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The Herald of His Grace

Presenting *every man* perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume XVII
Issue 421

Matters of Controversy

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

For the truth-seeker, life is filled with heart-rending controversy. After all, scriptural truth always runs contrary to religious and social traditions. My entire life has been filled with controversialists. It began at a very young age as I took the study of Scripture seriously, and the truths uncovered therein as essential – regardless of the implications or costs. Such a diligent approach is a guaranteed life of controversy.



For I came to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's own family will be his foes (Matthew 10:34-36, Weymouth).

AS DECEIVERS, YET TRUE

Paul informed us in II Corinthians 6:8 that he was viewed as a deceiver, although in fact he was a true servant of Christ Jesus.

As deceivers, and yet true (Rotherham).

As seducers and true (ECB).

An "impostor" but honest (Moffat).

As leading astray, and true (Young).

NO SMALL DISTURBANCE

Concerning Paul's ministry, in Acts 19:23, we read,

There came, at that time, not a little stir about the way (Young).

There arose during that season no small disturbance concerning the Way (Rotherham).

As peacefully as we endeavor to live with all men, God's servants always have been embroiled in controversy. It is a part of the hardness that a good soldier of Christ Jesus must face, standing against the flow of a world that piously worships a god of their own making, and truths of their own liking.

As much as we long for peace and tranquility, truth thrusts us into a battle that is as old as humanity itself – "Yea, has God said?" Well do those of us who have dared to stand against such railing accusations against the truth of God understand the straightforward statement of our Lord,

Do not suppose that I came to bring peace to the earth: I did not come to bring peace but a sword.

Let's never forget the tactics of our Adversary, among which is to malign the ministry of the truth-bearer. The Pharisees labeled Christ, "that deceiver" (Matthew 27:63). The Circumcisionist labeled Paul a "deceiver," too. Paul said that the religionist marked him by "dishonor" and "defamation" (II Corinthians 6:8, CV).¹

To the religious, both our Lord and our apostle were con-men. Little did they know that they were both

1. For further study on this theme see "The Adversary's Policy of Evil: Discrediting or Discouraging the Messenger" in [Bible Student's Notebook 373](#).

(see *CONTROVERSY*, page 3767)

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Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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This free weekly electronic publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the church, the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Romans 11:13);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
 - total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6);
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

This publication is a joint effort of a few members of the body of Christ. It is a product of our individual lives and ministries together. We do not claim infallibility for its contents. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "church," "denomination," "movement," "organization," "mission," "creed," "meeting," "school," "conference" or "fellowship."

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CONTROVERSY (continued from front page)

bearing the truth of God. So it is with all of God's servants in every age. The enemy portrays them as frauds and "evil-doers" (II Timothy 2:19). It is one of the marks of the servant of God, one that, eventually, they learn to bear as a badge of honor.

THE DANGERS OF CONTROVERSY

Controversy comes with great risks for the controversialist. Vladimir Gelesnoff reminds us of the related dangers:

Controversy is fraught with dangers. Engrossed by the one desire to condemn a contrary view, the judgment of the controversialist becomes warped, and he does injustice to himself while he unconsciously misrepresents the position of his opponent. ...

We are not saying that our critic has deliberately misrepresented our position, but that his eagerness to condemn has prevented him from viewing the subject in its true perspective. ...

Our critic concludes by saying that his denunciation is prompted by loyalty to Christ. The inquisition claimed the same. We mortals are all too prone to think that *our* views of truth *are* the truth, and when differing views are put forth, we imagine that the faith trembles in the balance, and that we must defend it at all hazards; whereas the truth of the matter is that the faith is trying us and our exertions to defend it only mar the testing. Uzzah imagined that the ark was in danger of falling, and lost his life in an attempt to steady it.²

THE BREACH

Years later A.E. Knoch also writes wisely from a heart that had experienced many a controversy.

We hoped that time would heal the breach, and lead him to see the futility and wickedness of reviling, but he has been encouraged in his course by a few who took no pains to inquire into the facts, and some who are eager to use any and every means of harming us, no matter how contrary to the Scriptures.

We take it as from the Lord, even though it comes through the adversary, and thank God for it, and

look to Him to transmute it into good. Nevertheless we are heartily ashamed and humbled by it. No such wickedness should be known among those who revel in God's transcendent grace.

We are well aware that this is a device of the adversary to engage us in useless and harmful controversy, and so hinder the work ... We need every ounce of strength and minute of time in *constructive* work for all the saints, and refuse to be diverted.

This statement is final. We have tried to make it as gracious as possible and yet fulfill our duty. *It is intended to help*, not to harm. So kindly refrain from writing to me about it, and spare us the pain of refusing to reply.

We exhort our fellow saints not to countenance reviling, no matter how just or fair the reviler's case may appear to be. This is God's remedy, and the only one. It is so shameful in His eyes that we should mark everyone who indulges in it and avoid them *for their own sake*, and for the honor and glory of His Name.³

ALL WILL BE BROUGHT TO LIGHT

Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, Who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God (I Corinthians 4:5).

There are many injustices in the life of the believer: dishonor, slander, defamation, misrepresentation, even as an "evil doer" (II Timothy 2:9). We rejoice in the day when the truth will come out and the record will be set straight.

At Christ's reward platform, the truth of life that is now veiled in darkness will be fully brought to light. Regardless of how things may *appear* to earthly eyes, the *Bema* will make clear that we are "His workmanship," "His achievement" (Ephesians 2:10). Then and there alone will we have our proper recognition, and it will be from the only One Who counts.

... then applause will be coming to each one from God (CV). ▶

2. "A Shocking Blasphemy," *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 5.

3. *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 39.

ENTRUSTING OTHERS TO GOD

I commit you to God (Acts 20:32, Darby).

I entrust you to God (Acts 20:32, Moffatt).

I give you into the care of God (Acts 20:32, BBE).

When Paul left the saints at Ephesus, he committed them to the care of God. Too often there are those who attempt to play “God” in peoples’ lives. Paul was not one of them. He not only entrusted the saints to God, but he did so to “*the Word of His grace*” which he knew was “*able to edify*” them.

Simply put, Paul trusted God with the saints. He trusted that they were *His* handiwork – *His* achievement. He trusted that God’s Word – and not just *any* word, but His Word of *grace* – was enough. He did not seek to lord over them or their faith.

Maturity, through acquaintance with God and His grace, brings one to a place of trust in God – that He is “*able to edify*” by His grace. It enables one to give others over to the care of God – to trust them *to* Him.

Some carry the heavy weight of others on their shoulder, as if somehow they were responsible for the di-

rection and outcome of their lives, that somehow they were supposed to lead and guide their lives. Being “God” to someone is an especially hard job if you are not qualified. There is only One qualified for such a daunting task, and He already has all things squarely under His control. So, relax.

God is good at His job. Just like with any other work, you can’t judge the finished product when seeing it in some stage of its development. This is true of you and me, of our loved ones, of our friends, and fellow members of Christ’s Body – in fact, of all of God’s creation!

God, Who works “*all things after the counsel of His Own will,*” finds no challenge with our circumstances and lives – or of the lives of others. Nothing poses an obstacle to Him – after all, He *is* the Almighty God.

Relax with those whom God has placed in your life. God is God; He is in charge. He loves them just as unconditionally as He loves you. He is molding them, as surely as he is you – day-by-day – into *all* that He intends for them to be, regardless of what we may think we currently see.

Do not be tempted to play “God” in the lives of others. Entrust them to God. ■

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No Longer I, but Christ!

(Galatians 2:20)

by — A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)

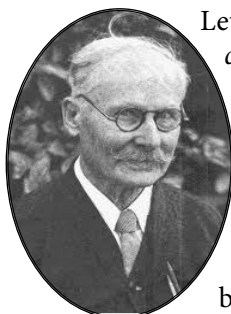
SALVATION IS IN CHRIST ALONE

O, that we knew the sufficiency of Christ for everything! We are so anxious to pry men into the “Kingdom” that we invent various crowbars to get them in, all the while ignoring the great truth that *the gospel is God’s power for salvation* (Romans 1:16).

WE PREACH ON ALL SORTS OF TOPICS FROM SANCTIFICATION TO SANCTIFICATION (EVER TINKERING WITH MAN HIMSELF), WHEN THE GOSPEL IS CONCERNING *His Son* (Romans 1:3). In a word, we are trying to “bring men to Christ,” when *He would have us bring Christ to men!*

How grand it is to fall back upon God Himself! He will see to it that everyone whom He has selected will be invited and justified and sanctified, and He does it in spite of all of the stumbling blocks we put in the sinner’s way.

Some preach law outright, some regeneration, some the spirit’s work, some baptism, some repentance — but none of these are *good news*; indeed, *there is no good news apart from Christ.*



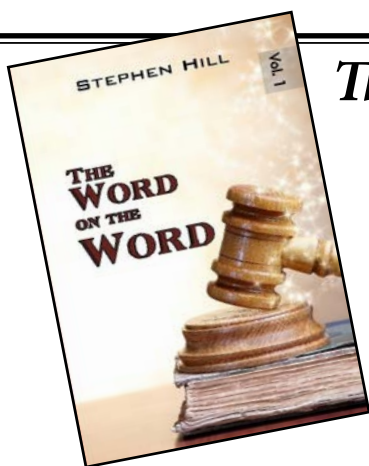
Let it be our precious privilege to preach *Christ crucified* to those who know Him not; and to those who know Him, *Christ glorified*. Let Christ be first and Christ be last and Christ fill all between.

Let us not look back and vaunt ourselves with, “I prayed, I repented, I was baptized, and I—,” but let us rather shout with the Apostle, “no longer I, but *CHRIST!*” If I had a hand in my salvation, it must needs contain a flaw; for I find failure fills everything I do. Yet if Christ *alone* deserves the crown, then all like Him is perfect and immutable.

CHRIST IS OUR FULLNESS

It is God’s purpose that in all things Christ should have the preeminence and that all fullness should dwell in Him. He is God’s fullness. He is our fullness. Both God and His saints are mutually and completely furnished in Him (Colossians 1:19-20 (*CLT*); 2:9-10). ■

Unsearchable Riches Magazine
1919, volume 10, page 275



The Word on the Word – Vol. 1

by — Stephen Hill

This is a collection of articles from the author’s blog. In its pages you will learn of many truths from God’s Word that you will likely not encounter in the traditional church setting. No topic is off-limits, as Stephen Hill addresses a variety of biblical truths – many controversial – which will likely challenge you to reconsider many of your long-held beliefs.

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The Wrath of God

by — Dan Sheridan

The wrath of God is revealed against something specific: The ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness and exchange the truth for the lie.

It's not against ignorance, or those who err, or the wayward, but conscious, willful opposition to revealed truth. It's the mystery of lawlessness opposed to the mystery of Godliness.



They changed the **truth** of God into the **lie** (Romans 1:25).

And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the **truth**, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe the **lie** (II Thessalonians 2:10-11).

They changed the glory of God into an image made like to corruptible **man** (Romans 1:23).

The **man** of sin showing himself that he is God (II Thessalonians 2:3-4).

Wrath revealed ... **idolatry** (Romans 1:18-25).

Ye turned to God from **idols** to serve the living and true God; And to wait for His Son from heaven, Whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the **wrath** to come (I Thessalonians 1:9-10).

God also gave them up to **uncleanness** (Romans 1:24).

Not in the lust of **uncleanness**, even as the Gentiles which know not God (I Thessalonians 4:5). ■

Wrath revealed from heaven (Romans 1:18).

The Lord Jesus shall be **revealed from heaven** (II Thessalonians 1:7).

When they **knew God**, they glorified Him **not as God** ... They did not like to retain God in their **knowledge** (Romans 1:21, 28).

In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that **know not God** (II Thessalonians 1:8).

They have **pleasure** in them that do them (Romans 1:32).

They had **pleasure** in unrighteousness (II Thessalonians 2:12).

A Grave and Serious Error

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth (II Timothy 2:15).

This rule is of very great importance, though many entirely ignore it. Most Christians consider the Bible as all true *now*; they have no idea of different ages and dispensations, each of which have their own *special* truths that will apply to no other period.

When all Scripture is jumbled together, regardless of God's "times and seasons," much of the force, and the true sense of Scripture is lost, and often times people are led thereby into grave and serious error.

— Arthur P. Adams (1845-1925)
Spirit of the Word, 1885



ALL in All: The Goal of the Universe

by — A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)
(#6269) 219 pages, Paperback
\$10.95 (\$14.70 with s&h)

This publication is a compilation of the writings of A.E. Knoch on human destiny. The author examines three major theories on this topic current among students of Scripture. The striking phrase "All in all," which pertains to the vivification of all mankind in I Corinthians 15:28 and relates to the reconciliation of the entire intelligent creation in Ephesians 1:23, is discussed at length. Two extensive appendices are included, exploring the usage of the terms "eon" and "eonian" in the Scriptures.

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Suffering: God's Forgotten Gift

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Two gifts given to the believer are mentioned by Paul in Philippians 1:29. The first is “to believe on Him.” This is a glorious gift. Every believer has been given this gift from God. Those who possess it may not even fully recognize it as a gift from Him, but indeed faith is God’s wonderful gift to us. Faith is a rich gift from God, but there is also another gift from God to the believer, mentioned by Paul in Philippians 1:29, that is equally as glorious. The second gift is “also to suffer for His sake.” This, too, is a glorious gift. Every believer has been given this gift from God as well, but those who possess it often do not fully recognize it for what it is. Indeed, suffering for His sake similarly is God’s wonderful gift to us. Paul teaches us to embrace this second gift as well as we do the first!

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