

TO OUR READERS: *Fourteen years ago, in November of 2000, we published a sermon entitled, SALVATION FOR MESSAGE BELIEVERS. The teaching in it was taken from the Prophet William Branham's sermons, but at that time, we had not understood that the falling away spoken of by scripture and the Prophet would include some folks that are dear to our hearts! Since that time in 2000, we have witnessed some folks leave the basic principles of God's Word who are supposed to be foundation stones and leaders for others to follow. To say that we have been shocked does not fully describe our feelings! I can't help but believe that some of us are feeling, to some degree, what Moses felt when he interceded for the Israelites who rebelled against his leadership. But, we take hope in that God heard Moses's prayer, and promised to hear ours also as we pray that those we love are only being temporarily led astray! This sermon is being republished by request. A heart-felt thanks to our supporters that we have not had the strength to write a personal note.*

Br. C.W.

Wood

It seems fitting to this writer, that still more emphasis should be placed on receiving the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ into ourselves. The need for this is most real and urgent, for those in whom the Spirit dwells will be Raptured, and those who have failed in this doctrine will soon enter into The Great Tribulation. The fact is, that until this infilling, we only have a "form of religion" and are no better off

SALVATION FOR MESSAGE BELIEVERS "A NEED THAT MUST BE ADDRESSED"

By C.W. Wood

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than the thousands of religious ones around us.

The Gift of the Holy Ghost is the crowning proof of God's love to a human being. It was to make this Gift possible that the Creator, Himself, came to live and die in a flesh body. His Incarnation (living in flesh), the Crucifixion and Resurrection, then the Ascension back to Heaven were all to make the Day of Pentecost possible. Without the Gift of His Spirit, all the rest would have been useless. For it was the changing of the fallen soul (nature) that would prepare man to live for God on Earth, then fit him for Eternity.

The outworking of this Spirit of Christ from within is what Christianity is. How then shall we call ourselves Christians without the Spirit of Christ in our souls? How very necessary that we be well instructed in the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

As important as our subject is and as prominent a place as it is given in the scriptures and by the Prophet, it seems that it is met with a considerable amount of neglect. In this late hour, we need to be awakened from our slumber and remember the words of Jesus, and to hear. "What the Spirit saith

unto the Churches." (Rev. 2:11) But, how shall we hear what the Spirit saith without the Spirit? We have boasted of having the "Perfect Word," but let it be clearly stated, "Only the coming of the SPIRIT can enlighten our understanding."

Many have come so far as to INTELLECTUALLY believe the Message, but to stop there and not receive the Holy Ghost is to be a borderline Believer.

QUOTE: THE TOKEN, PAGE 32, "Like the spies, if they came right up here to the borderland, looked over and said, "Well, I know it's there, but the obstacle is too great. We look like grasshoppers." They perished in the wilderness, Borderline Believers."

"Don't just come this far. Say, "I believe the Message." You OBEY the Message. Come into Christ (receive the Holy Ghost). You say, "I believe every word you said Brother Branham. That is good, but that is just being able to read. Take the Message. Take it into your heart, (believe) that you must have the Token. The very Life that was in Christ be in you. When I see that I will pass over you."

PAGE 36, "No matter how much you believe, how much you are circumcised (No matter how many

things of the flesh you have been able to lay down by your willpower.)....but you've got to get beneath the BLOOD. That is the Token.".....Now don't just talk about it, receive it. HEAR ME, HEAR ME, IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, HEAR ME."may I use His words? **"ALL OUTSIDE OF CHRIST WIL PERISH."**....That is the Message. COME INTO CHRIST." (End of Quote)

Do we not realize that if we should add a thousand to our church tomorrow, and do not lead them to receive He, Himself, into their souls, we have done nothing to prepare them for the Rapture? Even though every one of them was sound in the doctrine and believed only the Truth, that would not make them a member of the Bride. They, and we, must have the Token! As Brother Branham said, "The Message is *come into Christ*. We must face the solemn fact that, just as in denominations, our greatest need is the Holy Spirit's power and blessing.

Have we ministers neglected the very foundation of the Message, which is **"Christ in you the hope of glory"**? (Col. 1:27) Message Churches have sprung up around our nation and we are thankful for the increasing numbers, but has the standard of personal Holiness been advanced in them? Are their churches less worldly today than thirty-five years ago? Are the members more Christ-like in their daily walk? Is there more Godliness in the homes? Are the Message children more obedient and respectful? Is the Sabbath Day being kept Holy, as our Prophet taught us we should do? Has our standard of honesty in dealing with our neighbors been raised, and are we as concerned about those we do business with receiving as fair a deal as we ourselves?

If we cannot honestly answer "Yes" to these questions, then the

fault can only be laid to one main thing: our people are not receiving the Spirit of Christ, for He never fails in His office work, and the things listed above are some of the things that He ALWAYS produces in those HE inhabits. Until the Holy Ghost is given His rightful place in our souls, there can be no improvement. Until we recognize that we are entirely dependent upon His operation for our spiritual blessings, we have not reached the root of the trouble. Until it be recognized that it is **"Not by might** (of education in the Message, nor by intellectual argument, or persuasive appeal), **but by MY SPIRIT SAITH THE LORD"**, there can be no deliverance from the fleshly zeal that is now paralyzing many of our Message Churches. Until the Holy Spirit is sought, received, and honored by our leaning on Him, the spiritual drought will continue!

Since in our Message there has been a trend toward believing that KNOWLEDGE of the Message, and its many Mysteries, are proof of having received the Spirit, it seems urgent that we list other leading things by which this transformation may be identified. We would respectfully ask the reader to compare himself with each one. Where the Holy Ghost has come in and changed the soul (nature), there will begin a RENEWING OF THE mind in its attitude toward God's Divine Law. It will be received as a rule of life, gradually by some, and sooner by others, but it will for sure be received by all. Nothing so clearly shows true conversion from a false one, as seeing one who was an enemy to God's Laws brought to the place of heartily loving and obeying it. I John 2:3, **"Hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments."** When we are born-again, we are given a

new appetite so that we now love the things we once hated. We now agree that the happiest way in the world to live is to seek and to walk in our Lord's commandments. Our heart's desire will be to become Holy as He is Holy, and to give our lives completely over to Him. The regenerated person will start down the very different road of hating himself. Whereas before conversion, he felt that he was not really a bad person, and in fact, considered himself better than most, he is now made to see himself in a very different light. Before he has walked the road of Salvation very far, he will begin to see what the Apostle Paul meant when he said, **"I am carnal, (present tense) sold under sin."** (Rom. 7:14) There will come a self-loathing, and a godly sorrow for the breaking of God's Holy Law Standard. With a broken heart for his many failures, he will hunger and thirst after Righteousness.

Please do not confuse the teaching at this point. We are not saying that the born-again person will seek to keep the Law for his Salvation's sake, only that he will strive with all that is in him to keep it out of love for his new Master!

In the born-again person, there will begin to take shape a genuine humility. An unregenerate man, never having been, **"Slain by the Law"** (Rom. 7:9-11), but who is nevertheless religious, will be proud and conceited because of his role in the Church. With the true Saint, it is just the opposite, because when the keeping of the Law becomes his rule of life, and he is constantly made aware of his every failure, he cannot but have low thoughts about himself. This will result in lowliness of heart. It is then that he is walking God's planned road of humility. Pride is of Satan, and is always God's enemy.

That is not to say that our Lord would have us remain in this low state. but we do say that we must first be made to see what we are without God's Grace. The first revelation, which is that we are totally unable to keep God's Perfect Law Standard, is meant to drive us to the foot of the Cross, and from there we will be shown what we are *In Christ*. To see what we are *In Christ* without first being shown what we are *without Him*, would lead to no good, as we would be lifted up in pride. The blind Pharisee, who was without Grace, felt no qualms about thanking God that he was not a sinner like other men. But, the repentant Publican, seeing himself in God's great spotlight, dared not lift up his eyes to Heaven. Some, who claim to be Christians, love to speak of their consecration, their victories and attainments, but Paul said, "**I count not myself to have apprehended.**" (Phil. 3:13)

The more the changed soul sees himself in the Light of God, the more he discovers how much there is in him that is unlike His Lord. He sees how many times he daily offends, and how unlike Christ he is in character and conduct. This "seeing" of itself, is the result of a changed soul, the New Birth, The Token, and it always leads to humility! Humility then is a true sign of conversion.

We are speaking of the sign, or fruit that will follow a true conversion. Of course, revealed knowledge will be a part of the fruit, but intellectual knowledge, being alone without other corresponding fruit, is surely a danger sign. Our merciful Father will first set out to show us what wretches we are in our natural man. He will show us that none but One who is **Mighty to save**" (Isa. 63:1) can redeem such as we are.

"Worthy is the Lamb" is a statement that will become most real to us. Ps. 115:1 will also become a reality to us. **"Not unto us O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give Glory, for Thy Mercy, and for Thy Truth's sake."**

When we have the Spirit of Christ in us, He will continue to apply the Law to our conscience, not to cause us to doubt our Salvation because of our failures, but to keep us at the foot of the Cross where we are to remember that Grace takes over when the flesh fails. Once our minds have been renewed, and we are convinced that God made a plan that involved us in sin so that His mercy could be extended to the most forlorn, wretched, guilty and hell-deserving of us, then we will throw down all our weapons that were formed against Him, and open wide the doors of our hearts. It is then that He begins to. **"Sup with us."** It is then that we begin to return His love **"Who first loved us."** It is then that our trust in Him rises to new levels.

This trust, or faith, is a sure sign of our conversion. It cannot be hidden; it will show up in our daily lives. Then, the lack of such trust is a danger sign.

When God's Spirit dwells in us, then He becomes **"Our Portion."** The knowledge of His perfect character becomes our **"Hope and Stay."** We understand that He is **"Ordering our steps"** (Ps. 37:23). We understand that **"All things are working together for our good."** (Rom. 8:28) A sickness may come, trouble may arise on every side, friends may forsake us, and family may put us out, yet the One who has placed His Spirit in us is controlling it all. This we know by the Spirit that is in us.

By His Spirit we are receiving a growing realization (revelation) of

His Perfection, of His inability to make a mistake, or to do a wrong thing. We learn to not be dejected as He brings into our lives the exact things we need to bring our inner man to perfection. We know His goal for us is a body change, where the flesh will be changed and lose its downward pull on us. With the great Apostle Paul, as well as with our modern Prophet, we are learning to say, **"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, rejoice."** (Phil. 4:4)

While we wait for this body change, there is being an increasing appreciation for the Grace of God, and for the provision He made in that He, Himself, came and died in our place. There is a great longing to be done with this flesh, this body of death, and be back in the Supernatural Body in which we had our beginning (our Theophany). But friends, the Message of the Hour is this. "Without the Token, we will never see, by faith, the all-wise Hand of Father God in our afflictions, and we will never say from the heart, **"Thy Will be done."** Without the Token, we will never seek Grace to patiently endure the trials, still less will we believe that **"Afterwards, they will produce the peaceable fruits of Righteousness."** (Heb. 12:11) Without the Token, we will chafe and kick like **"A bullock unaccustomed to the yoke."** (Jerm. 31:18) We might even, at times, **"Curse the day of our birth."** (Job 3:1)

Without the Token, we will have no faith that our sufferings are among the **"All Things"** working together for our good. Without the Token, we are unable to **"Glory in our infirmities that the Power of Christ may rest upon us."** (II Cor. 12:9) Such faith, as we are speaking of, is not the product of the carnal mind, but of one that has been

renewed by the Spirit, through the Word. They are the fruits of the Holy Ghost Token, gracious, lovely fruits, produced in hearts that were beforehand set against the Giver of All Grace.

When we are at our wit's end and ready to wring our hands in despair, when we feel so dead in our emotions, and the skies have turned to brass when we pray, what do we do if the Token does not abide within? The answer is this: We often hear of terrible backslidings, and even suicides, when the Spirit is not in us to make, "**Intercessions with groanings that cannot be uttered.**" (Rom. 8:26) Yes, it is the Spirit of Christ that keeps our frail ship from sinking. It is He that keeps our heads above the waves until we can reach solid footing again. It is He that grants us a fresh surge of Faith just before our spirits are completely overcome.

He it is that pours His oil on our troubled waters, quiets, at least to some degree, the storm in our minds as He shows us over and over that He will not allow us to be totally overcome, but with the trial shall, "**Show us a way of escape, THAT WE MAY BE ABLE TO BEAR IT.**" (I Cor. 10:13)

It is our prayer that we are all beginning to see why Brother

Branham said, "This Message of the Token is the most important message I have ever preached."

QUOTE: THE TOKEN, SEPT. 1, 1963, JEFF, PAGE 23, "Any Bible student knows that Israel was a type of the Church....exactly (traveling) to the promised land....but when the evening time came and the journey was on, **THERE WAS ONE SOLEMN REQUIREMENT.** No matter how much Jew you had been, how well he kept his crops, how well he had taken care of the neighbors, how much he had done, how good a member he was, how much tithes he had paid, all these things were fine, that was okay; He was a good man; recognized among his people as a good man....but without the Token of the Blood, he perished.

CONT. QUOTE: "Oh may God help me, both present and in the tape, to pin that down.....You might have preached the Gospel, you might have cast out devils, you might have spoke with tongues, you might have shouted, danced in the Spirit, but without the Token....You say can I do it? (Can I do those things without the Token?) Paul said you could, "**Though I speak with tongues like men and angels, though I give all my goods to feed the poor, my**

body to be burned as a sacrifice, I have faith to move mountains and these things, I am nothing yet." **DON'T RELY UPON THAT.** It is the Token (It has to be the Token.) No matter how much you done, how good you are, when the wrath of God flashes, it'll only recognize the Token."

PAGE 28, "Oh apply it Church, Don't fail! Will you not? Don't....Don't....Don't let the sun set. Don't....Don't...Don't rest day or night. Don't take no chance. It won't work Children. It won't work. **YOU MUST HAVE THE TOKEN.** You say, I believe, yes....I believe the message. That is all right. That is good. But, you must have the Token. Do you hear Branham Tabernacle?Without it, all your believing is in vain. You live a good life, you listen to what the Word says, you go to church you try to live right, that's fine. But, that's not it." (End of Quote)

Our prayer is, "Oh Lord, take your Words and the words of your Prophets, and reveal to us our desperate need of the true Holy Ghost!"

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