

"HETEROGENEOUS ADMIXTURE."

Much of the present day contribution from "pulpit and" and press which, to a large extent, is engaging the attention of the people reminds one of the novice who decided to cook a dish of food. He dumped into the dish most anything and everything in sight. Some of the material that went into the concoction was very good; some of it was very bad.

When the food was finally prepared and cooked, there were just two things to be said of it: it was nameless and useless. In the process of cooking it obnoxiously offended the nasal sensibilities of the countryside; and, when eaten it very thoroughly wrecked the cast iron stomach of the eater.

Here is how the proposition works as regards the many, so-called religious messages: the Scriptures are twisted, dwarfed, juggled, dissected, vivisected, criticized, opinionated, and confounded.

Then, to this ruthless treatment there is added. an abundance of fanciful, frivolous, fictitious, factious, fatuous, man-created theological, theoretical, theosophical, and psychological ideas

As a result of all this what can be expected but a conclusion merging into utter exasperation ?

Thinking man thinks either in conformity with or contrary to the revealed Word of the living God. Cp. Isa. 55:8.

"My thoughts are not your thoughts, saith the Lord."
Whenever man's message is made up of man's thoughts

as" against the thoughts of God, then that message becomes misleading and destructive.

To be what God intends it, a message must contain and be in harmony with the Word of God. Then again, it must contain and be in harmony with the Word of God
RIGHTLY DIVIDED.

Note the following texts: Deut. 18:19", 20; 1 Cor. 2:13; Eph. 6:19; Col. 4:3; 1 Tim. 2:1; 2 Tim. 2:15, 16.

The further one is from rightly divided truth, the worse the mixture

It is indeed pathetic to find men in the pulpit plunging, grasping, gasping, struggling, staggering, slipping, sliding, stumbling, in an attempt to deliver a message that utterly disregards the Dispensational, Distinctions of The Holy Scriptures.

Many preachers take great pride in the number of books they have read or are reading. It is well to read books, but only to the extent that such reading does not deprive one of time and attention that ought to be given to The Book.

When the writings of man predominate in any message, then we may know that the Word of God has been neglected.

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by Russell H. Schaefer

THE INQUIRER

**It is a good indication of earnest thinking when people
ask questions.**

**QUESTION: "What is the proper Translation and
Interpretation of Matt. 25:1?"**

ANSWER: (1)—The Translation. "THEN (at that time) will be compared the kingdom of the heavens to ten virgins who, having taken their own torches, went out to a meeting of the bridegroom."

(2)—The Interpretation. The word "THEN" studied in the light of Matt 24 shows that the event will take place after the great tribulation. Matt. 25:13 gives additional light, and shows that the action of the ten virgins is in connection with the coming of the Son of Man, not for The Church of which Christ is Head, but to the earth in behalf of Israel and for earth-dominion. (Cp. Dan. 7:13, 14.)

The difficulty with most of the Commentaries and Expositors, Preachers and Teachers is that they make "Interpretation subordinate to Application. This, of course, is a complete reversal of 'God's order. Interpretation must come first; Application is to follow, but must not in any sense violate the Interpretation.

We herewith cite a comment found in *The Cambridge Bible*, viz: "The condition of the Church at the End of the World shall be like the condition of the ten virgins described in the parable."

Just what church is meant we do not know. Neither do we know just what is meant by the expression: "end of the World."

This present age (eon) will be brought to an end by the coming of the Son of Man to the earth, but The Church of which Christ is Head will have been taken to the

Glory before the end of this present age. Cp. Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians.

There can be no exact Interpretation of Matt. 25 without duly respecting the word "THEN." When one learns to regard and study the very words of Scripture he is saved from Commentary confusion. What is it but confusion when we find "the kingdom of the heavens," "the ten virgins," "the bride," all representing the church.

The expression: "Kingdom of the heavens" is clearly explained in Dan. 2:44.

When we see the word "THEN" in a passage in our New Testament it behooves us to read the context; or what goes before the word, in order to discover its meaning and import. The enquirer by reading what precedes Matt. 25:1, by consulting Matt. 24: 15-26, 24:27-81 will discover "WHEN" the "THEN" will be fulfilled.

The ten virgins cannot be the Bride, for five of them are shut out from the marriage. We must pay attention to the significance of numbers. The TEN virgins represent ALL Israel nationally considered.

The Bride is made up of the election, or an elect remnant, saved out of The Nation.

For further study of this question we submit the following texts: Matt. 9:15, Jno. 3:39, Rev. 19:7, Matt. 8:12, Isa. 25:9.

H. N. B.

PART I

BAPTISM DURING ACTS

by Russell H. Schaefer

Mark 16: 15-18

He also told them, Go into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He who believes and is *baptized* shall be saved; but he who disbelieves shall be condemned. And these signs shall follow the believers: In My name they shall expell demons; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall pick up serpents, and if they drink anything fatal it shall not injure them in the least. They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall become well.

(The Berkeley Version)

In verse 16 of this commission there is a binding together of HE WHO BELIEVES and IS BAPTIZED with the statement SHALL BE SAVED. While there is no question as to its truth, the reader is asked, for the moment, to withhold his judgment on which Biblical *baptism* is hereto referred. In spite of

predisposition of the reader to insert mentally the word "Water, " the text itself does not identify the *baptismal* "element nor the *baptizer*. However, it does state the result and, in view of this being so vital, we dare not state clearly what is obscure in the text.

Reserving comment on the *baptizer* and *baptismal* element in verse 16 until a future study, comment is required on verses 17 and 18, which refer to a distant baptism. This is the fulfillment, or the filling out, of the *baptism* that John the Baptist predicted as being the work of Christ in Matt. 3:11; Mk. 1:8; Lk. 3:16; Jno.1:33. "I indeed have *baptized* you with water: but he shall baptize you with The Holy Spirit" (Mark 1:8). Truly, if the Kingdom setting of this

commission had been fully operative, the prediction of Joel 2:25-32 would have been literally fulfilled. Israel would have been restored; His spirit would have been poured out upon all flesh; the royal city of Zion would have had her king and Jerusalem her temple for the worship of all nations. The signs that follow in this commission coincide with the signs that followed the Power From The On-High *Baptism* in the Book of Acts. Their essential relationship cannot be easily evaded. The difference involved with the commission in Mark 16 is one of degree -- not of content. In Mark the world and the Kingdom Gospel are in view; in Acts the preliminary promissory outpouring of this POWER is on a relative few (Cp. Lk. 24:47). If the condition of Israel turning again to the Lord had been met, then, through Israel's instrumentality, the nations would experience life from the dead -- as stated in the later words of Paul (Cp. Rom. 11:12-15). In spite of the long and difficult ministry of the Apostles to Israel, she remained adamant in her unbelief, and these signs, instead of being the means of ministering to the nations via tongues and healings, became a snare, a trap and a stumbling block (Rom. 11:9). Israel's bounty became the measure of her judgment.

In each of the texts cited - Matt. 3:11; Mk. 1:8; Lk. 3:16; Jno. 1:33 - Christ was to be the BAPTIZER. Where then is His BAPTISM? The ELEMENT prophesied was other than the BAPTIZER. It was distinguished in the words of Christ in His instruction to the Apostles in Acts 1:8. Baptism INTO CHRIST is not the same thing as BAPTISM BY CHRIST INTO THE GIFTS and POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

THE BAPTISMAL ELEMENT DEFINED

And, behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high.

Lk. 24:49

In this verse we have the two-fold ministry of The Holy Spirit involved. First is the gift of POWER FROM ON HIGH with its attendant signs and miracles, as readily seen in Acts 1:8:

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost (Spirit) is come upon you.

This was an O. T. truth as expressed in Isaiah 44:3b. ..

I will pour My Spirit upon they seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring.

Second, in John 14:16, 17, Christ prayed to The Father for another Comforter, the Spirit of Truth that would dwell in them. Not the least of the Spirit's ministry would be to authenticate the Apostolic spoken word so that the oral ministry would, indeed, be the genuine, veritable and bonafide word of God. No less important than the *Baptismal Power From On High* was The Holy Spirit's spoken Word through these men that had accompanied Christ; His first message through them in Acts was to the Covenant People of God. God had not yet cast away His ancient People. It seems almost superfluous to mention that no typical Gentile is ministered to by the first Apostles of Christ. Seven years after the opening of the Book of Acts we do see a reluctant Peter being commanded to communicate with Cornelius (Acts 10), but this man was far from being a typical Gentile because, as a proselyte, he fasted, prayed and gave alms. It took a supernatural vision (Acts 10:9-17, 28) before Peter would communicate with even this type of Gentile. We can only conclude that there was something very essential about reaching Israel inasmuch as there is no record of any of the first Apostles ever

conducting a world-wide ministry among typical Gentiles. Paul's ministry to the nations during Acts was not completely without a distinct bearing upon Israel, according to Rom. 11:13, 14....

**I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:
If by any means I may provoke to emulation them
which are my flesh, and might save some of them.**

This aspect of Paul's Gentile ministry did provoke Israel, but not to salvation, rather to deeper hatred and unbelief, until at the close of the Acts era Israel was no longer in any prior place of blessing. It is a tragic mistake to read Paul's post-Acts Gentile ministry into the Book of Acts and to seek to harmonize that which God has made distinct.

POWER FROM ON HIGH was to be the BAPTISMAL ELEMENT ... power as evidenced in gifts such as tongues, healings, miracles of one sort or another. Dr. E. W. Bullinger's book, *The Giver and His Gifts*¹ keenly points out the distinction between the GIVER and His Gifts, i.e., signs, miracles, etc. The Greek text of 1 Cor. 12:13 reads, "For indeed IN (*EN*) one Spirit we all into one body were *baptized* ... and all one spirit were given to drink." It was Christ who *baptized* those believers in The Spirit's power and for the operation of whatever purpose God then had in view. This in no way sets aside the indwelling Spirit in the heart and life of the believer. Nor is this **POWER FROM ON HIGH BAPTISM** to be equated with The Holy Spirit's sealing of the believer IN CHRIST (in Eph. 1:13 the text, as it stands in the A.V., lends credence to what has been called the "second blessing"). As read in the Greek there is no suggestion that this sealing is some later work of grace. There is no "after that"

in the Greek, which reads:

1) Obtainable from Oscar M. Baker, Rt. 2, Warsaw, Ind. 66

In Whom also ye, hearing the Word of truth, the gospel of the salvation of you, in Whom also believing ye were sealed with the Spirit of promise the Holy.

Eph. 1:13

The sealing was not one of external sign-gifts but was by the placing of the believer into Christ and, thereby, signifying surity, identification with Christ; insuring family likeness; assuring the family heritage; and much more. It is tragic that "life in Christ Jesus" has been paired with token sign-gifts. Some erstwhile believers, lacking the gifts of which the Scriptures speak as being so

freely given, seek, by emotional meetings and means, those gifts which are not now the God given order of the day. Pseudo-gifts have thrown into disrepute this tremendous Baptism by Christ. We would point out that Salvation is a free gift and not the result of works (Eph. 2:8-10) - that God declares the believer "COMPLETE IN CHRIST" (Col. 2:10) aside from all subjective emotional experiences, human merit or tradition. Our salvation and redemption rest on a much more secure foundation than the whims of our emotions or our minds. Thank God for the full revelation of His Grace that causes us to rest our faith in God's perfect Saviour. The heart might well up in songs of joy and rejoicing because of His perfections, but, even lacking this, God's Word of Grace is still sure and steadfast, in spite of how we feel at any given moment.

The words of the risen Christ to the Apostles in Acts 1:8 use the promise of John the Baptist as a text for the forthcoming baptism. Note the words of Christ in Acts 1:5:

Because John indeed baptized in water, but ye IN SPIRIT will be baptized (Holy) not after these many days.

In Acts 1:8 this is elaborated to:

But ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.

This power was varied in its manifestation and operation but was illustrated in Acts 2:4 as the ability to speak other languages. This was an orderly and recognizable language to those devout Jewish pilgrims visiting Jerusalem from the surrounding nations, as is stated so well in Acts 2:5-11. This evidence of God being in their midst was in accordance with the spirit of Joel's prophecy when he foretold of Israel's glorious last days and the judgment of the nations in the Day of the Lord (cp. Acts 2:16-21). While these signs and miracles were common in the streets of Jerusalem, they were unknown in Paul's post-Acts ministry to Gentiles. A miracle in Nero's court might have changed history (cp. Acts 5:12-16),

Another result of this *BAPTISM* by Christ is seen in Acts 4:31-34, where, subsequent to this baptism, there was communal ownership of property, communal selling, sharing and living ... all, we must stress, on a voluntary basis. This was in keeping with the soon hoped for Messianic Kingdom that was to follow if the conditions layed down by Peter in Acts 3: 19, 20 had been fulfilled. In keeping with this Davidic kingdom-hope was the death of Ananias and Sapphira for lying about the sale price of their property. This communal brotherhood was based upon the premise of Lk. 18:28-30 and Matt. 19:27-29, where the recompense for forsaking all was to be made when Christ would be enthroned and the twelve Apostles would be the appointed rulers over the twelve tribes of Israel (cp. Matt. 19: 28). The present dispensation, ushered in upon the deflection and setting aside of Israel, ceases all such practices. The lengthening shadows of Israel's soon departing glory, expressed in I Thess. 2:15:

Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men....

would postpone those things that belonged to Israel's peace. Instead of selling their goods and not working in anticipation of Christ's return, the Israelites were cautioned by Paul to work with their own

hands, and if they would not work, they should not eat (1 Thess. 4:11 and 2 Thess. 3:10).

This same "*Baptism in Spirit*" was not limited to the initial Apostles or believers in Acts but continued throughout the thirty years or more covered by this Acts period (Cp. Acts 10:44-46 — with signs following — and Acts 11:15-17). The reaction of Gentiles to miracles was to worship initially the performer of the miracle -- a practice never followed by the Jews. For instances of this kind of worshipping see Acts 14:11-18 (Paul and Barnabas), Acts 10:25 (Peter) and Acts 28:6 (Paul). The Lord Jesus did not seek miracle-made disciples and would not commit Himself to that type of credulous person -- for we read:

Now when He was in Jerusalem at the pas sever, in the feast day, many believed in His Name, when they saw the miracles which He did. But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew what was in man.
Jno. 2:23, 24

The miracles of our Lord and those attending and following the Power From On High *Baptism* must stand on another and distinct basis from the mere miracle-worker. It is only when they were performed within the context of the Kingdom purposes of God and within the framework of the Word of God that the miracles lent God given Sanction to the performer. Aside from the kindness of God seen in these acts of healing, their attestation was to be to the person of Christ and His glory (or that of the Fattier) whether the miracle was done by Christ or by one He baptized in Spirit. In Acts 8:9-24, when Simon the Sorcerer thought to buy this "gift" with money (intrigued with seeing the miracles and signs), he almost lost his life. According to some, the proper place for Christ to perform the miracle would have been in Herod's courts or in Pilate's Hall. But He remained silent then just as He did on the cruel tree. Miracles may confirm a God given faith but are never a substitute. Simple faith in a God-appointed Saviour does not need the booster shots of signs and

miracles. The greatest miracle of all is within the inner man ... and the heart knows beyond and without external miracles.

The gift of languages and the expounding on what is spoken ... oh, what a wonderful gift for would-be missionaries throughout the world! If certain groups claiming to have this "gift" do have it, then they are remiss in their missionary work. Unlike those hearing the understandable languages listed in Acts 2:1-10, no one on the foreign field of diverse language hears in his own tongue the wonderful works of God -- unless the missionary has gone to language school or has learned the language the slow, laborious way. We reject out of hand the gibberish spoken at emotionally packed meetings which capitalize on these passages. It is not of God; it is not an orderly language; it is not spoken understandably; the spirit of those so moved are not under their own control. Anticipating misuse of these gifts, Paul hedges them about with safeguards in 1 Cor. 14.

The 12th chapter of 1 Cor.² gives a rather full treatise on this Power From On High *Baptism*. It is at once instructive, corrective and correlative of all sign-gifts and miracles. The remarkable thing about this chapter is the very last verse:

But covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. 1 Cor. 12:31

Arthur S. Way's translation of the same verse gives a little different emphasis than does the A.V.:

It is for you to emulously to seek the higher gifts. Nay, none of them should represent the summit of your aspirations. I now point you to a path that leads to heights beyond all heights....

2) A short commentary on 1 Cor. 12 and a few passages from chapter 14 will be in a future issue.

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It was not that Paul was forbidding the exercise of sign-gifts, nor was his intent to contrast sign-gifts with a more excellent way. Was it not rather that the very need for these sign-gifts and the *baptism* that they betokened pointed to a very Imperfect state? Healings speak of illnesses; languages remind one of the confusion imposed at Babel; apostolates, helps, miracles, wonders -- all remind us of the decay about us in personal or corporate bodily functions. Otherwise these unusual manifestations would not have been called forth. It is true that the **MORE EXCELLENT WAY, as broadened out in the 13th chapter of 1 Cor., is a finer tuning of our motivation for Christian service. It is adjustment for what ends we serve and the divine refinement of all ... the how, why and wherefore of our life relative to God and to others. We cannot escape any condemnation we might level at others for their derelictions in this realm.**

It has been customary to use **THIS MORE EXCELLENT WAY as a rebuttal of sign-gifts, especially by those seeking an explanation of the lack of bonafide sign-gifts or by those sickened by the charlantanic emotional, hypnotic pseudo-workings of so-called healers. Paul never meant to imply that when Christ healed, raised the dead, cleansed the lepers, fed the multitudes, or did any of His miracles, He did these in less than perfect love. The whole cycle of Christ's**

earthly life was **THE EXCELLENT WAY**. It is interesting to note an unusual factor in Christ's miracles. He made a direct point of telling the one so healed or worked upon **TO TELL NO ONE OF IT** (Of course, the public miracle of feeding the multitudes could not be hid.). In Mk. 7:35, 36, the deaf and dumb man healed was admonished thusly. In Mk. 8:23-26, the blind man was lead out of the town so that no one would see the performance of the miracle, and then Christ added, "Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town." In Lk. 8:51, Christ shut out the multitudes when He was about to restore Jairus's daughter. Finally, He put outside the death chamber even those whom He had first allowed in. He charged them that they should tell no man what was done (Lk. 8:51-56). Even the

great transfiguration in Mk. 9:9 was not to be broadcast about until after His resurrection. Christ was no cheap trickster performing miracles to astound the credulous and, by this means, to gain followers. That some blazoned it abroad led to His scathing remarks in Jno. 6: 26-66. The multitudes have ever wanted the miracles of food, signs and wonders, but they do not want HIM -- the greatest sign God ever bestowed upon mankind. Christ was too sensitive to human feelings to want to make an ostentatious display of miracles and healings ... or to perform these to prove His deity, which needed no proof. Rather, because He was **DEITY** manifest in flesh, He performed miracles, healings, resurrections, etc., for the reason He came ... to heal earth's broken things, to bind up the broken hearted, to restore the sin-sick, the weary and the lonely. The disciples could well ask, "What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him" (Lk. 8:25). Out of His perfections He wrought wonders, not for effect nor ever for Himself. Miracles became Him; they robbed Him and

graced Him as a common dress. On miracle-made disciples Jno. 2:23b, 24 is a commentary full of meaning:

... many believed in His Name, when they saw the miracles which He did: But Jesus did not COMMIT HIMSELF UNTO THEM, because He knew all men.

He did not own such disciples. If you will look again at the life of Christ, you will see that He ever appealed to the WORD OF GOD, to this -- miracles were incidental.

The MORE EXCELLENT WAY of which Paul speaks is a pathway that goes on to heights beyond all heights, to depths and wide spacious plateaus and vast horizons that will cause us to fathom the very motive and object of creation itself and our part in it. It will usher us into that which will outlast our little day, and its stream

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and flood tide will sweep aside all that is unworthy and outworn. It will bear us into His presence so we may fellowship with Him, grasping, at last, something of the very essential nature and being of God.

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CHARITY in the A.V. of 1 Cor. 13

Before progressing further with a short development of 1 Cor. 13 as the MORE EXCELLENT WAY, it might be well to consider briefly the word translated CHARITY in this same chapter, which is the GREEK word *Agape* (Ag-ah' pay). This is love motivated from within itself and choosing its object from a decision Of the will. He has set His love upon us, not in our worthiness but because of the very nature of His love. It must be shared. It must have an object and carry that object to great and glorious goals. This is in contrast with the Greek *Phileo* (Fil-eh' o) - brotherly love, love of friends or love between the sexes. This is generally based upon mutual attractions, ties of birth or mutual interests. *Phileo*, to kiss or to be fond of, represents tender affection. It is needful in our lives and relationships. It sweetens the bonds of friendship and is the felicity of marriage. We all want to be thought worthy in someone's eyes. Both words are used of God ... The Father's love for The Son, Jno. 3:35 (*agapa*) and Jno. 5: 20 (*philei*). Both words are used of individuals ... loving Christ, loved of Christ, loved of The Father throughout (Jno. 14:21) ... *agapao*. The Father holding forth a tender affection toward those loving His Son is seen in Jno. 16:27. The Father looked upon them as worthy because they had believed in the mission and work of The Son. Eph. 1:6 expresses it so beautifully as being "Accepted in the Beloved." Christ set His love on John without thought of merit or demerit (Jno.. 13:23) as they reclined at supper. This same disciple was spoken of with warmth and tenderness as he hurried toward the empty tomb; he saw and believed that his good Friend was also his Lord and his God. Never is *phileo*

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used of men to God. It is not that the word is unexpressive but rather too dependent upon mere fluctuating emotions. Hence, it is not pure enough to be used of most holy relationship with God The Father. To LOVE HIM is to believe Him, trust Him, commit ourselves to Him forever REGARDLESS of circumstances that may mold our emotions of the moment. The most interesting example of the usage of these two words is found in Jno. 21:15-17. Poor Peter could not rise to the more noble word Christ used -- not after having just denied Him. Peter had been so sure that he would never forsake Christ. Suddenly he was not at all sure of the nature of his love for Christ. Was it selfish? Was it ready for service? Was it necessary for Christ to adopt his weak response and question his regard for Christ? It grieved Peter. Such an examination from the One Who knows all things would likely grieve us, too ... 3

Because *agape* is prompted by principle and by a choice of will rather than the loveableness of the object God can indeed love the world universally while abhorring its character. It is this same love

3) Jno. 21:15-17

Christ's Question Peter's Reply

I- "lovest thou Me more than "Thou knowest that I love these?" *philio* Thee"

II- "lovest *agapas* thou Me ?" "Thou knowest that I love *philo* Thee."

II- "*phileis* fond art thou of "Lord, all things me ? Me?" Thou knowest, Thou knowest that I love *philo-am* fond of Thee."

The pathos of Peter's reply might be a commentary on the depth of our love.

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that goes out of its way to redeem its enemies (Rom. 5:8). It is not that God has no tender affection for those IN CHRIST, but we can count it fortunate that His love is on another and different basis than that of the variable and emotional response most of us experience.

PART II

THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY, 1 Cor. 13

In this "Hymn of Love" Paul uses the subjective "I" with a view to vividness and impact upon the reader and in the 12th verse changes the "I" to the conjunctive "we." The larger picture we should view in this chapter is the true Christian life, for we are indeed looking upon a wonderful portrait of the life of Christ -- the way of life meant to be lived by the believer. It was lived out in a full measure in the life of Paul, even though he would be the first to point out his shortcomings. The Reformation looked upon Paul as the legal doctrinaire of justification by faith, and this, somehow, has colored all our thinking of Paul. That his motivating power was divine love comes almost as a surprise. In the first verse he repudiates all other motives for speaking, and he crossed land and sea to tell of the glories of Christ; in the second verse he rejects any other motive for prophetic foresight and utterance, for grasping all mystic secrets, for attaining all knowledge and exercising all faith. Paul places all Christian service or any service on the balance scale of divine love in the third verse -- even martyrdom. His conclusions in these verses brand much of our communication as so much noise, our attainments leaving man as nothing in the sight of God and our service without essential profit ... all worthless because love is not the motivating power. The Law of Moses never hewed the line so closely; the prophets of old never demanded so much. Those who think of love as an attractive, easy way of life should try it sometime.

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If, like Paul, you would be a missionary to others, the first basic need and utmost goal is a grasp of the love of God and to let it grasp and hold you. To be sustained like Paul in trials, sufferings, persecutions, imprisonments, hunger and nakedness, you must learn of love, if you would know the essence of all Christian service, if you would know the language that bridges every barrier, if you would know the giving that brings fruit, if you would learn the knowledge that builds up - then you must learn the Love of God in Christ. So it was with Paul, and inasmuch as he did this, he reflected Christ.

**If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels yet
have not love I have become sounding brass or a
clanging cymbal.**

1 Cor. 13:1

To speak with the TONGUES OF MEN, as in the context of the 12th and 14th chapters of 1 Cor., would be to speak with the languages(4) or dialects of men under the power of God; that is, languages and dialects the speaker had not been taught and were not native to him.

(4) DIALEKTOS, the conversational language or dialectical form of language of a people or province ... occurs in Acts 2:6. A good illustration is in Acts 1:19, where the local phraseology is meant. A language, yea, even its fine shades of dialect, is known to The Spirit of God; it is mistakenly translated "tongue" in Acts 1:19; 2:8; 21:40; 22:2; 26:14. LXX Esth. 9:26, "in their language, ..."

GLOSSA, a physical phenomena describing the flame that appeared at Pentecost -- Acts 2:3, "... cloven tongues like as of fire." It was used of the physical speaking organ by that name in Mk. 7:33; Rom. 3:13; 14:11; 1 Cor. 14:9; Phil. 2:11; James 1:26; 3:5, 6, 8; 1 Pet. 3:10; 1 Jno. 3:18; etc. it was also used of a language, orderly and

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This gift, under the POWER FROM ON HIGH BAPTISM, had been listed last by Paul but is the first considered, possibly for the reason that the Corinthian believers placed too high a value upon this gift or worked up what is known today as "tongues" or *glossotomia*. The mention of "angels" goes beyond any gift of language hitherto mentioned in the Word of God. In the above passage not only is "language" the meaning but the skillful usage of that language. Linguistics was highly praised among the Greeks, and one must admit that the skillful use of words has changed the course of history; has called forth the

noblest in man as well as the most base. Illustrations of the power of words for good or evil are: the call to courage by Churchill, the inflaming speeches of Hitler, the Gettysburg address of Lincoln, the simple 23rd Psalm of David, the Sermon on the Mount of Christ, or even this Psalm of Love we are now studying. Words can cause a stock market crash or embroil the world in a bloodbath. Angel's speech? Yes, Matt. 1:20, 21 records and Angel's speech to Joseph:

understandable, whether of a tribe, people or a nation, in Rev. 5:9; 7:9; 10:11; 11:9; 13:7; 14:6; 17:15. Another usage in Scripture is in Acts 2:4-13 referring to the gift of speaking in another orderly language not native to the speaker. This is a reversal of the "confounding of languages" in Gen. 11:7-9, and was to be SIGN to unbelievers -- not fellow believers (1 Cor. 14:22). If practiced today by missionaries going to a foreign land and super-naturally speaking the native "tongue," we would have an excellent example of what happened in Acts when the foreign-born Jewish pilgrims asked in amazement, "... how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? ... we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God" (Acts 2:8-11). In spite of this wonderful gift Paul felt compelled, under inspiration, to quote the prophetic word in 1 Cor. 14:21, "... and yet for all that will they not hear Me, saith the Lord."

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Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee
Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of
The Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son, and
thou shalt call His Name JESUS (Jehovah is Salvation):
for He shall save His people from their sins.

Also see Matt. 2:13; Lk. 1:13-20; 28-38. The angel's message to the shepherds in Lk, 2:8-14 was a spoken message. Nothing is said about "singing." The Book of Revelation abounds in messages of angels ... each one full of poignancy though given in the language of men. How much more meaningful if the angels had spoken in their

own tongue!

There must also be the thought of inspired eloquence in the usage of languages. Paul makes the vital point that divine love must animate and motivate all communication or the ensuing result will be the echoing brass or clanging cymbal of warfare. Speech without love makes us all instruments of warfare -- whether domestic, social, national, or oftentimes international. We become like the ancient army's signal corps-men beating out the din of battle instead of men of peace. In "yet have not love" -- God, through Paul, evaluates speech, regardless of how high and mighty, as just so much noise if without love. This is true of eloquence, music, singing, of any method of communication. Knowing our own weakness, can we not still say it? If we would speak for God and to men, if we would know tranquility of hearth and nation, if we would fain bring peace to the troubled heart or the world, WE MUST LEARN THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE. Without LOVE this poor world will bring doom upon itself. It will die for lack of this single, simple thing. No one will have cared enough. We are not talking here about weakness nor compromise with evil but real LOVE. It is the hardest way, but without it there is no hope.

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And if I have prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to transfer mountains, yet have not love, I AM NOTHING. 1 Cor. 13:2

Prophetic insight; knowing all mysteries; knowing and having all knowledge -- one might as well say it plainly -- "though I be as God in these realms!" In this verse Paul is indeed sweeping these gifts to their ultimate goal. Each gift within itself, even on a lesser plain, would be more than enough, but here Paul is speaking of the supernatural, superlative, all-embracing gifts of each domain. It is ALL PROPHETIC INSIGHT, UNDERSTANDING ALL MYSTER-IES, HAVING ALL KNOWLEDGE AND ALL FAITH -- faith in the power and ability to perform even the proverbially impossible feats of moving mountains, of so exercising power that there is no limit to it's operation, no limits imposed by question or unbelief. No man has ever exercised faith on such a basis. It all enters the realm of the Creator Himself ... "YET HAVE NOT LOVE, I AM NOTHING." Prophetic insight? Without love -- NOTHING. Knowledge of every

mystery and knowing all things? Without love -- NOTHING. What a judgment of all human attainment! What a standard for searching out knowledge and for the mastery of all that is mysterious now! Man has always searched, has sought to know, and some have been giants of faith, whether for good or ill. But the last word will be GOD'S. NOTHING, NOTHING, NOTHING, WITHOUT DIVINE LOVE. It is His verdict. It is His way. It will judge all things.

And if I feed all my possessions away and if I deliver my body over in order that I be burned; yet have not love, I PROFIT NOTHING. 1 Cor. 13:3 (Lenski translation)

Luther wrote: "To give is, indeed, a fruit of love though not yet

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love itself. Love is a spiritfult gift which moves the heart and not only the hands. LOVE is the name, not for what the hands do, but for what the heart feels." The works of love are thus often imitated by those who have no love and yet desire to enjoy the praise of love.

The measure of giving is the amount of love that goes with the gift. You cannot take a gift from God without taking His Hand -- He has ordained it. When He gave Christ as the Gift of God, He gave all His Love with Him. Have you given .without love? All of us have. Mark me, to provide the needs of physical hunger is to do much ... a thing that needs to be done. But this is not enough. The inner man must be fed, too; one must know that he is loved, needed and wanted. **THEN YOUR GIVING AND MINE ARE SOME-THING.** If you only fill a man's rice bowl, he might hate you. (I recall that as a hungry young boy, I stopped at a wealthy home to ask for food, expressing a willingness to work for it. The owner obliged me by throwing crusts of bread outside at my feet and saying, "Here is food for you." Even now I feel the same humiliating emotion I felt that day. The man had reduced me to a level lower than his dogs.) True giving may, at times, mean withholding. It should not be confused with indulgence nor

substituted for moral self-reliance. Most of all, **GIVING WITH LOVE** is giving of one's self. It is caring enough that others may know you are a friend in joy or in sorrow, in abundance or in want. Simple Christian friendship is a rare gift at any time.

Paul next takes up the ultimate expressing of service to a cause -- giving of one's self to burning. The cause is not identified but the deed is. Was Paul thinking of the Book of Daniel and the furnace of fire? What is the measure of our deeds? What is the measure of fame? Can it be that no deed really lives unless prompted by such

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love? Will all other deeds die with the doer? Is it indeed the exercise of Christ-like love that makes all gifts, all knowledge, all faith, all service glow with divine nobility, that enriches both the giver and the receiver? Does this make the smallest gift, the mutest message, the least service far outweigh all that is done for vain glory? Dear friend, do you see what Paul is saying here? This path leads higher and higher, and if you are busy seeking sign-gifts, then seek this one ... a heart full of Christ-like love for God, for family, for friends and for the friendless. Let this be the self-effacing motive and goal of all actions, the exercise of all powers. Without this kind of love, all service profits nothing. With it, the least service has the ring of heavenly coin.

In the next verse Paul shows us something of the nature of love. We can trace its characteristic outworkings. If you have known love, Godly love, then you will recognize its portrait. If not, then you and I can learn here -- compare and learn again -- until the lesson becomes a part of our inner self, the new man.

Love suffers long, is benignant; love envies not; love vaunts not itself, is not puffed up, acts not unseemly, seeks not its-own, is not provoked; takes no account of the bad; rejoices not over unrighteousness but rejoices with the truth; suffers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

1 Cor. 13:4-7

"LOVE SUFFERS LONG ... " The Greek word here, translated "suffereth long" in the A.V., is *markothumei*, from *markros*, meaning long, and *thumos*, meaning temper. It is self-restraint in the presence of provocation. In 1 Pet. 3:20 this word is ascribed to God, and in 1 Tim, 1:16 Paul uses it of Christ Jesus showing forth all longsuffering toward Paul himself, "for a pattern

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to them" that would come to believe on Him. It is used as the basis of that great unity of Eph. 4:1-6 (v. 2). We feel, of course, that the unity itself is of the Spirit of God, but before it can be enjoyed, there must be humility and meekness with **LONGSUFFERING**, a Godlike quality. For some reason Paul felt it necessary to list this quality first in this. Psalm of Love. Maybe love's first reaching forth would be rebuffed and rejected, as Christ was and so often is. If you and I are going to love people, then we can be expected to love them where we find them and as they are, even our nearest brethren in Christ may show resentment and anger. How much more those outside of Christ? If we would love, the first step is to learn self-discipline rather than exchange angry, bitter words. For rejection and unfaithfulness we must have an inner peace that endures and does not repay in kind.

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IS BENIGNANT (A.V. "is Kind"). The word **KIND** is too weak here. The Greek word *chresteuetai* has the thought of useful kindness, of being helpful, good, gracious. God is said to show the exceeding riches of His grace in kindness toward us (Eph. 2:7), which will take ages to unfold. It bespeaks a continued need met by a useful, gracious act. It is love continually reaching out. It is old-fashioned kindness that doesn't weigh down the recipient with a guilty indebtedness. To give of love's kindness is an art, and to receive of love's overflow in homey, kindly, useful acts or thoughts is also an art. Kindness is to be dispensed with gentleness and self-forgetfulness. How sweet it reads in Eph. 4:32,

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Love such as Paul envisions is a love that is fitted to where we are and where we live. It is suited to the kind of world in which we live, not the dream world of make-believe, but fully aware of the hard facts of our presence in an often hostile world.

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LOVE ENVIES NOT. This love is not the seething, selfish passion of envy. It does not feed itself upon detracting from what belongs to others. It does not build itself up by down-grading others. There is a noble emulation in love which is right and proper that we seek. Paul could say without false pride, "Follow me as I follow Christ." In so doing he places at our disposal every lesson he had learned, every help, every aid, every bit of knowledge that might be of help to us in becoming mature Christians. Had he withheld this last, we could not follow him. Envy is smallness of being. It fails to see that the greatest gifts of God are for all and that they are very simple things. A heart at peace with itself and God ... can this be purchased? An awareness that our minute lives are in His keeping and He cares. Envy the man of wealth? Be glad rather for his advantages and pray that he may have the wisdom to use that wealth wisely and good. Pray, too, that your wealth in spiritual things, in grace and love, encouragement and peace of heart may spill over and be a blessing to others. There is no ill in emulation if it is good and just, but do not bemean yourself to envy. Envy can dry up the well of human kindness and embitter love's outflow. Be content, in the Will of God, with such as you have. If you, under the Will of God, are to engage in attaining certain things, do so but not in envy. Envy can be spelled BITTENESS AND LEANNESS OF SOUL.

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LOVE VAUNTS NOT ITSELF ... vaunts not itself! Love never becomes a braggard -- for in braggadocio lies overweening conceit. Our achievements or abilities might indeed be outstanding, but such gifts should humble us and cause us to feel the added debt and responsibility we bear to others less endowed. Do you feel you are a self-made man? Take account that others have passed this way

before you. No one lives, labors or even dies unto himself. We all need reminding that life itself is only on loan and that God keeps the title deed.

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IS NOT PUFFED UP. A true estimation of one's self in the light of Christ's moral and spiritual perfection a true evaluation of purpose and end-result of life, leave little room for becoming puffed up with pride of station c attainment. We, like Job and his friends of old, need to ponder the question so well put in that ancient book, "What is mortal man compared to God?" This will adjust our sights to a proper Christ-like humility and compassion.

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ACTS NOT UNSEEMLY. Love is never out of place and never fails to let the other man retain his dignity. Do we think of love as tact in our bearing, giving others due respect and consideration: Do we think of love as being in the other man's shoes? Looking through his eyes? Feeling with him? If so, then our conduct toward him will not be contrary to what is good taste, fitting and honorable.

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SEEKS NOT ITS OWN. Do we all have rights? Yes. These are our most cherished possessions. The right to live, to seek happiness, to love to suffer and to die, if the need be, that those rights might be argumentative. The nature of this love, of which Paul speaks, tells of unselfishly putting others rights before yours, of setting aside your prior claim, if necessary. Every man who has been a real blessing to mankind has set aside his own rights. The perfect example is Christ Himself. Then comes the writer of this Song of Love. The odyssey of his life and labors are befitting a hundred lives, but its central theme was boasting in Christ and "OTHERS." Who said love was an easy way? Have we ever done a completely unselfish deed where there wasn't something in it for us?

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IS NOT PROVOKED. Is not embittered or enraged by abuse, insult or injury. This very facet of love is awareness that love is a knowledge that love will not always be returned in kind. Who was it that said, "If you can keep your temper when all others are

losing theirs. Can you garrison your heart so as to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man: so that Christ may dwell as at home in your heart: so that there is a rooting and a grounding in the love of God. If so, then you will withstand provocation and outrage.

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TAKES NO ACCOUNT OF THE BAD. The A.V. misses the point of the verb, Paul here is not thinking of the evil within us but that which is without. Love does not keep books regarding the evil that is done unto it. It does not keep a balance sheet of debits and credits regarding people or their actions. Love keeps no ledger of evil. It does not harbor vindictiveness and is bigger than holding a grudge. This is the very word used of God's pardoning in Rom, 4:8, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." God's ledger of our sins against Him has been wiped clean. They have been imputed to Christ; the claims of justice have been met; we have been given His Righteousness (2 Cor. 5:19-21).

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REJOICES NOT OVER UNRIGHTEOUSNESS. Can we believe that a worthwhile love is so holy? It respects the essential nature and being of God; it honors His righteousness and holiness and incorporates them into its own being. Holiness is wholeness, and one cannot be a whole person if he is only patterned after man. It must be filled with that which is above him, too. Real Godly love has no pleasure in that which brings pain to God; it grieves with Him over the wrong. Real love has no meanness in it and will not be contrary to high and holy standards. Joseph in the House of Potiphar (Gen. 3.9) had occasion to subscribe to what is known today as free love, but he refused in those classic words, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

BUT REJOICES WITH TRUTH. Rejoices WITH the truth is more exact than the A.V.'s IN the truth. This is the opposite of what has just been said. Love, this kind of love, is always true and rejoices with all that is true. The thought is one in sympathy with

the truth, a joyous sympathy with truth that does not countenance deceit. It rejoices in the truth of God because it subscribes to the highest law. It rejoices when it sees truth in man. Notice the Apostle says that love rejoices with the truth. It does not let truth stand alone as though it were a frowning mountain of law like Sinai, where those who heard and saw, feared and trembled. Rather it is in the spirit of Phil. 4:8:

Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

With such an outlook there need not be legalism; there need not be a lack of things to enjoy and rejoice in. The laughter of children, the lovely rose, the mighty redwoods, the sunset on the hill or stream, the joy of friends the beauty about us, the good clean fun are all partners of love. We cannot forget that such a love would rejoice with spiritual verities, too.

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SUFFERS ALL THINGS. Greek *panta stegei* means all covering or to protect, to keep off something that threatens, to fend off all things that threaten, to hold out and so to endure against all that would offend. This divine love has loyalty as strong as steel. It has infinite capacities to endure suffering for the object of its love and against itself. It is the guardianship of love to endure and protect. It does not speak of a stoic resignation to fate or withdrawing from reality. Christ layed down His life for His friends -- and His enemies.

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BELIEVES ALL THINGS. Love believes all things that are

consistent with truth. It is not suspicious or doubtful by nature. The ALL (*panta*) here is to be understood regarding good things. It is not ready to believe a bad report. It will put the best possible construction on everything. It will know its own weak humanity and that it, too, is subject to temptations, has the will of the flesh with which to contend. Thus it will seek to believe the good and shun the evil. Have you ever wanted someone to believe in you -- to have faith in you? Someone who knows all your faults but sees beyond the gossip, failures, through the ill report? Christ does! And each of us should have His kind of love.

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HOPES ALL THINGS. Love is a reservoir of constant hope. Have you ever met buoyant people filled with this kind of love? They lift you up by their constant hopefulness. Real love comes as no burden, is not depressing since its resources are infinite. Eph. 3:20:

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.

It can look at things as they are and then look again to see the panorama of God's tomorrows. This love contains neither pessimism nor a fool's optimism. Its very nature is hopefulness and not to be kept down. By the grace and strength of God it will win out. It has the bounce we all need. It will lift us up.

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ENDURES ALL THINGS. Love bears up courageously under trials, tribulations, persecutions and distress. Defeat cannot stop the outpouring of love. It does not give up to circumstances. Paul understood this more fully than we can possibly imagine. Even in his final prison cell, stripped of possessions, of friends, of all that was dear to him in life, his love poured forth in the letters he penned within the shadow of death. His love endured. It enabled him to bear the pain, misery, humiliations. It is interesting to note that

Paul did not introduce the grim element of martyrdom or sacrifices, or even his own record, but allowed love to operate as constant exercise. It is as if he were telling us ... let love be manifest in ordinary things and toward ordinary people - the extra-ordinary will take care of itself.

To review -- Gifts without love are nothing.

Prophetic utterance, mystic understanding, grasping all knowledge, having all faith --without love, nothing am I.

Charity, humanism, martyrdom, if without love, is profitless. You are nothing 'til somebody loves you -- and until you love others.

Next we are shown the permanency of love versus transient gifts.

Love never falls; but whether prophecies, they shall be done away; whether tongues, they shall cease; whether knowledge, it shall be done away. 1 Cor. 13:8

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LOVE NEVER FALLS. Falls ... Greek *piptei* (some texts have *ekpiptei*, which is "falls away"). Love never falls so as to disappear. Because it has God as its source it is constantly renewed in our experience and in our lives. We can be thankful that love outlasts pain, disappointments, heartaches. It will still be new and fresh when we grow old and gray. One should explore the full implication in Eph. 3:16-19, where the inner man is strengthened in order to love, where Christ may dwell at home in our hearts, where we, having been rooted and having been founded in love, can encompass love's varied dimensions, thus to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ as the prelude to being filled with the very

fullness of God. Love is the motive; love is the means; love is the purpose; love is the goal; love is the reason for it all; love will continue forever because it is the very essence of God. "God is love," says the Apostle John in 1 Jno. 4:8. For this reason he bids us love one another; "FOR LOVE IS OF GOD" (1 Jno. 4:7). He also states that you do not know God if you do not have love (1 Jno. 4:8). Rather shaking, isn't it?

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BUT WHETHER PROPHECIES, THEY SHALL BE DONE AWAY. One day the prophet and the prophecy will no longer be needed. The gift will give way to fulfillment; the revelatory sealed pages will be opened; the lessons will be learned; and in the light of a brighter day the formerly dim unknown will be clear to our sight. Prophecy varied from the prophets of the Old Testament to those like John in the Book of Revelation to those who admonished and taught. Slowly, each prophecy, each line of copy, will literally be done away. Did you know that there are certain truths in Paul's later ministry that no prophet ever knew about? These were hidden from prophet, sage and teacher. Did you know that these truths will not be done away: that these truths reveal the purpose of God before the measure of ages and will extend to the Father's very throne? Did you know that The Father, in Ephesians, is working out a heritage for HIMSELF?

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WHETHER TONGUES, THEY SHALL CEASE. They shall cease, STOP. The verb *pausontai*, here in the middle voice, is to come to an end, a willing cessation. It is used of a storm ceasing in Luke 8:24, a riot ceasing in Acts 20:1, and the cessation of the scourging of Paul in Acts 21:32. The gift of languages and dialects were to come to a pause and finally lapse into silence. Not so with love -- it will continue speaking in a myriad of ways, ever communicating, ever making itself known.

WHETHER KNOWLEDGE, IT SHALL BE DONE AWAY. This gift of knowledge (1 Cor. 12:8), seemingly only granted to a few, will go the way of prophecy. It, too, belongs to an imperfect state and serves only an immediate

need. While the gift of tongues was considered the least important, prophecy and knowledge, though lingering on, will at last give way to that perfect wisdom.

For we know in part, and we prophecy in part; but when the complete shall come, that in part shall be done away. 1 Cor. 13:9,10

Partial is our knowledge, our illumination and, as such, is inadequate. Full comprehension and the complete mastery of any theme or any subject is not possible at this stage of our life. Even the Word of God is limited in what it reveals, and what is revealed is too often beyond our ken. Every walk of life needs this reminding, "in Part, In Part, In Part." As soon as text books are written, they are obsolete. There are certain truths we value and hold dear, but our capacity to contain infinite knowledge, infinite understanding, is limited by what and where we are, what we see from here. We need another base, greater vision, a more comprehensive mind.

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WHEN THE COMPLETE SHALL COME. ... the *teleion* reaching forth until it has reached the *telos* or goal. The *teleion*, the state of maturity, full growth, is contrasting our limitations with God's perfection -- the permanent versus the transient, present state. Our knowledge is *MERO*, partial. This has no thought that it does not serve us well nor is not adequate for our present state. This, also, does not mean that we cannot understand what God has already given to us or that all truths are dark mysteries. No, rather the part we have is good, but there is yet the full reality of which this is a mere token, an earnest. Disjointed pieces of knowledge? No, rather what we have is but the shadow cast by a yet greater reality. I am not supposing that Paul is speaking here of the COMPLETE as

meaning his latter ministry. I realize some seem to think he has reference to this. However, I believe not since we, too, in this dispensation are moving to a yet higher state and destiny. It is true that we are COMPLETE IN CHRIST and are ACCEPTED with all His acceptableness and graced with all His grace, but we are also moving toward a yet greater COMPLETE STATE. We are, for instance,

reckoned as being seated with Christ on The Father's throne. But **RECKONING** and realizing are two different things. God can so reckon, and we can reckon because God does. He can reckon, though, because all time is one with Him. With us? We must await the actual experience.

When I was a child I spoke as a child, I had the interest of a child, I reasoned as a child; now that I have become a man I have put away the things of a child.

1 Cor. 13:11

Childhood? In our speech? In our interest? In our reasoning? In our wants and desires? Even in our evaluation of sign-gifts? In our motives in wanting spiritual power? I am afraid so ... **NOT CHILDISH THINGS, BUT THE THINGS OF A CHILD** -- a certain state of development that is common to all mankind. It is not wrong; it is not sinful; it is not planned that way. It is just because we are who we are. The thoughts, interests and reasoning of a child are conducted on a certain level; this is, at the moment, compared to our present state of partiality, of moral and spiritual infancy. There was a point in Paul's life when he became a man -- we ourselves may not know when we have made the transition from childhood to manhood. One mark of this is that the things of a child have been put away and they **REMAIN AWAY**. Maybe in some things we will never grow up. We are told to grow up into Him (Christ) **IN ALL THINGS** (Eph. 4:15); this does not mean the senses of childhood will be dulled or that we will cease to wonder or lose the feeling of newness to all about us. No, rather we will see

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more clearly. The wonder will embrace The Giver of it all, and we will see His beauty everywhere and be humbled under His ceaseless giving.

For we now see by means of a mirror in a dark saying but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully even as I have been known fully.

1 Cor. 13:12

There is a mirrored riddle of existence. It is as though we were looking in a mirror with the features reversed, as though we were seeing just the back side of an intricate woven design -- except to us there is no pattern, only a riddle for so many shades and threads are hidden from our gaze. It is like looking in a great telescope. You see reflected light that left that area in space eons ago. You are not looking at the object as it now is. The Bible is a very human though divine book. Its words are words of man, though refined. It speaks to us as men speak one to another, and The Christ Of God comes to us a man among men. He is humble, lowly, in all partaking of our humanity -- even to the death of a slave, dying. How else would you have God speak to you? Life is a dark riddle, is it not? It is an enigma; but a mirror is something in which we see things in reverse -- and in which we see ourselves. Maybe that is what hinders sight, our limitations.

Now? Imperfectly ... then FACE TO FACE. Are we to see more clearly than now? Are we to see indeed FACE TO FACE without anything between? Are we to have at last a personal living relationship with God without the intervening limitations of time and space and place? Is this how God sees us NOW? Will we see Him thus, too? Will we know then as He knows us fully now? Will our poor senses be quickened to see and understand so as to resolve the riddle once and forever? Will we penetrate the darkness and know Him as one of our own is known and loved? Yes, all this and more. It will be FACE TO FACE.

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And now remains faith, hope, love, these three; yet the greatest of these is love.

But now remains. What else can be said of love? The verb here is emphatic and refers to all three things. Faith remains. Hope remains. Love remains. Faith in the form of trust and committal will always remain and so it must. Faith is used by Paul in several senses, one of these as faith in opposition to sight (2 Cor. 5:7).

This is like God telling Abraham to leave Ur. Without any further instruction he obeyed, though he did not know "whither he went" (Heb. 11:8). In the Book of Hebrews (11:1) faith is looked upon as the title deed of things hoped, for because God had promised and the heart had said, "AMEN." Faith is the medium God uses for justification, " ... therefore being JUSTIFIED BY FAITH" (Rom. 5:1). Faith in this instance is inclusive of what has been stated in the verses just prior to, " ... who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." The faithful God gives us His faithful word. We take Him at His word, believe it and, hence by faith, have received the good report.

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HOPE? Hope elsewhere is looked upon as expectation of that which has been promised. It is the embryo of what is yet distant, the unfulfilled promise, the awaiting period looking for the consummation. Paul is not using hope here in this respect. Rather, it is that eager outlook, the anticipation of joy in the tomorrows, that happy reaching beyond whatever is at hand. It is that quality of being and of thought that does not stagnate, that feels still the excitement of the future and shuns monotony. Hope and faith must be companions of love, if not an intricate part of it, since love must be ever young in its spirit and must be ever moving to and from its object, hence faith with its committal. God is committed to

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us because of His love as a Father. His love cannot rest alone. It must forever have an object, and by its nature, love MUST BE SHARED. No future here or hereafter will be dull if we walk with God.

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THESE THREE. What a trinity. LOVE. How gracious for Paul to bind these three together. They make a wonderful unity. ... how we are to be pitied if our lives are void of these three. Are you seeking gifts? Then seek these as life's greatest treasures. If we do not have a foundation for faith and hope and do not know the greatest love of all -- the love of God in redemption, then we might well despair for tomorrow, having no anchor for today, no bright hope and renewing for the future. With these three, Paul's prison cell was a virtual antechamber of heaven. Cannot our little lives be the same?

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YET THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE. Paul, the man of faith, the man of constant hope, is telling us the essential secret of God if we will but listen. It is not that faith in its committal to God will fade or that hope will lessen with increased years, but love under-girds all, outranks all, caps all by its very nature. I very humbly believe that love caused God to create this universe. It was love that caused Him to create man for an object of His unrelenting love. It was love that caused Him to initiate redemption. Love provided a Great Redeemer for a ruined creation. Love will carry all on until each part is filled with fullness of God. That fullness? Getting to know the love of Christ that we might be filled with all the fullness of God ... this was Paul's theme in Ephesians ... a FATHER-GOD seeking an everlasting inheritance patterned after The Son of His Love. In the word of that old song, "IT IS THE ANSWER, IT IS THE END OF ALL OUR SEEKING." This love will always be outflowing -- always being received.

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THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE.

Might we add: Love is the greatest gift!

Numerics in Ephesians

By John Boyd

THE WORD "US" Occurs Fifteen Times.

- (1) Who hath blessed "US" with all spiritual blessings-
Eph. 1:3.**
- (2) He hath chosen "US" in Him before the overthrow-**

Eph. 1:4.

(3) Having Predestinated "US" unto the adoption children-

Eph. 7 1:5.

(4) Wherein He hath made "US" accepted in the Beloved- Eph. 1:6.

(5) Wherein He hath abounded toward "US" in all wisdom- Eph. 1:8.

(6) Having made known unto "US" the mystery of His will-

Eph. 1:9.

(7) His power to "US"-ward who believe according-

Eph. 1:19.

(8) For His great love wherewith He loved "US" even-

Eph. 2:4.

(9) When we were dead in sins hath quickened "Us" together- Eph. 2:6.

(10) And hath raised "US" up together and-

Eph. 2:6.

(11) Made "US" sit together in the heavenlies in-

Eph. 2:6.

(12) His grace in kindness toward "US" through Christ- Eph. 2:7.

(13) But unto every one of "US" is given grace according- Eph. 4:7.

**(14) And walk in love as Christ also hath loved "US"-
Eph. 6:2.**

**(15) And hath given Himself for "US" an offering- Eph.
6:2.**

EXPLANATION OF THE NUMBER FIFTEEN

FIFTEEN being a multiple of five, partakes of the significance of that number, also of the number three, with which it is combined, 3 times 5. Five is, as we have seen, the number of Grace and Three is the number of Divine Perfection. Fifteen therefore, especially refers to acts wrought by Divine Grace, and these acts which express the energy of the Glorious Trinity are in striking evidence in this Book of Ephesians.

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LISTENING IN

with

J. CLYDE STILLION

Our small matters are great for His love.

Our great matters are small for His power.

Are you occupied with self or with Christ?

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God uses types not to teach doctrine but to illustrate doctrine.

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We must choose between the Holy Book and human babbling.

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Live in pure Church Truth and you will have nothing to quarrel about.

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And in teaching the types don't go beyond the limits that God has set.

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In Titus, we find three times "God our Saviour" and three times "Christ our Saviour." Christ is God.

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Divisions are due to carnalities not to spiritualities.

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When God speaks prophetically, He is speaking doctrinally.

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Abraham is the only man God has used to type Himself.

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A ministry will be either "ear scratching" or "heart searching." 2 Tim. 4:1-4.

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In giving the Word, God used the mouth* of the prophets, not their brains.

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Godliness and growth go hand in hand. 2 Tim. 2:15, 16.

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Jonah is a type of Christ only in death and resurrection.

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God never gave any authority for calling Angels' food "manna."

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The Holy Spirit inspired words. Study the words of Scripture.

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The Title Deed to Palestine—to the last square inch—is vested in God.

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The good is never typed by the bad, nor the bad by the good.

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We are to fight with our faith, not with our fists.

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The prophets of God were not moved by the profits of man.

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It is a great thing to be slaves to the truth

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Yes. the Bible is a planned Book! Teach it as such!! And TEACH!!!.

When however, the Bible is used to any considerable extent, the preaching and teaching of the day is largely Kingdom preaching and teaching.

It is always in order to teach Kingdom truth, but not for the Church. Nowhere in Scripture is Christ ever said to be King of the Church.

The first chapter of Ephesians informs us that "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ [v. 17] gave Him [Christ] HEAD above all to the Church, which is His Body" (Vs. 22, 23).

One may ridicule, libel, condemn, coerce, misjudge, misquote, and misrepresent the ministry of rightly divided truth, yet in so doing, that one injures not only himself but also those who have no ear for anything save his words.

We fear the preachers of the day are becoming more and more like the Pope and Priests of the Roman Catholic Church in their attitude, if not in their actual admonitions, i.e. to the people: "Don't read or study the Holy Scriptures for yourself; take what we say." And the people take it without question or investigation.

Just as long as Dr. So-and-So says so-and-so, then it is so-and-so.

But what saith the Word of God?

The following Scripture texts surely merit prayerful consideration:

1. THE SOURCE AND PROFITABLENESS OF THE SCRIPTURES—2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

2. THE PURITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE SCRIPTURES—Prov. 30:5.

3. THE ENDEAVOR AND RIGHT DIVISION OF THE SCRIPTURES—2 Tim. 2:15.

4. THE COMMITMENT AND MINISTRY OF THE SCRIPTURES—1 Thess. 2:4.

5. THE MESSENGER AND DETERMINING FACTOR OF THE SCRIPTURES--Isa. 8:20.

With considerable Kingdom and some Church; a great deal of Law and some Grace; a few Jews and some Gentiles; much water and some spirit baptism; a lot of earth and some heaven; volumes of human speculation and some Divine revelation—all thrown and mixed together, we have a Heterogeneous admixture.

Each and every preacher and teacher must of necessity come to an understanding of Rightly Divided Truth, or CONTINUE CONTRIBUTING COPIOUSLY to confusion worse confounded.

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