “Apostolic Teaching on Fellowship and Withdrawal” (ATFW) have done, is doomed to miss the mark. This is true despite the many lofty Scriptural references and clips from Pioneer brethren which are, regrettably, taken out of context.

With this false platform of reason upon which the Pearce / Gates document on fellowship is based, the authors proceed with a train of misapplications and presumptive interpretations of Scripture in order to arrive at the answer for which they’re looking. They’re purposely ignoring gross departures from the Truth creeping into the ranks in order to create and maintain a broader social fellowship over which the trappings of Christadelphianism would be placed like a “whited sepulcher” (at the time of publication of the Pearce / Gates document, these would have been “clean flesh,” “partial atonement” and “constabulary [police] service”). Such an approach, far from being a manifestation of the Truth, is a subjugation of it to the thinking of the flesh!

As we now consider specific verses, the reader should note that the Pearce / Gates document, instead of considering time-tested interpretations of Scripture, offers up new and revolutionary points of view. Again, these are designed to render the desired conclusion on each point but sometimes being contradictory of their own message as a whole. We begin with Titus 3:10 - Titus 3:10, **“A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject.”**

Heretic, from the Greek **aihretikos**, is defined as “a *schismatic*,” from the root **aihretizo**, meaning “to make a choice – choose.” This is one, who by his or her insistence on maintaining a position which is in error, morally or doctrinally, despite the counsel of their fellow brethren, causes division. To “reject” association with such a person (Gr. **paraiteomai** = avoid, excuse, intreat, refuse, reject) would be to remove them from association with the ecclesial body. What is the subject about which one could be found to have views that were so divisive – evidently involving choices contrary to the Truth - that removal from the ecclesia was found to be necessary? Verse 9 of the same chapter reveals several things that would fall into this category:

- Foolish Questions (Gr. **moos zetesis**), *heedless and absurd disputations about the truth.*
- Genealogies (Gr. **geneologia**), *tracing by generations, in other words, pedigree.*
- Contentions and strivings about the law (Gr. **eris kai mache nomikos**), *debate and controversy concerning the Law of Moses, which had been fulfilled in Christ.*

These were all important matters of doctrine, which would have a tremendous impact upon the first century ecclesia. Titus was in Crete, to whom Paul wrote on the cusp of the ecclesia being scattered from Judea by the Romans to all points of the Gentile compass. Some would no doubt be received in the ecclesias of Crete, but what would be the effect of this Jewish influx of believers into the Gentile world? In order to prepare for these momentous events, it's logical for Titus to have been instructed by Paul to organize the ecclesias, establishing an eldership to guide the body through the challenges it was about to face. Time was running out – and so the instructions were simple and to the point: *“But speak the things which become sound doctrine”* (Titus 2:1). The ecclesia of Christ had been founded upon the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone and yet, then as now, there were those who would dispute the plain truth that they had received by Divine grace, preferring their own rewrite of apostolic teaching. A Judaizing element was also afoot – *strivings about the law* - and would become a greater threat with the influx of Jewish believers preliminary to AD 70.

To summarize, there would be extreme pressure placed upon Titus and others instructed by Paul to hold the line against those who would trouble the flock with false doctrine subversive to the One Faith. Thus, to the Romans Paul wrote, *“mark them which cause divisions, and avoid [ek-klino—move away from] them”* (Rom. 16:17). He warned Timothy concerning men of corrupt minds who would introduce *“perverse disputings... destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself”* (I Tim. 6:5), and to the brethren in Thessalonica: *“And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith... Now we command you brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly and not after the tradition which he received of us... And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother”* (2 Thes. 3:2, 6, 14-15).

The warnings of Paul were clear and concise – brethren harboring error in doctrine or walk and threatening the wellbeing of the ecclesia were to be confronted in the most efficient and caring manner; to first effect a cure for the individual, which would then translate into a benefit for the body but at last to remove the cancer if it was incurable. Despite this clear language which encompasses principles of doctrine, and by natural progression, walk, the authors of ATFW insist that the issues at hand in the first century ecclesia of which Paul and others warned time and again concerned moral, not doctrinal issues. The point in this approach by the authors of ATFW shouldn't be missed – there were serious doctrinal differences between the amended and unamended ecclesias, particularly in the UK, in the mid 1940's to the mid 1950's. In order to smooth over these doctrinal differences as to effect “reunion” between several factions, the point was to somehow illustrate from the Bible that the only cases of apostolic withdrawal were over moral issues

and that dividing over differences in doctrine was un-Christ-like and unscriptural. Thus, it was necessary to fabricate the evidence against sound Scriptural reason. Regrettably, others more recently within the unamended community have followed suit, almost verbatim, in this unscriptural thinking – so long as it falls under the “Christadelphian tent,” it’s supposed, “all is well.”

We believe that such a position cannot be sustained from Scripture and is in fact unconscionable.

- Regarding the *heretic* of Titus 3:10, the authors of ATFW claim, **“the word involves a person’s conduct.”** This is an assumed position, which is not specified in the text. While it’s claimed that such an individual is to be equated with the fornicator in Corinth (5:11-18), Titus, as a whole, is dealing with serious challenges to the purity of the Truth (doctrine) that were about to arise in their midst (Titus 2:1; 3:9).
- Those who Paul described in 1 Timothy as being “destitute of the Truth” are claimed only to be men of **“evil character.”** Nothing is said about their lack of truth (being destitute), or doctrine.
- Again, in 2 Thessalonians chapter three, there appears to be a focus upon **“disorderly walk”** while ignoring those who *“have not faith”* and *“if any man obey not our word by this epistle”* as having anything to do with Paul’s doctrinal teaching. What about the “falling away” of 2 Thessalonians 2:3 that Paul warned of that would eventuate in the rising up of the man of sin, who we recognize today as the Papal power? Was this not a doctrinal matter to be considered? Was it a lack of morality that drove the development of the Catholic Church, or was it false doctrine creeping in which, when fully manifested under the Roman Emperor, Constantine, made “morality” a moot issue completely?

Rom 16:17-18, “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.” The Pearce / Gates booklet only quotes verse 17 and concludes that the message is “beware of false teachers,” as if to say that there is no fellowship issue here – no action to be taken in such a case, no need to sound the alarm, merely a kind warning, “beware.” The first thing that is wrong with the Pearce / Gates approach on this passage is that they completely miss the mark on verse 17. This is not merely a gentle “be on notice” for false teachers but that they should mark them (Gr. scopeo - take aim, regard carefully) and avoid them entirely (Gr. ekklineo – shun, turn away from, turn aside).

The word “avoid” in verse 17 (Gr. ekklineo) is a compound word from ek – “out of” (as in ecclesia), and klineo – a primary verb meaning “to be far spent,

turn to flight, wear away". This implies action to be taken in the case of one who is causing division in the body by the promotion of their teachings which are contrary to the Truth. These are errorists whom Paul condemns in a most severe way, "...such as serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly..." Again – from such, turn away! Yet we have ecclesias and Bible Schools today where the false teachers are not only tolerated, but they are asked to speak and teach, pray and preside and to serve as ecclesial elders. In essence, the false teachers are being celebrated in defiance of all reason, yet some would claim that "we haven't changed." Has it truly been standard practice in our community to give the podium and eldership of the ecclesia into the hands of errorists? Indeed, Christadelphians have changed: they have become sickly tolerant of gross apostasy and rebelliousness in their very midst. Well did Jeremiah the prophet speak when he wrote, "*The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?*" (Jer 5:31).

1 Tim. 6:5, "*Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.*" The Pearce / Gates booklet summarizes that "Such is the type of man to be withdrawn from—one advocating unrighteous conduct, proud, refusing to accept the authority and teaching of Christ and the apostles" (emphasis ours). While we wouldn't dispute that unrighteous conduct is a matter to be swiftly dealt with in any ecclesia, the text makes no such narrow limitation in the application of Paul's record. Paul qualifies such men of "corrupt minds" as being "destitute" of the Truth. The word for destitute (Gr. apostereo = defraud) from the root apo, (away from) indicating a direction away from the Truth in any manner of teaching, whether doctrine or walk. Moreover, Paul's warning against an apparent belief that gain in this world is somehow connected with godliness would be a refutation of false teaching and false walk together in one. How is it then that the Pearce / Gates work entirely negates one aspect (doctrine) while artificially promoting the other (walk)? We're startled that anyone (at least anyone claiming to be a follower of Christ) would be so incredulous as to try to limit the Word of God in this manner to suit their own ends.

2 John 10:11, "*If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.*" "It is clear," say the authors of ATFW, "that the Apostle John is here referring to those that 'went out' from an ecclesia, for he says in v. 7 'Many deceivers are gone forth into the world' (RV)." Here the authors of ATFW are at pains to convince the reader that those who had not the doctrine of Christ were merely brethren that had left the Truth – no relation to the ecclesia - the point being to highlight the theory that, "oh no, this has nothing to do with ecclesial matters at all!" However, some translations place the verb in the active mode, such as Young's literal translation which says, "because many leading astray," that is, in the act of leading others away from the Truth. In any case, John's warning

is clear, “if there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine....” If such is true, is the source of the error the focus of Paul’s warning or the substance of the error? Are we to suppose that the error of persons from outside the ecclesia is unacceptable to Yahweh, while the error of persons from within the ecclesia is deemed acceptable to Him? Error is error, no matter the source. Moreover, if the error were from within, would this not be a far greater threat to the welfare of the ecclesia than some error heard of from without our ranks? There are errors all around us in the world and among the daughter churches of the apostasy, but are they really our concern, or is it those errorists rising up from within the ecclesia leading brethren away captive by their charisma or popularity that have shredded the fabric of our community?

The fact of the matter is that the elect lady to whom John was writing and exhorting was committing the very error which the authors of ATFW appear to embrace: to accept, out of kind feelings and a wrong application of brotherly love, those who were in doctrinal error. Verse 9 records, *“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God.”* This certainly covers all the bases, and in such a case, the apostles loving instruction for the welfare of her ecclesial house was *“to receive him not.”* We find it entirely absurd, therefore, for the authors of ATFW to suggest by their presentation that only error from without should not be received, as if to say between the lines, *“so long as it is in the house, there’s no issue.”* Again, it’s a very sad and painful realization that some of our contemporary leaders in Christadelphia have taken this very stand – paint it with “Christadelphian” and supposedly that makes it so. Call it “Unamended” or even “exclusively Unamended” and supposedly that whitens the sepulcher.

Brethren, contending for the faith not only requires our vigilant outcry against those who would lead astray, but when the ecclesia ceases to be a lightstand for the Truth and rather beacons to the pride of the flesh in its rebelliousness, we must stand aside. Even if making that stand eventuates in our exile from the world, yet joined eternally to the Word.

2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15, “Now we command you brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly and not after the tradition which he received of us... And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.” From ATFW we quote, “This is the case of disorderly walk; a characteristic which we are not left to define for ourselves but which the apostle defines for us in the same chapter. He says, “for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you.” Again, the authors of ATFW are determined to wrest passages of Scripture and cast all apostolic matters of fellowship into the light of “behavioral issues”. Unfortunately, they didn’t quote verses 1 through 5 of the same chapter and didn’t make the connection with the rest of the epistle, particularly chapter 2 from which we quote here with some explanation interposed:

“Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition” (2 Thes. 2:1-3).

As previously mentioned, Paul’s epistle to the Thessalonians highlighted the *“mystery of Iniquity”* that was already at work within the ecclesial body, eating away as a cancer upon the true teachings of the Apostles and Prophets (2 Thes. 2:7). This departure from sound doctrine would develop, in the course of two and a half centuries, into the Roman Catholic apostasy. For this reason, Paul exhorts the brethren thusly:

*“Therefore, brethren, **stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught**, whether by word, or our epistle” (2 Thes. 2:15). Paul continues with a reference to the *“traditions which ye have been taught”* in chapter 3: *“Now we command you brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly and **not after the tradition which he received of us**” (2 Thes. 3:6).**

The Word translated “traditions” in both cases is *paradosis* and may be rendered, “transmission or precept” from a root meaning to “entrust, transmit.” What was it that the Thessalonians were entrusted with by the Apostle Paul? Was it merely his teaching concerning walk, or was it the Truth in total concerning the Gospel message from which there was an incremental departure at hand, styled “the mystery of iniquity?” Decidedly, it was the latter, and the result in due course would be a complete manifestation of apostasy, which would turn about and persecute the true ecclesia of Christ (Rev. 12:13-17). No obfuscation of this fact by the authors of ATFW can change the Scriptural record which they so insistently ignore in order to frame their forced conclusions. In any case, the Apostle Paul continues in chapter 3 of his second epistle with his warning against those who had introduced false teachings subversive to the truth with which they had been entrusted:

*“Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: **And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith**. But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil. And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you. And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ” (2 Thes. 3:1-5).*

It was these very workers of iniquity - those who **had not faith** and were not subject to Apostolic teaching – that were at the heart of the matter in Paul’s epistle to the Thessalonians. From such, they were instructed to

“withdraw yourselves” and “have no company with him”. These were matters of doctrine and walk, not merely one or the other, bringing us to our next topic.

Doctrine and Walk are inseparable principles

1 Cor. 5 :11-18, “But now I have written unto you not to keep company if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them that are without? do ye not judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore, put away from among yourselves that wicked person.”

ATFW states on page 4 following the quote from Corinthians that “This is the case of the man guilty of immorality.” As we have previously stated, while “walk” is accentuated by Pearce / Gates in every account examined, the principle of doctrinal teaching as related to fellowship is completely ignored. Paul, however, also clearly mentions idolatry as a case from which one should withdraw. The word for idolatry in the Greek simply means “image worshipper” or “to minister to a heathen god”. While immoral actions may in fact have been a part of such heathen associations, the point is that you can’t ignore doctrinal error as an issue when someone has involved themselves in a false system of worship of any kind. Moreover, not only do the Scriptures not make a distinction between doctrine and walk (“doctrine” simply being that which is taught – true or false), the Scriptures often use one as representing the other. The following are examples:

- **“When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers”** (Psa 50:18). Here, the psalmist describes dishonest associations as adultery.
- **“And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks”** (Jer. 3:9). In this passage, the Spirit speaking through the prophet Jeremiah identified the wicked in Israel as adulterers with idols of wood and stone. Idolatry and false worship was counted by Yahweh as adultery, but He is clearly speaking in reference to their false doctrine. Israel was Yahweh’s bride taken out of Egypt and brought into the pleasant land, yet Jeremiah laments, **“Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number”** (Jer. 2:32). Without the Truth as the basis of worship, morality was irrelevant.
- **“Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! for they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men”** (Jer. 9:2). In the balance of the chapter, Jeremiah again describes the specifics of Israel’s infidelity to Yahweh, including: lying, not being valiant for the Truth, proceeding from evil to evil, deception, forsaking Yahweh’s law, disobedience, Baal worship and uncircumcision of heart. Certainly, there can be no doubt that a false position with regards the

Truth begets immoral behavior. The Apostle James says in essence the same: ***“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?”*** (James 4:4).

- ***“For the land is full of adulterers; for because of swearing the land mourneth; the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up, and their course is evil, and their force is not right”*** (Jer. 23:10). Again, Jeremiah draws the parallel between adultery and the false worship he describes, even profaning the priesthood (vs 11) that had enveloped Israel.
- ***“Thou hast built thy high place at every head of the way, and hast made thy beauty to be abhorred, and hast opened thy feet to everyone that passed by, and multiplied thy whoredoms. Thou hast also committed fornication with the Egyptians thy neighbours, great of flesh; and hast increased thy whoredoms, to provoke me to anger”*** (Ezek. 16:25-26). Fornication, again, a moral term, is here applied by the Spirit speaking through Ezekiel to false worship of Egyptian, Babylonian and Canaanitish Gods. Israel had corrupted themselves with all these and more. Has Christadelphia, like the Egyptians, become “great of flesh,” thinking that by the eloquence of their speeches, the dogma of their wrested scriptures and by the obstinacy of their ecclesial policies permitting gross offenses against the Word that all is presumed to be well before Yahweh?
- ***“Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.”*** (Rev. 2:20). Finally, the Spirit of Christ revealed to John reprimands the ecclesia in Thyatira because they suffered “Jezebel” - they refused to put her out - a personification of persons in positions of influence or authority who deceived the ecclesial flock into committing spiritual fornication by a corruption of the Truth which is false worship - idolatry. Today, brethren who have introduced false doctrine into the ecclesial house and by their influence convince others to tolerate it, if not follow their lead, seduce Christ brethren into committing spiritual fornication and to “eat things” (false teaching) which is also ministering to idolatry. There is no difference in this gross offense today than that which Israel committed and for which they were justly condemned in the most obvious terms, two and a half millennia ago.

In summary, the Spirit has connected the two principles, moral and doctrinal, throughout the Scriptures, and that which applies to the one applies to the other; they are inseparable. Moral or doctrinal manifestations of error will both separate us and the ecclesia from Yahweh if left unaddressed. As an aside, some have criticized the works of the Pioneer brethren as being

woefully unbalanced because they don't address issues of walk. The fact of the matter, however, is that they recognized, as amply demonstrated throughout the Scriptures, that it's the Truth itself which drives the moral compass, not the other way around. Teach a man to love the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God, and the truth of these matters will be his guide for all of life's challenges.

Ecclesial Eldership

One of the ways in which the Truth is manifested in the absence of Divine inspiration or the operation of the Holy Spirit is through the role of eldership in the ecclesia. True elders of the One faith are a valuable asset to the ecclesia, as they carry with them a life-long experience of dealing with the troubles of the flesh, which invariably affect the One faith. It's flesh thinking that is the source of all the troubles within the household, and true elders are keen on recognizing it for what it is and dealing with it quickly and with a Christ-like spirit. Elders provide a stabilizing influence against "winds of doctrine" on the one hand, or inexperience in dealing with error on the other, both of which can often affect the entire community of believers. Only faithful elders well-grounded in truth – the pillars of the ecclesial body -- will be able to withstand the storm and firmly ground the ecclesia whilst the Laodicean multitude is swept off its sandy foundation and into the Babylonian sea.

True elders recognize the Bible as our divine instructor through its record of examples as well as written instructions on how we should organize ourselves (ecclesias). They believe that if the Bible says it, then that is the way it should be done. They believe that fellowship matters must be weighed against the whole Truth and not one or two passages taken out of context, or the ever fatal, *"well, I've always believed thus and so"* with no Scriptural backing to sustain the position taken. To act upon the Word of God as that which is necessary for salvation is not a case of someone being haughty or judgmental against his fellow brethren; much to the contrary, it's a matter of one being faithful to the tenants of Scripture above all else – exalting the Word, whilst subduing the will and "wisdom" of the flesh. They believe that Yahweh's Word has the right answers and specifications for our manner of doing all things and that man's logic can never be superior to the knowledge of God. We say this because it is the view of some that the instructions left on hand, specifically in Paul's epistles to Timothy and Titus on ecclesial eldership, can't be applied in the absence of apostolic authority or the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. If this were the case, however, there would have been little reason for these words to have been recorded and preserved at all. Again, *"all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable..."* Moreover, if the position that a particular book or passage of Scripture "is not applicable today" should be allowed to stand, what is to prevent the sidelining of any book or passage as not being applicable only because man's wisdom is preferred in such and such a case? Indeed, is this not exactly what the churches of the apostasy have done with the Word, making it of none effect by their tradition? Passages regarding marriage, chastity, morality, purity,

parenting, self-discipline, have all been swept off the table for fear of offending parishioners, not to mention the complete absence of Gospel Truth, destitute of hope - the end of the road for such rebellious thinking. Given such dangers in thought that the flesh is capable of, elders should be the most seasoned brethren possible, well-grounded in the faith. Such may not always be attainable in certain circumstances, but that should be our goal.

Returning to Timothy and Titus, in order to protect the sanctity of the Truth, the apostles appointed elders for the management of the ecclesia primarily in their absence. Elders were typically those appointed by the apostles as “bishops” (Gr. episcopo – a superintendent) or “deacons” (Gr. *diakoneo* – an attendant). Today, we might call them serving or arranging brethren. No doubt these men had the Holy Spirit and were capable brethren specifically chosen for the work at hand. As mentioned previously, Titus and others were preparing ecclesias for a dramatic shift in the center of ecclesial operations in advance of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. It would be as though the “central command,” geographically at least, was going to be wiped out, and now ecclesias everywhere would lose the connectivity that they once had with the center point of their faith – Israel and Jerusalem. This would be a major blow to the fledgling community, and only the most grounded in the faith would be able to steady the ecclesia and withstand the winds of change. The Apostle Paul, therefore, lays out specifications for the office of the eldership that were not merely his thoughts but Divine thoughts – no doubt thoughts from the Lord himself on how the ecclesia should organize and operate, all things being done decently and in order. From I Timothy 3 and Titus 1, we quote:

“This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (1Tim. 3:1-13).

To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour. For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: (Titus 1:4-10)

It would be a good exercise for us to review how closely our own ecclesia matches these specifications to see if we can improve. These requirements for eldership in the ecclesia of Christ are simple and straightforward. They aren't burdensome or offensive. They were recorded for our benefit, being *"profitable for doctrine [teaching], for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."* These are wholesome instructions, not only for those who had the Holy Spirit but for those who have that which is complete – the Spirit Word, well-seasoned with salt.

Regrettably, because of respect of persons and the desire to follow the whims of fleshly reason, some view these instructions as offensive and therefore impossible to reach - not applicable to brethren today. It would seem as if the young men, those identified by Paul as the "novice" or newly baptized, not having the life and family experience of the older, would say, "we know better." But there is great wisdom in these words recorded for our learning, words from a divine source, words that can lead us in the way of life if we would submit to the inspired testimony of the Apostle Paul. To those who might reject this conclusion upon the democratic principles used so liberally today, we would ask, upon what grounds do you accept anything recorded by Paul or any other of the Apostolic writers? Simply put, if the authority of Paul is not to be accepted in this matter as to how the house of David should be organized through a seasoned eldership, then all else falls completely to the ground. Those, on the other hand, who accept these instructions as divine and authoritative and organize themselves accordingly, are humbly submitting to the Word in a manner that will be well-pleasing to their Lord. In conclusion on this point, with the Spirit Word as their instructor, leadership in the modern-day ecclesia may indeed be patterned after apostolic arrangements. The Apostle Paul labored tirelessly with the reasonable expectation that the ecclesias should continue cultivating the Word in his absence having transmitted to them the holy oracles of God – the "traditions" as he called them. Similarly, our Lord should well expect that we likewise continue to manifest the Truth in the absence of Divine inspiration or the operation of the

Holy Spirit. Such a manifestation must by necessity include divine teaching regarding fellowship and withdrawal. It is true that the spirit gifts are no more, but that which is perfect or complete for our instruction in these matters has come, and we have it in our hands. (To be continued, Lord willing, next quarter.)

Al Bryan

"A "Thus saith the Lord" does not necessarily require a specific verse which says "you shall disfellowship one for this," or "you shall withdraw from another for that." There is no verse in the Bible which says in this language, "The soul of man is not immortal," yet there is abundant evidence and testimony that such a statement is true.



"So it is with the matter of fellowship. There is evidence in the Scriptures which has appealed to the majority of Christadelphians throughout the world, during the past sixty years, and which has satisfied their convictions in relation to ecclesial attitude and responsibilities, governing the fellowship at the Lord's Table, and regulating their withdrawal from others under certain conditions. In view of all that has been written by "stalwarts" during that period, it is somewhat amazing to have anyone say, at this late day, that "stalwart students have not produced a "Thus saith the Lord." What would they have us believe happened to those "stalwarts" of the past - were they asleep? Did they not know what they did and why? They fought the battles of the Truth and preached the Gospel far more effectively with their exclusive methods than has been manifest in the last fifteen or twenty years, during which period toleration of error has been more prevalent. Times have changed; most stalwarts of the old school have passed away, and we have conditions which remind us of, "A king arose who knew not Joseph." We have a generation of younger believers, who in many instances have not been brought into the Body under the same foundation principles as were former generations. Many of this new generation do not like controversy, and are encouraged in this by some of the few remaining of the earlier believers. They fail to perceive its true value and therefore cannot appreciate its worth. They do not know what has been accomplished in the days of controversy because they do not read. With many the present day attitude is "prophecy unto us smooth things." Some who know the right are afraid of the stringent methods of earlier days lest the younger generation is alienated thereby. We believe it would be far better to have a plan of campaign to educate these in the methods of the past, and to demonstrate to them the reason why it was so."

Bro. Albert Hall - Editor of the Christadelphian Advocate, July 1930, pp. 200,201

THE LAW OF UNCLEANNES AND THE NEED FOR SEPARATION

Old Testament teachings compared to
New Testament



THE Gates & Pearce paper presents fellowship and withdrawal based on their erroneous understanding of the New Testament only. If we are to have a correct understanding of fellowship and withdrawal we believe that we should find Old Testament principles concerning fellowship and withdrawal that agree with NT principles, including the sin of toleration that is so rampant in the brotherhood today. By principle we mean: a fundamental doctrine or tenet that serves as the foundation for a system of belief or behavior or for a chain of reasoning.

One reason some may shy away from examining the OT is the execution of the punishment for sin under the Law. There are occasions in the OT where we find that there were sins (uncleanness) that were punishable by death under the Law. What we find in the NT is that those sins are described as leading to the spiritual death of the believer. Under the Law, after a proper examination of the circumstances, anyone committing incest was to be stoned (Lev. 20:11). In the incident of incest recorded in 1st Corinthians, Paul directs the ecclesia to apply the Law's underlying principle. Make the examination and if guilty "To deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. 5:5). Sin was removed from Israel by the death of the sinner, and from the household of faith by removal of the sinner from the ecclesia. There were provisions under the Law describing how one might re-enter the camp. So also are there provisions for one to return to the ecclesia.

Additionally, Paul points out other errors either known of or committed by the Corinthians as recorded in verse 11 of 1st Corinthians 5: cases of false prophets, idolaters, rebellious children, etc. Paul's counsel "... Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person". This was the same principle under the law (Deut 13:5; 17:7; 21:21; 22:21-24). Is it not apparent that ecclesial discipline under Christ is to be viewed on the same foundation principle as discipline under the Law?

So what principles can we derive from this? In both cases we have the principles of uncleanness and separation. "Unclean" or "uncleanness" are words that many brethren would reluctantly use to describe the condition that a brother or sister finds themselves in. Nonetheless it defines a scriptural condition in which one finds himself outside the camp or outside of the ecclesia. The necessity of that separation is not only to make the believer aware of their sin, but also to ensure that the household is not defiled or profaned. We sometimes forget that it is not our ecclesia but our Lord's.

Most dictionaries (biblical and non-biblical) define unclean as an adjective meaning dirty, evil, morally or spiritually impure, vile. If this is not sufficient, thesaurus.com provides many synonyms for "unclean" which include the following:

contaminated, corrupt, defiled, evil, profaned, vile, sinful

So what do we understand when we read the following scripture? *"Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness that they die not in their uncleanness when they defile my tabernacle that is among them"* (Lev. 15:31).

These are strong words that are reflective of an understanding that separation from that which defiles is a principle found in the NT and OT. The Pearce and Gates paper tries, by misapplication of scripture, to make the case for a NT application only in which one never leaves their ecclesia and additionally, the errorist is allowed to continue to partake of the memorials, while supposedly trying to correct them. Sad to say that leaving the error in the midst of the meeting does several things:

1. A Brother or Sister may never see themselves as being in error. If so, then 1st John 2:19 will never be realized as some believe. Those who try to correct them are looked upon as trouble makers or having a crochot. The errorists will stand their ground and continue in the error.
2. A contradiction is presented to young and old alike. The brother or sister is spoken of as being in error yet they continue to partake of the emblems with the rest of the brethren as if everything is OK. The prime focus is the remembrance of our Lord, but is not the partaking of the emblems with others also a public declaration of sharing of the same beliefs? If not, then any doctrinal belief would be sufficient to participate. This is a

mistaken understanding of what partaking of the memorials involves. (See Brother William's quote on page 41) Many young minds will quickly see the inconsistency.

3. We believe there should be an opportunity to try and correct the error. When it becomes apparent that no resolution will be reached, the discussion should end and separation made. The assumption of Gates and Pearce is that the erring brother or sister will leave on their own because they will obviously follow 1st John 2:19. This becomes a point of controversy amongst brethren because "longsuffering" is interpreted by some to mean that we should tolerate the error until they leave of their own choosing.
4. Separation may never occur and the leaven of error continues to work within the household.

Obviously the OT also contains directions for separation from errors that match, in principle, NT writings. This is not as Pearce and Gates saw it, but it is a consistent application of a principle designed to protect the body (in OT or NT times). We believe that the OT does present the same principle of separation. The cases are many and all point to the same conclusion.

Let's consider this word "unclean" as we find in Haggai 2:13, 14: - *"Then said Haggai, If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean. Then answered Haggai, and said, So is this people, and so is this nation before me, saith the Lord; and so is every work of their hands; and that which they offer there is unclean".*

What do we find in the concordance for this Hebrew word "unclean"? H2931. נָפֶשׁ *tāme'*: An adjective meaning unclean. It can denote impurity or defilement (Isa. 6:5; Ezek. 22:5). It can also refer to ritually unclean items such as people, things, foods, and places.

We find the word used 161 times in the Old Testament of the AV. – 74 times as unclean, 71 times as defile, 14 times as pollute, once as uncleanness, and once as utterly.

So to what instances does the Old Testament apply this word "unclean"?

- Animals and foods were considered clean or unclean by their nature.
- Persons and objects could become ritually (ceremonially) unclean.

- Personal uncleanness could be incurred through birth, bodily emissions, "leprosy," sexual relations, misdeeds and contact with death.
- Priests and Levites were especially concerned with the issues of cleanness and uncleanness.
- The greatest uncleanness was idolatry which defiled the temple and the land. The prophets, in denouncing moral uncleanness, used ritual uncleanness as a metaphor for the wickedness which only God can cleanse.

Most of the ordinances dealing with ritual uncleanness appear in Lev. 11-15; chapter 11 deals with clean and unclean animals, chapter 12 with birth, chapters 13-14 with "leprosy", and chapter 15 with emissions.

So what is Ceremonial Uncleanness?

This is what Brother Roberts brings out in the 1910 edition of The Law of Moses, Chapter 9, Private Life and Public Institutions (pp. 74, 75)

The uncleanness involved in the various laws referred to in the foregoing was what is called "ceremonial;" that is, such as is not uncleanness itself, in the physical sense, but such as was merely constituted by the law of the case. Such an uncleanness has otherwise been expressed as fictitious uncleanness as distinguished from physical defilement. We can all understand the reality of a physical defilement requiring to be cleansed away, but this was a defilement recognized merely, that is, not subsisting physically in itself, e.g., where a man touched the dead body of a prohibited animal, there was nothing in this to physically defile the man; we have all touched dead hares and been none the worse. There has been some attempt to claim a scientific basis for the uncleannesses of the Mosaic law, that is, to connect them with some physical influence of an inherently defiling or corrupting character, such as polluted gas, or microbe-infected air, &c. But this is evidently a mistake. All the uncleannesses of the law were what might be called imputative or artificial.

But they were none the less powerful on this account as an actually felt or recognized uncleanness. We all know the power of a current recognition in any matter, —losing caste, for example, which is nothing more nor less than a prevalent view that one is not up to a certain standard of recognition. Or the law of taboo in savage races; a tabooed person is avoided and even detested by those around him, while the subject of that state is a misery to himself on account of the taboo. The experience is actual, though artificial in its source; so indeed we may say with all games. A

person in a certain unfavourable state by the standard of some rule, feels himself in that state, and others recognize it; although it is all a matter of mere convention.

If this be so with human distinctions, we may easily understand how powerful the states constituted by the Mosaic Law would come to be amongst those in Israel by whom the law was faithfully obeyed. The object in such artificial distinctions would be very pleasant to contemplate in the light of divine explanation. Some of them we can recognize; nothing could have more powerfully contributed to the conception of the idea of holiness than this constant scrupulosity as to contracting ceremonial defilement: and nothing, as already observed, could have been more calculated to keep God continually before the minds of the people. There were also concealed significances unknown to them which have been hinted at in apostolic exposition, some of which may engage our attention afterwards”.

The Peace Offering

In relation to expiation, sacrifices were to be made. Let's consider the Peace offering.

Chapter 7 of Leviticus deals with the trespass, burnt, meal and peace offerings. The Hebrew word for peace is shalom. It conveys the general idea of uniting together as one and presents the idea of Divine fellowship. In Lev 7:19-21 the law stipulates that one who had come into contact with anything unclean was not to eat of the sacrifice. An unclean person who presumed to do so would be cut off. The unclean person had to be sent outside the camp, as Yahweh dwelt in its midst (Lev 15:31).

Consider the following comments from the Expositor:

Lev 7:19 - *“And the flesh that toucheth any unclean thing shall not be eaten”* — This prohibition is made because in the moral sphere, uncleanness is transmuted one to another (1 Cor. 5:6; 15:33). This is true also of doctrinal impurity (2 Tim. 2:17). *“It shall be burned with fire”* — because fire is a purifying agency. *“And as for the flesh, all that be clean shall eat thereof”* — A person was expected to be ceremonially clean to eat the fellowship meal with Yahweh. Fellowship with God is predicated upon *“walking in the light”* (1 John 1:6-7). If a person's actions do not conform to God's word, he cannot have true fellowship with the Father.

Lev 7:20 - *“But the soul that eateth of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, that pertain unto Yahweh, having his uncleanness upon him”* — Under the Law there was such a thing

as ceremonial uncleanness (cp. Lev. 15:3; 22:3). It typified the uncleanness of human nature. Even though the individual was not responsible for his ceremonial uncleanness, the Law legislated accordingly to put Israelites on their guard against the natural sin-prone promptings of flesh (See Isa. 52:11). Israelites were called upon to be holy, and that required scrupulous care in all avenues of life. A similar care needed to be observed in moral and doctrinal principles. "Even that soul shall be cut off from His people" — He shall be excommunicated at least until his lapse is atoned for (see Lev. 22:3). In the state of excommunication, such a one would be cut off from contact with Yahweh and thus would be without hope. The parallel in the N.T. was such acts of excommunication as Paul refers to in 1 Tim. 1:20 (cp. 1 Cor. 5:1-5 with the restoration of the excommunicated person in 2 Cor. 2:6-7).

Lev 7:21 - *"Moreover the soul that shall touch any unclean thing, as the uncleanness of man, or any unclean beast, or any abominable unclean thing, and eat of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, which pertain unto Yahweh, even that soul shall be cut off from His people"* — These acts of defilement are dealt with further on in Leviticus, together with the means required for the restoration of those concerned. The prohibition of partaking of the peace offerings (expressive of communion with Yahweh) on the part of those ceremonially denied, taught that those who approach Yahweh must be circumspect in every way: *"Ye shall be holy for I Yahweh your God am holy"* (Lev. 19:2). Ceremonial defilement taught that moral defilement is easily transmitted from one to another; therefore separateness from such is necessary. Meanwhile, whilst defilement continues, the Law demanded the excommunication of those concerned.

What of the fact that those found to be unclean were to be sent outside the camp? Where was the tolerance that one might allow the unclean or sinful person to continue in partaking of the sacrifice while trying to correct their error? Based on Gates and Pearce's reasoning we would have to ask "Where was Yahweh's tolerance"?

How do we define tolerance anyway?

1. The ability or willingness to tolerate something, in particular the existence of opinions or behavior that with which one does not necessarily agree with. "The tolerance of corruption." Synonyms - acceptance, toleration, open-mindedness, broad-mindedness, forbearance, liberality, liberalism, patience, charity, indulgence, understanding , "an attitude of tolerance toward other people"

Tolerance is a tremendous virtue, but the immediate neighbors of tolerance are apathy and weakness. We look at different epochs, such as the period of the Judges, and say 'Yahweh was tolerant. Look how long

things went on'. What many fail to see is that in that period of the Judges, there were many generations. Each generation had opportunity to serve Yahweh, and in each generation there were those who followed and those who did not. Those who did not follow Yahweh had an opportunity to repent but chose not to. Therefore, they are gone without a hope, they never manifested the faith of Abraham. Brother Roberts wrote, "God is ready to pardon, but not to put aside the ways of His righteousness. He aims at His own exaltation as well as our benefit, in the conferring of salvation: and therefore He adopts a method that humbles us in the dust while affording scope for His favor towards us without departure from justice and wisdom". The Son taught as the Father "If he repents forgive him" (Luke 17:3).

The process of reconciliation was one of approach from outside the camp. By recognizing the error (moral or doctrinal) and approaching Yahweh with the appropriate sacrifice in humbleness of spirit, the person was provided with a way to be atoned for and then could enter back into the camp.

Death

Death was especially defiling. A priest was not to defile himself with the dead, except for his closest relatives (Lev. 21:1-3; Ezek. 44:25). The high priest was not to defile himself even for his father or mother (Lev. 21:10,11).

Those who had become unclean through contact with the dead were to eat the Passover a month later (Num 9:6-11). Touching a grave conveyed impurity (Num 19:16). This led to the later custom of whitewashing sepulchers to warn passersby of their presence (Matt 23:27; Acts 23:3).

Priests were to teach the distinction between what was clean and what was unclean (Lev. 10:10, 11; Ezek. 22:26; 44:23). Priests were not to approach the holy elements while they were unclean (Lev. 22:1-9). Aaron was to make atonement for the uncleanness's of the people by killing the goat of the sin offering (Lev. 16:15-16).

To cleanse such defilement, the priest employed the water of the ashes of the red heifer (Num. 19:1-22). Another interesting study in and of itself.

Death and the Nazarite

One who had to be particularly wary of becoming unclean through contact with a corpse or even by entering a room where a dead man lay (Num 6:6) was the Nazarite. If someone suddenly fell dead beside him and contacted him, he became unclean and had to be cleansed and begin the days of his Nazarite vow over again (Num 6:9-12).

In Dealing with the Nazarite, Brother Roberts writes the following in The Law of Moses, chapter 30, pg. 285 in the 1910 edition:

"But it might happen that some person might "die very suddenly by the Nazarite" (Num. vi. 9), and thus the Nazarite would involuntarily contract the defilement which he had been taking pains to avoid. What then? The Nazarite was reckoned in that case as having "sinned by the dead" (verse 11), and he was required to "offer two turtles or two young pigeons at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." If such a thing happened before the period of his Nazariteship had run out, it was to be considered that all the days that had gone before were "lost" (Num. vi. 12), and that the days of his separation had to be begun over again.

Several important things are suggested by this. It shows the extreme scrupulosity of the divine law when a Nazarite could "sin by the dead" without intention on his part. We may be affected by this in the antitype. One, "dying suddenly by us " would be one who had been alive—consequently a brother falling away from the faith. The type points to the possibility of our being defiled by such an one. Yet the occurrence must be "by us"—near us—in contact with us—before it can have a defiling effect. That is, there must be intimacy and toleration and perhaps more, a co-operation amounting to saying "God speed," and so a "partaking of their evil deeds" (2 John) . Personal friendship often interferes with a clear and healthful discrimination of duty in divine matters, and so the guilt of an offender against God may cleave to us. Eli, though disapproving of the wrong ways of his sons, sinned in "restraining them not" (1 Sam. 3: 13). Jesus told the brethren at Thyatira that though they were not behind in "works, charity, service, faith and patience," he had this against them, that "thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants." There is such a thing as being "partakers of other men's sins" (I Tim. 5:22). We may "sin by the dead" while not sinning in our own action. The line to pursue is indicated by Jude: "Of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (verse 23).

If there were no remedy for the defilement arising from "one dying suddenly by us," the occurrence would be fatal: but here the type comes to our aid. Though the preceding days of separation are "lost" by defilement (in harmony with what is written in Ezekiel, that " when the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness . . . all the righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned "), there can be renewal and resumption, except in the cases reserved in Heb. 10:26, where we are

informed that in the case of willful sin after enlightenment, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." The defiled Nazarite was to bring a sin offering and a burnt-offering to make atonement, after which, he might resume the days of his separation; repeating those that had been lost.

What is this, but the typical inculcation of confession and supplication in the name of Christ—the antitypical sin-offering and burnt-offering. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity." We must not forget God's kind disposition towards even the wicked, as when He says: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon" (Is. 55:7). If God is ready thus to favourably receive unrighteous men (saying, "Have I any pleasure at all in the death of the wicked?"), what is the hope for those who walk in His fear all the day long, but who may, stumble occasionally out of the right way? The question is answered in the beautiful declaration of Psa. 103: "As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy towards them that fear him: and as far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." It might be thought that the scrupulosity's of the law were inconsistent with these wide-sweeping declarations of God's kindness: but this feeling disappears when we remember the constant provision for sacrifice and forgiveness. And when we discern in those sacrifices (taken in connection with the sacrifice of Christ, which they all foreshadowed) the maintenance of God's supremacy as the foundation of His grace, we can but exclaim with Paul: "Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out . . . for of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever" (Rom. 11:33)".

As Brother Roberts presents, it is possible for one to become defiled simply by tolerating error - "... there must be intimacy and toleration and perhaps more, a co-operation amounting to saying "God speed," and so a *"partaking of their evil deeds"* (2 Jno.) ...There is such a thing as being *"partakers of other men's sins"* (1 Tim. 5:22).

Continuing with Old Testament teaching concerning uncleanness and separation, God's temple was to be guarded against defilement. Jehoiada stationed guards at the temple so that no one who was unclean could enter (2 Chr 23:19).

What then is our duty and responsibility to the memorial table of Christ's sacrifice? Here are the thoughts of Brother Williams in The Life and Works of Thomas Williams pg. 75:

"We have heard it claimed that one can partake of the memorials in an ecclesia and yet not fellowship one or more present from whom he differs on some vital doctrine or against whom he may hold a charge of wrong-doing. This can only be where the complaint has been made known and scripturally acted upon, and after that the person charged intrudes and defiantly partakes. But to break bread and drink the wine with a mental reservation that some present are unsound in doctrine or immoral practice is to act the part of a hypocrite. For the act of partaking of the memorials is a powerful and solemn way of giving expression to true fellowship with those with whom we partake. If it is not this it is meaningless...To outwardly receive one in fellowship whom we believe to be unworthy is to partake of his supposed or real evil deeds; for by the act of partaking we virtually say, 'I partake with you'.

Others again we have heard say that the table is the Lord's, not ours, and therefore we have not right to dictate who shall partake. It is true it is the Lord's Table, but it is so by reason of the fact that it is spread by His command and in accordance with His laws – the laws of his household. Now the question is; can we claim the right to spread the Table of the Lord and yet after it is spread allow it to be polluted? Is it that we are to eat and drink with the drunken at the Lord's Table and plead the excuse that it is His, not ours? What folly some men can be guilty of! Whose are we if we have been bought with the precious blood of Christ? Are we not the Lord's? That being the case, is not the table the family table? What respectable family would think of allowing its house to become a den of thieves? In the world and in the church men are very particular to guard the sanctity of their homes and household, but it seems that some lose that concern when the household of God is in question. There seems to be an idea that much care must be exercised in protecting our own temporal things, while the things of God may be treated differently or indifferently as whims may decide. Let us never forget that the body – the ecclesia – is "the temple of God"; and "if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy."

Sadly, it was the priests under Zedekiah who made the temple unclean (2 Chr. 36:14). Because of Israel's apostasy the Lord permitted his temple to be defiled by the heathen (Ps 79:1), abominations (Jer. 7:30; 32:34), slayings (Ezek. 9:7), idolatry, adultery, and human sacrifice (Ezek.

23:37-39). How many in those days did not have a problem with the “unclean” Israelites entering the temple because:

- “It’s in Yahweh’s hands”
- “Why can’t we just get along”
- “It’s Yahweh’s Temple”
- “They just don’t understand”
- “We need to be more tolerant and caring”
- “It’s only politics”

How strongly would we have contended to protect the Temple (ecclesia) from becoming the den of iniquity described in the above references?

The Land

Idolatry defiled the land (Ezek 36:17, 18). Yahweh asked Judah, "How can you say, 'I am not defiled, I have not gone after Baalim?'" (Jer 2:23). Israel had defiled herself by the idols which she had made (Ezek 22:4; 36:25; 37:23). Defilement is contracted by contact with a defiling (unclean) influence. So the land is represented as defiled by the presence of the defiling Israelites. (*Could this be called contamination by association?*)

What of the prophets?

With the prophets, especially, the ideas of ritual uncleanness were used as metaphors of moral uncleanness. Haggai used the contagion of the defilement of death to denounce the immoral behavior of Israel which defiled even their offerings (Hag 2:12-14). Consider for a moment the point Haggai was trying to make.

A rhetorical question is asked in verse 12 of chapter 2 concerning holy flesh being carried in a priest’s garment. This represented a close identification with the offering made. Although the holy sacrifice was carried in the skirt as a vessel, the skirt in and of itself does not transfer the holiness of the sacrifice. Therefore, the priest’s answer to Haggai was an appropriate ‘no’. Personal contact with the sacrifice that sanctified was necessary in order to be constituted holy. This point is most relevant to our standing in the sight of God. Only those who have made personal contact with that which sanctifies (the slain Lamb through baptism - Heb 10:10; 13:12) can be holy or separate. It is possible, however, for such to become "defiled" by spiritual death.

In verse 13 a second question is asked based on the first. This second question was asked to show the importance of the principle of defilement and its effect, that being: Is defilement contagious? "*If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean?*" As we have already seen, under the Law, a person was considered unclean if he

touched a dead body (Num 19:14-16). This ceremonial uncleanness was easily transmitted to others that touched the person so defiled (cp. Lev 22:4-6). What a contrast with the law of sanctification. How easy it is for one to become defiled, or to defile. It was so much easier to defile morally than to make holy. The response of the priests here was, "it shall be unclean". This clear and definite answer of the priests showed how easy it is to be defiled, and emphasized the need for separateness (holiness) and care in the interrelations between brethren.

Haggai responds that "so is this people" unclean. This was the state of the people before they responded to the work which Yahweh gave them. They were both defiled and defiling like the dead body mentioned. Their previous attitude towards the work of the temple was indicative of the general apathy of the nation towards the things of God. It showed them to be spiritually dead.

Do we not understand that this uncleanness was imputative and scriptural? Hosea (5:3; 6:10), Jeremiah (2:23; 13:27), and above all Ezekiel (23:7, 13, 17; 24:13; 43:7) denounced the infidelity of Israel as defiling adultery or harlotry. Cf. Ps 106:39. Micah decried as impurity, crimes of injustice (Mic 2:10; cf. 2:1-7). Isaiah realized that he was a man of "unclean lips" (Isa 6:5) and confessed, "We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment" (Isa 64:6 ESV).

Unfortunately, the prophets' ethical perception of the precepts of uncleanness was replaced by an increasing preoccupation with ritual minutiae (Matt 23:23). It was in protest against their exaggerated emphasis upon man-made ritual cleanness that Jesus denounced the hypocrisy of the Pharisees (Matt 15:10-20; 23:25-28).

What of False Prophets?

According to 2 Peter 2:1 false prophets = false teachers. In Deuteronomy 13 we find that a false prophet or false teacher can be as close as those nearest and dearest to us. This chapter of Deuteronomy instructs the people how to deal with assaults on the truth from within just as 2 Peter chapter 2. We find 3 specific warnings in this chapter against false teachers and their doctrines as promulgated by some within the household and how they are to be dealt with. This is an issue that has plagued the Truth throughout the ages. Yahweh was clear in His instructions, ***"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you."*** Deut. 4:2

A prophet or teacher is scripturally defined as one who sets forth the will and purpose of Yahweh. If what is presented is not in accord with

scripture then, the prophet/teacher is a false one. It is amazing and yet so typical that some believers today want something different, some new thing that better fits the times in which they live. They sound just like Israel did in the days of Isaiah (30:10) - “...***Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits***”. The audience for the false teacher is ripe with those tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, those with itching ears, those influenced by strong delusion that they should believe a lie. The true prophets, the apostles and our Lord all spoke the same thing that there should be no fellowship with such. Under the Law the consequence was death, under Christ the consequence is exclusion from fellowship. Under both dispensations there was a process for atonement and reconciliation. Whether to preserve a nation in the past or maintain an ecclesia in the present, the consequences may seem harsh to some minds, but to the mind of those like Paul we find, “Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven...”. The ecclesia can only be preserved when those promoting and tolerating error are excluded.

Several conditions are presented in this chapter of Deuteronomy:

1. **Deut. 13:1** - “***If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder,***”

This is a warning that false prophets (teachers) would arise to lead the people away from Yahweh. The prophets of old could give evidence of their “speaking in the name of Yahweh” by giving evidence by a “sign or a wonder”. This could be by knowledge possessed or by a demonstration of power. It might be a prediction or prophetic insight, or it might also be a miracle showing control over the laws of nature. Elisha, as a true prophet, was able to show all of these.

If it were a sign or wonder, there was always the possibility of coincidence or illusion. There are many things that our limited ability to reason does not allow us to explain. Our Lord clearly warned that “great signs and wonders” of a certain type can be displayed by false prophets, who can wield a dangerous ability to deceive (Matt 7:22; 24:24). In our day it is definitely by the pseudo-knowledge possessed. Since they would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect, we must ask, how then do the elect avoid deception? What possible defense do they have against the false teacher? The answer is clearly set out in Deuteronomy 13. The content of the prophet’s (or teacher’s) message was to be tested against the known, authoritative word

of Yahweh. If it contradicted, then separation (by stoning) was to occur.

We note the words of verse 3, ***“Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul”***.

Yahweh permits the emergence of false prophets/teachers to prove those who have the Truth that they might show themselves worthy of an entrance into the Kingdom (1 Cor. 11:19).

A final thought on this first condition in verse 5, ***“...So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee.”*** Through those false teachings the people became mentally and morally unclean. Purging the evil was the prescribed antidote just as withdrawal is today.

2. ***Deut. 13:6 - “If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers;”***

This is a warning not to allow one's relatives or close friends to lead them astray from the requirements of Yahweh. This is a much more trying situation when dealing with matters of the heart verses matters of the Word.

In this case the temptation could arise within a family or group of close friends. This was more subtle than the first case with a public declaration of a false prophet and the equally public response of the people. Here there was no sign or wonder but a more secret enticement which made it all the more acute because of family ties or close relationships. This would make for additional mental pressure in such a situation. We can go all the way back to Genesis 3 to find an example when Eve offered the forbidden fruit to Adam who consented to follow her in disobedience.

The one that is ***“thy friend which is as thine own soul”*** in verse 6, reminds us of that closeness of friendship as David and Jonathan experienced. One whom we would shy away from offending, even less deliver them to death. The flesh would quickly shrink from causing the death of one so close, ***“thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death”***! This was the enormity of the error of those who were moving the people away from Yahweh.

In this case, the same basic error is presented by Yahweh in vs 2 of Deut 13 ***“Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers”***. Yahweh is stating that the offered coaxing is entirely contradictory to the faith of the founding fathers of the nation (the pioneer brethren if you will). The magnitude of the peril is only matched by the severity of the penalty. How distressing an experience would that be to carry out?

Moses delivered the warning and our Lord endorsed it (Matt. 10:37; 12:49,50). Even the nearest and dearest must not be allowed to move us away from our God.

The prophets endorsed it as well (Micah 7:5-6). ***“Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom. For the son dishonoreth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man’s enemies are the men of his own house.”*** Though spoken of natural Israel the flesh of man is the same in all generations.

When Brother Thomas was asked about his fellowship position when dealing with those in error, he wrote, “No; if I agree with you in doctrine, I will forsake the assembling of myself with a body that opposes your doctrine, although it might require me to separate from the nearest and dearest.”

Verse 8 of Deuteronomy 13 tells us what our response should be, ***“Thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him:”*** Those who persist in error must be rejected.

When we read in verse 9 ***“...Thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death...”***, the flesh shrinks and declares such a law as unmerciful, yet Yahweh is concerned with the preservation and wellbeing of the flock. When Yahweh’s Truth is challenged today we hear pleas for love and pity when the Word clearly shows that His Truth must be upheld above all else. Love yes, tolerance no.

The principle of uncleanness is dramatically brought out in verse 10 ***“And thou shalt stone him with stones, that he die; because he hath sought to thrust thee away from Yahweh thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.”***

The method of stoning ensured that there was no personal contact with the guilty. Such contact would have been defiling as we have seen earlier. We reason this from the record of Exodus 19:12,13. The account reads **“there shall not a hand touch it”**. The pronoun should read “him” instead of “it” referring to the transgressor. Ceremonial uncleanness is transmittable from one person to another as we saw in Haggai 2.

Our Lord makes the same demand of loyalty on his disciples as Yahweh has in these verses.

3. Deut. 13:12,13 - ***“If thou shalt hear say in one of thy cities, which the Lord thy God hath given thee to dwell there, saying, Certain men, the children of Belial, are gone out from among you, and have withdrawn the inhabitants of their city, saying, let us go and serve other gods, which ye have not known;”***

This deals with a report of apostasy in some city in the land. How far away it was makes no difference. The Jews were mere tenants in the land for it belonged to Yahweh. **“The land shall not be sold forever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me”** (Lev 25:23). Their responsibility was to see that Yahweh’s will was carried out in all parts of the land. Failure to do so would see their ejection from the land. This condition involved those whose knowledge would become so perverted that they would raise their voices against the requirements of Yahweh and so lead the people astray.

We read in verse 14 **“Then shalt thou enquire, and make search, and ask diligently”**. It was the responsibility of all to investigate any form of apostasy and try to turn back those influenced by it. If not, in accordance with the laws of defilement, others would be influenced thereby thus affecting the nation. It is easier for many today to ignore the teachings of ecclesias afar off and to relegate it as a matter of local concern. This allows the leaven to grow and the influence to spread. The inquiry must be done in the most Christ like manner before any condemnation is made. We are admonished to “judge righteous judgments” and can only do so by being diligent in our approach.

If the investigation found the situation to be true, then the city and everything in it was to be destroyed and the people smitten. The severity of the punishment shows how great Yahweh’s indignation was against the apostasy of His people. We are not to use the sword today but have been given fellowship and doctrine

to contend with error from within. As we stated in the beginning, Paul directs the ecclesia to apply the Law's underlying principles. Make the examination and if guilty "To deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." 1 Cor. 5:5.

What many maybe failing to understand is Yahweh's viewpoint of sin (uncleanness). In verse 17 of this chapter we read **"...that Yahweh may turn from the fierceness of His anger..."** We quote here from the Expositor which provides an excellent explanation:

"This expression is used in Josh. 7:26 in relation to the sin of Achan. The "fierceness of Yahweh's anger" was assuaged by the national endorsement of the punishment meted out to the offender. Flesh deprecates the penalty of capital punishment for such a sin as Achan's, and decries it as unreasonable. But flesh does not view sin as God does. In its philosophy such a sin is considered of little consequence, and even doctrinal error is excused if the person manifests the "spirit" of the Truth. But the Bible treats apostasy as a drug that dulls the sensitivities of the mind to the realities of right living. The term "witchcraft", used of wrong doctrine (Gal. 5:20), is from the Greek pharmakia, and is derived from a root signifying the removing of an evil, or the inflicting of one, by means of a drug. It therefore denotes the stupefying effects of false religion acting as a drug upon the mind. Many who claim that the death penalty is a worthy punishment for those who destroy the characters, or lives, of others by unscrupulous drug-peddling deplore the disfellowshipping of those who spread false doctrine. But in the sight of Yahweh, false teaching is treated as "witchcraft", or the soothing effect of a drug that can induce a bad habit and destroy all hope of life eternal. Disciples must try and view such penalties from the standpoint of God, and understand His attitude towards sin. That is not easy; for being flesh, and all too conscious of one's own failings, the tendency is to excuse sin in others, and fail to view it from the standpoint of God."

Ignoring or tolerating any of these three conditions would bring about the fierceness of Yahweh's anger. The method that Yahweh gives the people to correct the situation is by a complete physical separation (death). We are not under the Law, but we are given the method of separation today which is by withdrawal (disfellowship). The principle of separating from the error is clearly demonstrated in both testaments.

Note particularly in the third situation, the city and its inhabitants were to be destroyed because of what certain men had done to pervert the people. Could there possibly have been those living in the city who didn't understand (this appears to be no excuse), those who were apathetic, those who had no problem with it because "we're all brethren" and we just need to get along. The error was not to be ignored and the people in other cities were to "inquire, and make search, and ask diligently; and, behold, if it be truth, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought among you; Thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, destroying it utterly, and all that is therein, and the cattle thereof, with the edge of the sword" (Deut 13:14,15). Is this not sticking your nose into another city's (ecclesia's) business? We wonder how those who cry "ecclesial autonomy" today would feel if they lived in one of those cities back then?

How lamentable that the people of a city should turn their backs on Yahweh by the works of a few 'men of Belial'. Such a falling away was in violation of Yahweh's laws and was an act of faithlessness as well. Such behavior would threaten the very stability of the nation. It was to be treated in the same manner as the cities of the Canaanites who Yahweh was driving out before them. Compare the fate of Jericho (Josh. 6:21, 24) with the exception of Rahab) with the fate pronounced upon a rebellious city. The end purpose was the same:

Deut 13:17,18 *"There shall cleave nought of the cursed thing to thine hand: that the Lord may turn from the fierceness of his anger, and shew thee mercy, and have compassion on thee, and multiply thee, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers; when thou shalt hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep all his commandments which I command thee this day, to do that which is right in the eyes of the Lord thy God."*

Conclusion

The dangers of deception for disciples in our day are no less subtle nor are the consequences less severe. Our Lord spoke of those in the day of his coming (AD 70) that there would be false prophets who would deceive, if possible, the very elect. What is it that distinguishes the elect then? Was it not to continue grounded in the Word which is the Sword of the Spirit used to defend the elect? If they stood firm in the Word it would not be possible to deceive them.

Today the "signs and wonders" are the dictates and philosophies of human reason not found in the Word. Isaiah gave good counsel for those in the days of Israel in the land up to and including our own days. His words offer comfort to them that fear Yahweh and threaten judgment on those who turn aside:

Isaiah 8:13-20 (NKJV) - *“The Lord of hosts, Him you shall hallow; Let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. He will be as a sanctuary, But a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel, As a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble; They shall fall and be broken, be snared and taken. Bind up the testimony, Seal the law among my disciples. And I will wait on the Lord, who hides His face from the house of Jacob; And I will hope in Him. Here am I and the children whom the Lord has given me! We are for signs and wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, who dwells in Mount Zion. And when they say to you, “Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter,” should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living? To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them”.*

Peter, knowing that his death would shortly come, similarly states in his second epistle to the disciples to hold fast to the faith. If they would follow his teachings, they would be delivered from “cunningly devised fables” that were present in the first century ecclesia right alongside the apostolic witness.

The voice from heaven that Peter, James, John, Paul and Jude heard was the same voice heard so long ago at Sinai. The principles of Yahweh are unchanging. They remain the same except for the method of execution. And so comes the warning of Peter (2 Pet 2:1,2;3:17):

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of... Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.”

The danger of losing the faith in these last days may not seem to be as great as that set before Israel in the Land. Some, I'm sure, imagine that there is a great gulf between the idolatrous culture of Canaan and our day. In any age when the truth of God's word is changed into a lie the people will be given over to a false hope. If our community were to lose its hold upon the faith which is our hope, then the character of our community will also change as completely as did Israel.

Whatever theories are adduced to explain the laws of uncleanness, the Scriptures themselves emphatically associate them with the holiness of God. The laws of purification contained in Leviticus chapters 11-17, were laws designed to impress upon the people that they were a unique people before Yahweh and the world. Those laws were placed side by side with

the laws of holiness or separation in Leviticus chapters 18-27. For example, in the passages which list unclean foods, the holiness of Yahweh is emphasized as the reason for avoiding unclean foods.

The regulations regarding uncleanness set Israel apart from other nations. These were object lessons, principles and foreshadowing's (Heb. 8:5; 10:1) of God's holiness which cannot co-exist with the uncleanness of sin. Just a thought, if the Law was a schoolmaster, doesn't that tell us that there are principles in the Law that are just as applicable and supported in the writings of the New Testament? If not, then did Yahweh differentiate in His principles between the Law of Moses and the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus?

I'm sure there is more, but is this not sufficient to show that the principle of separation from error is taught in the OT as well as the NT? Is not that which causes ceremonial defilement as simple as those with whom we associate and tolerate and that in order to protect the body, that which defiles must be taken "outside the camp" and dealt with?

Lou Locklear

EDITORIAL FLYLEAF

UPCOMING TRUTH GLEANER PAMPHLET

Please note that the two articles by brethren Locklear and Bryan, are borrowed from an upcoming pamphlet being put out by Truth Gleaner Publications, that is to deal expressly with the errors found in the Pearce/Gates document.

THE U.S. ELECTION - WHAT NOW?

Following the dramatic BREXIT vote by Great Britain in June, it is quite the understatement to say that the political direction of the United States has taken a remarkable u-turn with the election of Donald Trump. Like the BREXIT vote it has been compared to a political "earthquake" - reminiscent of Scriptural language.

Quite honestly, we were not sure which way this election would turn. We were able to see the workings of the Elohim in either result. Whatever the future might hold in regard to the U.S. impact on global events, especially as they relate to Israel, Russia and Europe, we can be most certain that the last 8 years of the Obama Administration have been EXTREMELY significant. To name a few reasons:

- The U.S. has been essentially bankrupted with a mind boggling expansion of the national debt, making it virtually impossible for a President Trump to move forward with many of the domestic investments and improvements ("Make America Great Again") that he has promised - including the expansion and upgrade of the Armed Forces which were greatly degraded by the political

decisions made over the last 8 years, and by the fighting of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan under George W. Bush.

- The American population is deeply and passionately divided on political and social issues. It is essentially a country at war with itself as opposing views of the “liberal” and “conservative” bend have diametrically and uncompromising positions. Based upon the unprecedented vitriol and socialistic (“frog-like”) movement that is vowing to prevent a Trump presidency, even after the election, this country is far from seeing a settled population or political landscape. A Trump administration will no doubt be given little peace by a radical media and celebrity culture to govern. It is a radical but influential and global movement that is bent on delegitimizing and handicapping any attempts at reversing the social and political transformation forced by the Obama Administration.
- The promotion of the so called “Arab Spring” by the Obama Administration has left the Middle East in absolute chaos. Adding to this has been the disengagement of American influence in the region and the promotion of Iranian power.
- Israel has been a casualty of the Obama years, receiving unwarranted degrees of criticism and arm twisting by the U.S., emboldening Israel’s enemies such as Iran.
- American foreign policy philosophy to “lead from behind” has allowed the reemergence of Russian power - not only in the Middle East, but in its European expansion and influence the world over. The rise of the Russian “Autocrat” has been the direct result of American foreign policy over the last 8 years.

As of the writing of these comments, Trump has already reached out to Great Britain by telling Theresa May that the UK, was a “*very, very special place for me and for our country.*” The U.S. had been moving away from Britain due to the “anti-colonialism” biases of the Obama Administration. This certainly indicates a move to reenergize the British/U.S. alliance - reaffirming the U.S.’s place as a Tarshish nation.

Even of greater significance, Trump has also reached out to Israel stating, “*I look forward to strengthening the unbreakable bond between our great nations... I know very well that Israel is the one true democracy and defender of human rights in the Middle East and a beacon of hope to countless people.*” Before the election Trump had revealed his intention of moving the American Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in a move to formally recognize Jerusalem as the capitol of Israel. He has also stated that the Israeli settlements should not be a barrier to peace with the Palestinians, and that any peace agreement “*must be negotiated between the parties themselves, and not imposed on them by others.*”

Trump’s views, as they now stand, are certainly not in line with the globalist world-view in general. If Trump proceeds on his declared course we will no doubt see fierce backlash and alignment among the nations that will further solidify that Latter-Day great divide between those many nations that fall under Russian axis of control, and the few nations that fall into the Tarshish alliance - with Israel caught in the middle. We continue to watch - **YAHWEH’S WILL BE DONE!**