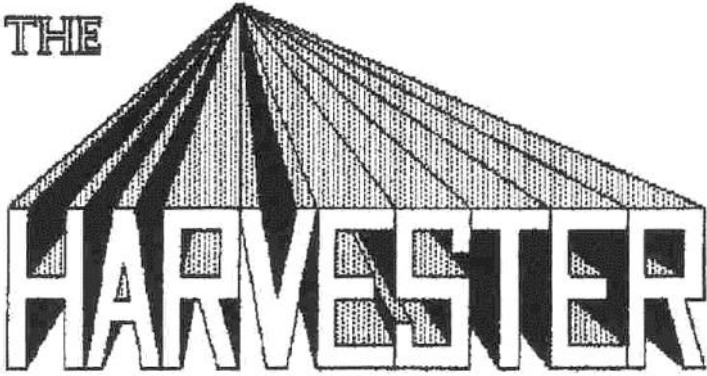


THE



"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2)

September 2013

No. 333

SPIRITUAL GOUT

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. (Rom. 8:16-18)

My mother has suffered with gout in her big toe recently which has caused her quite a bit of

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pain. They were over here a few nights ago eating supper with others we had invited, and it struck me how much her whole system was affected by a fairly small joint in her body. Her whole body felt the pain, her whole body limped along because of the inflammation. There's a variety of medical suggestions as to why uric acid gets to be too high, including too much food that is derived from animal products and that high fructose corn syrup can produce the same effect. Whatever the cause it appears that gout is due to things we ingest which causes inflammation.

But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. (1 Cor. 12:18-27)

This seems to me to be the way my mother's system has been working on her body. Her toe is

feebler than some parts of her body but it is necessary, and instead of her body choosing to reject her toe, the whole body instead chooses to feel her pain and work to find a solution for "their" pain. But sometimes, inflammation is replaced with infection and disease which might lead someone to a different solution. For example, consider the words of Paul in 2 Timothy 2:14-18:

Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

The word "canker" here comes from the Greek equivalent of *gaggraina*. It is the word from which gangrene is derived. Gangrene in the body generally results from an injury or infection that limits or stops blood circulation that would normally feed and heal that part of the body. By the context of Paul's letter, spiritual gangrene similarly is brought on by strife over words that have no profit. Strife appears to be the injury and comes from the Greek word *logomachia*, a compound of words *logo* (word) and *machia* (war) or a war of words. A similar word is *logomacheo* which is the action of being a disputer. The only places these words are used are in Paul's writings to Timothy. Look at 2 Timothy 2:14:

Of these things put them in remembrance,

charging them before the Lord that they STRIVE NOT ABOUT WORDS to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.

In John 1:14 we find Jesus is referred to as the Word *logos*. He gives us the words of life. The theme that the enemy is come to steal, kill, and destroy and that Jesus came so that His followers could have abundant life becomes so real when we examine Paul's admonishment. Words that injure and minimize or prevent the healing and saving blood of Jesus are words that have "no profit". They are words that result in "subverting of the hearers" where the truth of Christ is replaced by the wisdom of this world.

I think what Paul shares with us in 1 Timothy 6 is that this spiritual gangrene is caused because of men who do not have a good spiritual diet. Notice a few verses 1 Timothy 6 with Strong's definitions and comments in parenthesis. Verse 3 describes a person with a poor spiritual diet. "If any man teach otherwise, and consent (visit, worship, assent) not to wholesome (to have sound health) words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine (instruction) which is according to godliness (the gospel scheme)..." Look what happens when we don't stay on a good diet in verses 4 and 5. "He is proud (inflated with self-conceit), knowing nothing, but doting (to be sick) about questions (the act of searching) and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy (ill will), strife (quarrels), railings (blasphemy), evil surmising (hurtful suspicions), perverse disputings of men (meddlesomeness) of corrupt (thoroughly rotten) minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain (follow the money) is godliness: from such withdraw thyself." Verse 6 of 1 Timothy 6 gives us the fix for all the disease and destruction, "But godliness (the gospel scheme) with contentment (He is our sufficiency) is great ("megas") gain."

Remember to be patient when the spiritual irritations of "gout" come our way and work as His body to heal those inflammations while removing ourselves from those that would deprive us of the simplicity of the truth of Jesus Christ.

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APOLOGIA

QUESTION: Does Matthew 28:19-20 apply to the modern church? Have we been committed to take the gospel to the modern world?

ANSWER: When studying the Bible one should always ask who, what, when, where, how, and why when dealing with a given topic of consideration. Let us now examine the above cited verses and ask some of these questions.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (Matt. 28:19-20)

The who under consideration originally were the eleven disciples of Jesus who later became the Apostles. Under consideration was the teaching of the gospel message. When? The Lord's church began at Jerusalem on Pentecost in Acts chapter 2 when Peter preached the first gospel sermon. Why? That the hearers might "observe *all things...commanded*" (Matt. 28:20). Those who became Apostles, not others, were originally committed to take the gospel in the beginning of the Christian Era. Jesus told his disciples in John 16:13 that when "the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth..." This

is fulfilled in Acts 2:4, "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

As the Lord's church grew and began to be persecuted, the truth of the gospel began to be spread via members of the church who were NOT Apostles. Acts 8:1 is germane to the subject at hand for it clearly states, "they [the disciples] were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the Apostles". While the Apostles remained for the present at Jerusalem, the teaching of the gospel message to the surrounding world was being accomplished by simple disciples who were not Apostles.

As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word. (Acts 8:3-4)

Who preached the truth of the gospel in the verses you just read? It was persecuted Christians! Is it scriptural for the modern church to take the gospel to the modern world? Absolutely!

We need to remember that when Peter was preach-

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ing the first sermon he didn't have a *New Testament* to preach from. That is the reason the Apostles were guided by the Holy Ghost. Paul pointed out plainly in 1 Corinthians 13:9-12 that the Bible was not yet complete. When John was inspired to write the book of Revelation on the isle of Patmos, the Bible had finally been completed. Thus, at this point, the church no longer had to "see through a glass darkly" (1 Cor. 13:12). They were now ready to think as adults. Let me conclude and point out that you and I have something that the original church didn't have: the complete inspired *New Testament*. Since the Holy Spirit does not work directly in the heart of the sinner, we have been committed to take the gospel to a lost world separated from God via the curse of sin! Brothers and Sisters of Christ, you and I are the only gospel that some will ever see and hear! Let us be ready "always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. 3:15).

TIM ELDRIDGE
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SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

...and remember last month's questions?

1. During Jacob's struggle with the angel, the hollow of which part of Jacob's body was touched and put out of joint? HOLLOW OF HIS THIGH (Genesis 32:25)
2. How long did Jonah say it would be before Nineveh was to be overthrown? FORTY DAYS (Jonah 3:4)
3. Who was appointed to replace Judas Iscariot as a disciple? MATTHIAS (Acts 1:26)

Gospel Meetings

| DATES | PLACE | SPEAKER |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| September 6 - 8 | Willow Oaks Russell Springs, KY | J.D. McDonald (Woodbury, TN) |
| September 8 - 13 | Goochtown Eubank, KY | Joe Hill (Hager Hill, KY) |
| September 13 - 15 | Antioch Monroe, TN | Scott Conner, James Brown, Harry Cobb |
| September 13 - 15 | Pleasant Ridge Woodbury, TN | Carley Conner (Cookeville, TN) |
| September 16 - 20 | Mt. Zion Crab Orchard, KY | J.D. McDonald (Woodbury, TN) |
| September 22 - 25 | Ashlock Celina, TN | J.D. McDonald (Woodbury, TN) |
| September 26 - 29 | Van Lear Van Lear, KY | Hunter Bulger (Fort Deposit, AL) |
| September 27 - 29 | Valley Valley, AL | Bill Prince, Sr., Bill Prince, Jr., Chad Prince, Brad Prince |
| September 27 - 29 | Van Lear Van Lear, KY | Hunter Bulger (Fort Deposit, AL) |
| September 27 - 29 | Verona Verona, KY | J.D. McDonald (Woodbury, TN) |

4. Who promised the gift of "power to tread on serpents and scorpions"? JESUS (Luke 10:19)
5. Who was Paul with when he wrote the letter to Philemon? TIMOTHY (Philemon 1:1)