

A PERSONAL NOTE TO OUR READERS

By C.W. Wood

November 2008

In our October sermon "Exhortation to Unity in Spirit and Doctrine", we promised to keep our readers posted about any future minister's meetings that might be forth-coming. Since that time, Br. Don Osborne and I have had what I will call our "First Minister's Meeting." It took place in my home here in DeWitt, Arkansas. Those attending were two in number, Br. Don Osborne and myself. It took place after I had mailed the sermon on unity, so that the ministers had been made aware of our burden to see the Bride come together, **"Speaking the same thing, with no divisions among us, being joined together perfectly, in the same mind."** (I Cor. 1:10)

Both Br. Osborne and myself, had spoken with some ministers around the nation, and the general consensus was that such meetings would end in failure. That was the overall *general thinking*; however, I want to say that some who contacted me were very willing to obey the teaching of Paul and Br. Branham in trying to present the Bride with correct doctrine.

In our first minister's meeting, Br. Osborne and I concluded that the Brothers we had spoken with were not against unity, but rather did not think too much of the plan, or method, I had presented for bringing it to pass. I will be the first to admit that the method may be faulty and should be laid before the Lord again as to how to get the ministers together. Br. Osborne and I both agreed at our meeting that the "method" for said unity may need to be changed, but we can never abandon the "thought", seeing that the Scriptures demand it, and our Prophet told us to have such meetings.

Though it would be a wonderful thing, we do not expect one hundred percent cooperation, but that should never deter us from our goal, seeing that it did not stop our Lord, or Paul, neither our modern day Prophet, Br. William Branham! All Israel was not Israel 2000 years ago, neither is it today. But we know from the Scripture, an honest heart will want the truth, and will not for long run from it! If there is a chance we are wrong, don't we desire to know it? It may be that the ministers in local areas can come together in small groups. In some cases, perhaps only two or three, and discuss differences in doctrine. It could happen in a restaurant while having a meal. It could happen in a minister's home, while being visited by another minister. Whatever God's plan may be, there is one thing that God-called ministers know; before Rapture, God will have brought the Bride together in unity, because Scripture declares that The Holy Ghost will lead us into "all Truth!"

There is a "uniting time" going on now in God's called-out Bride. If a man from China visits America and he has been taught by the Holy Ghost, and he meets a man here who has been taught by the Holy Ghost, the two men will be saying the same thing. The two may not yet be at the same level of revelation, but concerning a doctrine that the Holy Ghost has dealt with both men about, they will be in agreement! Or, do we believe there is more than one Holy

Ghost and their teachings are different?

You may say, "We will just have to wait for the Holy Ghost to do His work or unity is impossible." This is a true statement, but let us be reminded that the Holy Ghost must have vessels to work through. We know, don't we, that He only works through His Church? Then what if we, the Church, choose to leave this work of "unity" all up to Him while we refuse to have any part in it? He will then move on to find a willing vessel, and we will have missed our chance to be led by His Spirit!

There is a Scripture in I Cor. 10:12 that is most important for us ministers to keep always in mind, **"Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed, lest he fall."** We might be surprised that the Apostle Paul would tell us, who think we already understand the End-Time Message, to **"Take heed lest we fall!"** But, we should remember that our Prophet warned us over and over, concerning a spirit that would come to us in the last days, disguising its self as an Angel of Light. This spirit would be very religious, and therefore very dangerous, for its goal is to lead away from our true Message.

Br. Branham said this spirit will "fool many!" so, says the Scripture also. There is a thing that is so near to true confidence that unless we use the greatest care and discernment, we cannot tell the difference between the two. This writer knows whereof I speak, having been in that predica-

ment in times past. We should never underestimate the cunning of these false spirits. We can be very sincere and still be wrong. (Please note, I do not speak of false Brethren, but of false spirits that come to good Brothers!)

There is such a thing as “unholy presumption” which can be misunderstood as revelation from God! This is what Paul warned us against. He was speaking to the Church, those who wrongly supposed they had all the Truth, but were in fact, deceived! Good Brothers, who had been deceived by religious spirits. When Born-Again Ministers get together, with the Love of God in their hearts, then, if one of us is wrong in part of our teaching, we can help each other.

In the first sermon (October 2008), on Unity, I named some of the different beliefs there are in our Message Churches. Some Brothers wrongly supposed I was condemning them for these different beliefs. Having been wrong myself a number of times, and having to be corrected by our loving God, I was not at all accusing or condemning anyone for their belief. I was simply pointing out our need to get together and iron out our doctrine. Who can deny the fact that some of us are wrong in some things? The very distinct differences themselves prove that some of us are wrong! Who can deny the charge? Then don't we want to be right?

Our business today is with God's Church, and with God's Ministers who have been made Shepherds over it! The fanning must begin in our churches. The winnowing must try the wheat. The Holy Ghost must winnow the Church to discover any who have been led off the Word and are perhaps presumptuous in our Faith. And, before you suppose that this writer thinks he is in a group that needs not to be winnowed, let me say that I desire to have my name at the top of the list of those who desire to be corrected.

We pray we will not be misunderstood. We have not a word to say against the strong faith of those who have full assurance of their doctrine. We do not speak to those who are able to say, **“I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I committed unto Him.”**

It is not against that which Paul spoke. But he warned us against that evil thing, a false confidence, and a presumption of truth that can creep over a Christian like the cold sleeping death on a mountain top. If the person is not awakened, he will die. But, thanks be to God, He will see to it that His own are awakened before it's too late!

“Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” According to our Prophet, there are men in every church, men who think they stand, men who lift themselves up in supposed might and power. They are children of nature (who belong in Church Natural). They sometimes have large followings and great church buildings. They are prosperous and have a name with the people, but some have not been broken in spirit and humbled. They think they stand! We are now also speaking to some true Christians, who have been trusting in fleshly security, and have grown presumptuous. May our faithful Lord deal with us all, in a way that will save us from such presumption!

If one listens to the ministers of prosperity today as they preach *planting seeds*, you might be led to believe that if you are not heaping up riches to a large extent, that if you are not always prospering, then your faith is lacking. Certainly we believe in Christian prosperity, but we also believe in the character that cannot be ruined by it! A prophet said, “Money, women and popularity can ruin us,” therefore we must **“Take heed lest we fall.”** Let a man have continued prosperity, let his crops always produce abundantly,

let his business grow until his barns are bursting, let his congregation continue to grow, and give him praise, let him always continue in good health with never a sickness, let him always be full of joy with never any times of desperation, let him be always one who laughs at fear, and says to worry, “Be gone from me!” then Paul says to that man, **“Take heed lest you fall.”** Let him be one of the best Christians that ever lived, he will become presumptuous, and say, “I stand!” David said, “In my prosperity I shall never be moved,” and we are no better than David, nor half as good!

If God always rocked our cradle and gave us the desires of our flesh, if there were never any clouds in our sky, if there were never any bitter water in our wells, then we would suppose that we would stand. We might stand for a season, but it would be the kind of a stand that one would be on if he was asleep in the crows nest of a plunging ship at sea! This writer has been in the crows nest many times, and it is no place to sleep! Each minute you are in danger, you cannot but wonder if the bow of the ship will come out from under the mighty wave that has hidden it from your view! We ministers in the End-Time Message are in the crows nest, hearing all kinds of doctrine, wondering if the bow of our spiritual ship will come out from under the waves of presumptuous revelation! Pride is a very real cause of our presumption! It is the cause of our “carnal reasoning” that we so desperately cling to.

God gives us gifts. We are able to stand and preach, or teach, before the people, or perhaps we have a Gift of putting thoughts on paper. The presumptuous may say, “The ignorant may fall, those who have no talent may fall, but I am blessed above all those.” They are the ones who fall, and in self-complacency, we think, “We stand!” This that I am about to

say is a very strange thing indeed! There is such a thing as "pride in Grace!" A man may say, "I have *great faith* in Grace; I shall not fall. Poor *little faith* in Grace may fall, but not I!" Yet this man may also fall unless he understands that it's his responsibility to obey God in all the light he has been given. Grace will not save the perpetual willful and disobedient! Another man may say, "My obedience will save me, and I shall not fall!" But, except Grace call us and give us "opportunity" to obey, we are surely lost!

Two major doctrines of the Bible save us. One is Grace; the other is man's free choice (to obey) after he is called. Free Moral Agency is the road by which God receives glory from His creatures! Some good Brothers mistake God's knowledge of the "End from the beginning" to be "His Decision" that He wanted some to be lost! Without any disrespect for those who preach this, I want to quote Paul, who was speaking for the Holy Ghost.

I Tim. 2:1-6, "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;

4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

Please notice: God would have all men to be saved, and He gave Himself "A Ransom for all." Certainly He knew who would accept and who would not, but His great loving and merciful Heart has never wanted a man to be lost. II Peter 3:9, "The

Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Did Peter misunderstand the will of God when he said, "God wants all to repent and be saved?" Rom. 10:13, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Thanks be to God He is no respecter of persons! Whosoever wants to be saved may have it. He did not say that all would want it. But, the worse sinner in the world, who will repent, can have Salvation.

Rev. 22:17, "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

17 And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that's athirst come. And whosoever will let him take the water of life freely."

Whosoever will, let him come and drink of the water of life freely, it is for him to drink if he wants it. Thanks be to God! Is that not man's responsibility? Do we believe that Abel's brother, Cain, was pure Serpent Seed? Do we believe he was from Lucifer to the Serpent, to Eve? Even so, it was not Cain's fault that he was so born! He had no choice concerning his birth. Therefore, a righteous God offered him Salvation, a chance to repent and be saved. It is true that the Lord knew he would reject the Plan, but would you accuse God of dangling the promise before him falsely? This writer would not so accuse Him. Salvation is for all men, but some had rather have the world for a season!

Ezek. 18:23, "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways and live! (Far be it from God to send a

man to Hell for no reason, just because He has power to do so!)

Ezk. 30-32, "Therefore I will judge you. O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord God. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.

31 Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

32 For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye."

In view of all these Scriptures, will you still say God sends men to Hell just out of His own Mind and without cause? Do you not believe our Prophet's teaching on this subject?

QUOTE: CHOOSING A BRIDE, 1965, PAGE 627, "Your eternal destination is a choice, and maybe tonight some of you will make the choice of where you will spend Eternity!! We choose our own destiny. God does not make that choice for us! But He did know beforehand who would and who would not. He set before every person "Life and Good, and Death and Evil" (Deut. 30:15) Verse 19, "I call Heaven and Earth to record this day against you that I have set before you Life and Death, blessing and cursing, therefore choose Life...." (End quote)

Now we are confronted with the fact that Br. Branham said, "Jesus did not die for everyone, only for His Elect." But, he also said, "God did not want any to be lost" and he got it straight out of the Scripture! Rom. 10:13, "For whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved."

QUOTE: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON HEBREWS PART 1, PAGE 225, "Ordained of old. Not that God set back on the throne, and said, "I'll save this man, I'll lose that

man." That wasn't it! God died, and when Jesus died, the atonement covered the entire earth for every person. But God by foreknowledge ...Not that He will...He's not willing that any should perish. He wanted everybody to be saved. That was His—that was His Eternal purpose. But if He was God, He knew who would and who would not be saved. If He didn't know, then He wasn't the infinite God. So the Bible teaches that." (End quote)

QUOTE: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON HEBREWS PART 1, PAGE 226, "Then, in there, God could not say, "I'll take you, and send you to Hell; and I'll take you, and send you to Heaven." God wanted you both to go to Heaven. But by foreknowledge He knew that one would be a shyster, and the other one would be a gentleman, and a Christian. See? Therefore He had to send Jesus to die, to save that man that He foreknew that wanted to be saved. Do you get it?" (End quote)

We cannot preach a "maybe so" doctrine to lost souls and see men saved! We must give no hint to the lost that there is the slightest chance

that they might be turned away while they have a "desire" to be saved! I am greatly burdened in my spirit about a teaching that says "God does not call everyone!" My concern goes far beyond my desire to prove my revelation right and another man's wrong! I tremble to think that we would accuse our God of withholding the Gospel of Salvation from any man. We must all make our choice of "Life and Good, or Evil and Death!" If God offered Cain Salvation, knowing what and who he was, then who is the man that God would refuse it to? (Gen. 4:6-7)

No plans have been made for a Minister's Meeting, as such. We wait on the Lord as to His way of bringing His ministers into unity. I am only one of many, but I will not forsake the idea of unity, since it is God's Word, and taught by His Prophet! Amen.

A Christmas greeting to all our readers, our heart goes out to each one of you as an individual. We love all of you! Perhaps you disagree with some of the teaching, we love you anyway. We give you that right. This note is to thank the many of you who have helped us financially and with

your prayers this past year. As I heard one minister say, "You are the wind in our sails!" This is your ministry, we are only the scribe. May God return to you many times over that which you have sent us. We are very aware that we will give account for every dollar, and how it is used. To all who have written us and received no answer, please know we read every letter, but as one man, I cannot answer all of you. I do try to answer vital faith building questions (If I know the answer.) Please understand that we receive hundreds of letters, from the states as well as other countries, and we appreciate everyone of them, but the only way we can respond to them all is by a personal note in a our monthly sermon. Those who ask for financial help can surely understand our inability to answer every request. To our precious Brothers overseas, we urge you to believe that your God is not a poor one, but He is the same there as here and able to meet all your needs just as soon as you trust Him rather than man.

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