

A PERSONAL NOTE TO OUR READERS: *God be with you faithful people. I give Him much thanks for moving on your hearts to stand with me on what I believe to be His Word. I believe you are spending your lives to promote the increase of the Kingdom of God, and if I know anything at all about my own heart, I am doing the same. I trust you will find something in what I say in this sermon that will be of interest to you and encourage you in the way that God has ordained for His Kingdom to be increased. Surely, we have more knowledge than the average Christian, but through nearly 50 years of preaching and teaching God's Word, I have learned a very important truth! People don't care how much we know until they know how much we care! When teaching the Word has failed to bring in the hard hearts, and when our great revelations have failed to dig them out of their fox holes, then, according to the Scriptures, a hand of love extended to them will overcome their doubts and fears. Thank you for standing with us, and we pray to see you soon.*

Br. C. W. Wood

The increase of God's Kingdom is, or should be, the desire of our heart. It is far more to be desired than the growth of membership in a clan (church system). It is not our

THE INCREASE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

By C.W. Wood

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motive to bring People into our church, with all their preconceived ideas about religion, but to see that they have a change of nature, called regeneration, or the New Birth. This change will than bring them into all truth, and not leave them with their own peculiar views of Christianity! Our first concern then, must be to bring them to the Great Sheppard, who has promised to, "Lead us into all truth." To change man's thinking from Methodist to Baptist, or Baptist to Pentecostal, or even to an intellectual knowledge of our End-Time Message, may be the work for those trying to build a large congregation, but to get them to Christ is the aim of a God-called minister! When they are filled with the Holy Ghost, we can be very sure that He will teach them the truths of the Bible. We do not consider it to be "soul winning" to hurriedly add names to our church rolls in order to show a good report at the end of the year. This can be easily done by men who have an out-going personality and a pleasing way

with people. By all means, we want to bring sinners into the Church, but they are never to be taught that they are "God's Children" just because they come to your church and perhaps even support it financially. To introduce the unconverted people into our church, is to weaken and degrade it, and so what might look like a gain is really a loss. And this is not to even mention the harm to the individual! We should not blame the people who come to church with a desire to live a better life, for not knowing about the Supernatural Change that God works in a human heart. This change must be taught them by those of us who have experience it ourselves. It is not possible for an unconverted person to understand Conversion! Before it happens to us, we are blind to its miracle working power, and we can only be brought into it by someone we trust to tell us the truth about it. This being true, then can you see the very great harm in men who have gone into the pulpit without this change, who may only

have a fleshly desire to preach, or perhaps a degree from some college! They may be good men, but we must have more than good intention, we must have an experience that has changed our very thinking and is continually separating us from the ways of the world. This experience will not make us perfect beings, but it will make us want to be perfect. It will cause us to repent when we get wrong and do all to make our wrongs right! The Death of Christ on the Cross is the most remarkable event in all history. Centuries before it happened it was told by men that God raised up to direct their thought's to a full revelation of Himself. They were called Prophets, Apostles, Pastors, Evangelists, and Teachers. They are with us today. They can help you know the difference between religion and Christianity! Religion builds big building, and invites all who want to come in and be called "Christian" to come and join them! You are welcome to your own personal doctrine, and the pastor who is out for numbers must be careful not to tread on influential and sophisticated toes! To insist that the people have a change of heart, and prove it by a changed life style is not politically correct, and can greatly decrease the names on your church roll. And the pastors seeking numbers know this quite well! We must preach Christ first and foremost, then let our Christ pick His own Bride from among the recruits we are able to bring in. this He will most certainly do, and if some later separate themselves from us, let it be through no fault of ours. We have been taught that the seed

never pulls away from the shuck. When a teachable heart is found, our patient and loving acceptance of those who may still be outside the Message, will lead them to discard error and accept the precious truths we hold so dear.

If any people on Earth should have a heart of compassion for the lost and misguided, it should be the Bride. Do we teach that mercy is in the Bride then close our bowels of compassion and fail to shed it abroad? If it be true that mercy is only to be found in the Bride, then what hope do those people outside the circle have if we refuse to be concerned? Far be it from the True Bride to hold Herself aloof and become proud through Her many revelations.

Do we see ourselves as spiritual giants? A spiritual giant is one who can come down to the level of those who need help and make himself "all things to all men". Such a giant was Paul the Apostle, and our Brother William Branham. I can find no attitude of self-righteousness, nor spiritual smugness in their teaching. Such attitudes in us are very unbecoming if, in fact, we are who we say we are.

Of all people on Earth, the Bride should be those whose concern is for one race of people, the human race, and this concern should not be a sectarian one, only getting them into our Message Churches. We must return to the number one doctrine of the Bible and the true message, which is persuading people to accept Christ. Our Lord will then separate them as He sees fit. Let us not be known for how many we have refused fellowship with on the

grounds of their rejecting a prophet, rather let us be known for preaching Christ to a lost and dying generation.

Will we, who claim the full Truth, be so spiritually blind as to sit in our own fragmented and war-like churches and condemn others for being sectarian, while we refuse to clean our own skirts? While the world's church systems stand in a general state of unbelief in what we preach, at least some of their distrust can be traced to our failure to show forth a Christ-like spirit, and also to our lack of uniformity in our own doctrine.

Which Message Church do you recommend, and which Message Camp are you in? Precious Little Bride, let us iron out our differences by discussing them in Christian fellowship and brotherly love. If one should, for example, investigate the Assemblies of God, he could read their doctrine, written out plain and clear. The same person would be hard put to discover our doctrine as he moved from camp to camp. He could well become more and more confused. May the Lord raise us above this strife and confusion, lest He be compelled to raise up some from the stones to carry forth His glorious Message.

We are well aware that there is a point beyond which fellowship between baptized believers cannot continue. This is not a call to forsake any of our scriptural and moral absolutes. Without these absolutes, Christianity would cease to exist and the world would laugh us to scorn. But, let us be certain it is the sin we stand against and not our brother, the

enemy we war against and not each other.

Do I hear someone say, but we are so much farther down the road than where these others stand. I pray that you are, and I pray that I am also, but do we not understand that we have been advanced so that we can reach back, and offer to others what has been so mercifully given to us? If we are found not reaching back, then I wonder if we have advanced so far as we suppose. Dear God, give us grace and mercy for others to the same degree you have given it to us.

How sternly we Message Believers have spoken against the sects around us who have built their walls of separation. And rightly so, because sectarianism is a sin God hates and has sworn to destroy. In the dictionary, the word *sectarian* means *narrow mindedness putting the religious beliefs of ones sect ahead of more general and important basic truths*.

As we look at the systems around us, we see many examples of this narrow-mindedness. For instance, baptism in water stressed above the more important and basic truth of a changed heart, which baptism should only follow after the changed heart.

Now suppose for a moment that we could be lifted up out of our Message Churches and turn and look back on it, seeing it as do other outsiders. Perhaps some of us would be shocked to see ourselves through their eyes. Let us now take such a look as we apply the definition of *sectarianism* to our own churches. Hear again the meaning of the word, *to narrow-*

mindedly put the beliefs of ones sect above more important and basic truths. Could this possible be said of some of us? Have we dared to put belief in our Prophet ahead of the more important and basic Truth of Salvation through Jesus Christ?

From our vantage point outside the Message, and looking into it as do outsiders, can we see that some of us who plead for undenominational Christianity, have ourselves fallen victim to a sectarian spirit? While coming against this spirit head-on in the denominational world, we have unsuspectingly left our own flanks unguarded. In some instances, we have become one of the most tightly-knit denominations in the world.

It happened as we demanded belief in our Prophet before we would extend a true and loving hand of fellowship to those around us. How beautiful was Brother William Branham's plea that we return to New Testament Christianity! His God-given Message was, "Let us be Christians only, laying aside our church brand names (even the name of Branham Tabernacle). Lay aside human philosophies and creeds and embrace the Christ of the Word. Let scripture be our only authority, and the name of the Savior be the only name we bear.

Unfortunately, we now bear the name "Branhamites" in many areas. Though we dislike their terminology, the name came not without cause. If our message has been demanding belief in a prophet ahead of belief in Christ, then we should not be surprised that it has fallen on deaf ears, and that they have so

named us. If our Message has been Prophet-centered, we would do well to remember that the number one doctrine of the bible, and of our Brother William Branham, is Jesus Christ. No man ever preached Christ more effectively than he. How dare we then, as his followers, hold him up between the people and Christ? How he would rebuke us if he were here. Have we forgotten that Jesus said to His followers, "**And other sheep I have which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring. And they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one Sheppard.**" (John 10:16)

The entanglement of some of the denominational systems around us may not be worse than our entanglement with ours. To fail to recognize such persons as Children of God, and do all to fellowship and share our revelations, is to openly declare our sectarianism. Also, it is declaring that those in our own groups, who do not agree with our camp, may be turned away.

Such a stand destroys the New Testament concept of Christianity, and makes a mockery of divine mercy and grace. It tends to reduce Salvation to a thing of our own works and makes us to sit with the Pharisees of old. They claimed to know Moses while rejecting the principles God gave him. Do we also claim to know a prophet, while we reject principles God gave him?

These things do not mean that we are to forsake our doctrinal absolutes, neither relax in our holy life styles and ways of worship. It does mean that we must tear down

our walls of separation and welcome all people into our churches, the religious ones as well as those with no religion, and not only so, but we must go forth out of our churches to seek the lost.

In order to balance out what we have preached, we must not fail to declare to the denominational church world, that their membership in a certain church system will soon turn into the deadly Mark of the Beast. Most thinking people (church people) now know that there is a World Church that is already formed, and that there is also being formed a One World Government! The Bible declares that these two powers will unite and become so great that the scripture asks the question, **“Who is like unto the Beast, and who is able to make war with him?”** (Rev. 13:4) Verse 7 says, **“And it was given him to make war with the**

saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues and nations.” Verse 8. **“And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”**

From these scriptures, we see the religious church world, and the world government coming under the rule of the antichrist! And their combined power on Earth is so great that no one can make war against them! Our warning then is that every denomination that determines to remain a denomination, will have to join this World Power block. And when they join, they are required to extend a hand of fellowship, and agree in their forehead (their thinking) with this anti-Word System! To do so is to be marked by God as being one who

is worshipping the Beast and his antichrist system! See Rev. 13:14-18.

And so, with our hearts and our church doors open to the totally lost, and to the Foolish Virgins without the oil (Holy Ghost) we present to you the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Savior of souls and the giver of all Truth. His love is all powerful. His Word cannot fail. It will perform what He promised. His Hand is out-stretched to one and all. Come and drink of the Water of Life freely.

Let no man or devil tell you it's too late to be received. If there is one ounce of desire in you to come to Him, this is your proof that you will be received. Time is short, yet He must be waiting for some who have not yet come in!

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