

## STUDIES IN EPHESIANS #93

4:29

LET NO CORRUPT COMMUNICATION PROCEED OUT OF YOUR MOUTH, BUT THAT WHICH IS GOOD FOR THE USE OF EDIFYING, THAT IT MAY MINISTER GRACE UNTO THE HEARERS.

Corrupt here means *putrid*, communication is *logos*, *word*, and edifying means to *build up* or *strengthen*.

Speak not only truth (v. 25) but that which is pure. Sanctify the tongue. It needs it. What an unruly member it is! Let no putrid speech issue out of the mouth. Do we need to explain?

Is there any believer who has not been vexed by the filthy conversation of the world? Or can it be that some revel in it? This filthy conversation is what righteous Lot had to listen to down in Sodom. Sodom is long since gone, but the filthy conversation is still with us.

That the world should use vile language is understandable seeing that the god of this world is the evil one, Satan. But for believers to repeat the smut that comes from evil minds is not at all convenient. The language of moral decay ill befits the lips of members of the body of Christ. How can there be a singleness of heart while at the same time indulging in *double talk*? It is not consistent. It is like a spring trying to send forth both bitter and sweet waters. It is not known in nature.

Immoral thots lead to filthy speech. Filthy speech leads to immoral acts. The end is ruin. The end is death, for that is the wages of sin. Pay day is sure to come some time.

One should be careful to set the LORD'S WATCH before the mouth (Ps 141:3). Put a bridle on that tongue!

Silence is not the cure. There is a time to keep silence, but there is also a time to speak up, to express convictions. There is a time when silence gives consent. It may make one appear to agree with what is being said. We cannot always ignore evil. We cannot pretend that nothing has been said. Silence can even deny the truth.

So there is a time to speak. But the subject should be carefully chosen. Let it be good. Let it be something that will build up, not tear down. Let it be something that will build up the faith and purity in the believers who are in the body of Christ.

Note the use of *edify* or *build up* in 2:21 and 4:12. Our language and work should always be constructive. It is evil that tears down.

The edifying and building up is to be done where there is need. Happy is the person who finds the need and supplies it! What a joy to have these rise up later and call us blessed because we helped in time of trial, edified in time of discouragement, and strengthened in fiery testing.

If there was ever a day when the walk and talk of the believer was watched by the world, it is now. If you want to have a witness for Christ, you first of all will have to live it. Not many these days are going to listen to what you say till they have seen what you do. As the old saying goes, *one example is worth many precepts*. Let us walk worthy.

## SEEKING FOR GLORY AND HONOR

M'T 19. M'K 10. LU 18

He was a young man. He was rich. And he was a ruler, which means that he was a member of the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin was made up of 70 rulers or elders of the people. These members had to be married and have families. So much for the background of this man.

It is evident that he had heard the preaching of the kingdom being at hand as was proclaimed by John the Baptist, the Lord Himself, the 12, and the 70. It can be taken for granted that he believed the message. He not only called this Jesus of Nazareth *Good Master*, but he kneeled before Him. All this would indicate that he recognized the deity of Christ, for a Jew would never bow that way to another. He must have known his prophecies.

So he made his request as a believer. He seemed to be sincere and in earnest about it. Now all he wanted was that he should have a high place of authority in this kingdom he had heard about. He was seeking for glory and honor. There was nothing wrong in that. It is not bad to aim high. A couple of the disciples once made a similar request. So he wanted to be a *right hand* man. He asked what good thing he should do to inherit such a position or reward in the kingdom.

The Lord told him to keep the commandments. The commandments had been given to believers that they might live and enjoy blessings that were promised to such as would keep them. He must have been brot up right, for he said that he had kept the commandments from his youth up. Paul was able to say the same thing.

But this young man felt that this was not all there was to it, so he asked what further might be required. No doubt in a few minutes he was sorry he asked the question. The Lord told him to sell his possessions, give to the poor, and then follow Him. He went away sorrowing for he had great possessions.

Then the Lord remarked how hard it was for a rich man to enter the kingdom. It was like a camel trying to enter the city by the needle gate after the other gates were closed. He would have to be unloaded and pushed and pulled thru the gate. Then the disciples concluded that if it were that hard, not many would enter the kingdom. But the Lord said that such things were possible with God.

Yes, this man went away. He was still a believer, but not an overcomer. He was not willing to pay the price, to do the things that would guarantee him the honor he thot he wanted. Present possessions had more attraction than the prospect of future glory.

The 12 had given up everything to follow the Lord, so Peter was curious as to what they would receive as a reward for their good deeds. They were told that they would receive blessings in this present life (with persecutions), and much more in the life to come including sitting on 12 thrones reigning with Him in the kingdom.

This lesson concerns believers and their rewards. For further references to eternal life as a reward, see; Ro 2:7; 6:22,23; ITi 1:16; 6:12,19; Jude 21; Ga 6:8.

## SCOPE OF CREATION AND RECONCILIATION IN

Col 1:16-20

1. ALL THINGS. God created all things by Christ. Things in heaven and things in the earth. Both visible and invisible. But these things are limited to 4 categories; Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers. Men are not mentioned. Neither are angels or Satan.

2. ALL THINGS. It is repeated that all things were created by Him (Christ) and for Him. But note that it is the same *all things*; Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers.

3. ALL THINGS. He was, He existed before all these things; Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers.

4. ALL THINGS. By Him all these things consist or stand together or cohere. But it is yet Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers.

5. ALL THINGS. He is the Head of the body, the church. He is the beginning. He is the Firstborn from among the dead. That in all things He might have the preeminence. But this is still limited to Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers.

6. ALL THINGS. God reconciled all things by Christ unto Himself. This is past tense. It was accomplished at the cross because of the peace that was made there. Any future reconciliation some fondly hope for will require another sacrifice, another Calvary. The *all things* that are reconciled are still Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers.

7. THINGS. As in paragraph 1, these are things on the earth. Note the reversal of heaven and earth. But these things can go no farther nor beyond the limits of Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers.

8. THINGS. Calvary effected a reconciliation of things in heaven. But these things are only Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers.

This study may be a little surprising to many, but our reason for giving it is not so much to teach doctrine, but to teach a method of study. Right division is needed here just as much as at some dispensational frontier.

You will note that immediately the creation of *all things* is mentioned, we have the word *whether*. It puts a limit to how far *all things* can go. The same in the last verse where *whether* again limits *all things* to earth and heaven. That word *whether* must not be overlooked. A lot of folks will quote verse 20 to prove a pet theory and completely ignore the context. That is not honesty. It is not right division. It does not take into account all the Word, and for those who believe that all the Scriptures are inspired of God, they just cannot go along with such foolishness.

For further study of this passage, begin with verse 12 and go on thru 22. See outline in the Companion Bible. Note the position of Christ.

Now the Lord did create more than is mentioned in the above passage, but the teaching here cannot embrace all creation for reconciliation is *NOT UNIVERSAL*. Even at the time this reconciliation was effected, there were principalities and powers that were spoiled.

Let us be careful with a text and keep it in its context, and also rightly divide.

## WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE?

104. Why must Christ be raised from the dead as Lord? Ro 14:9 (cf question 103)

105. Why must Christ be raised from the dead as Head of the body, the church? Col 1:18

106. What would naturally follow Christ's finished work here on the earth? Joh 17:4,11

107. What was the first message sent to the disciples after the death of Christ? Joh 20:17

108. How is ascension connected with the purpose of the ages? Eph 4:10; 1:20-22

109. What is Christ's position as a Priest and what does it signify? Heb 10:11-13

110. Is Christ now manifest to the powers in the heavens? Col 3:3

111. What is the hope of the dispensation of the mystery? Col 3:4

112. What is the hope of Israel?

113. What is the millennium?

114. What will Christ say when the new heavens and new earth are present and He is Ruler over all? Re 21:6

115. What is the difference between what He said on the cross and what He will say on the throne?

116. What then is the goal of the ages? 1Co 15:21-28

117. How long will Christ reign? Ibid

118. When Christ ceases to reign, then what? Ibid

119. How is all this the fulfillment of the first unconditional covenant ever made? Eph 3:6 2Ti 1:1 Tit 1:2

120. When will it be true that all things are of God? 2Co 5:-17-18-

121. What was the purpose of the signs following? Mk 16:20

122. Do we have them today? Why?

123. To what does THIS IS THAT in Ac 2:16 refer?

124. In what connection was the shedding forth of the spiritual gifts? Ac 2:30-33

125. What was the confirmation of the kingdom gospel? Heb 2:3,4

126. How were tongues a sign? 1Co 14:21,22

127. What place did healing have in the Pentecostal period? 1Co 12:28

128. What evidence do we have that the healing ceased after Ac 28:28? 2Ti 4:20 1Ti 5:23

129. What is the meaning of Pentecost? Lev 23:15-21

130. Who were celebrating the feast of Pentecost in Acts 2?

131. Whom does Peter address when he speaks at Pentecost?

132. Is it likely that Peter would have preached to Gentiles at Pentecost? Ac 10:28,29

133. What was the effect upon the church when Gentiles first came into the kingdom truth? Ac 11:2,3,18

134. Is there any reason to believe that Acts was a transition period and that the miracles gradually died off? Ac 28:3-5,8,9

135. Had the hope of Israel gradually faded away? Ac 28:20

136. Was the Jew or the Gentile first in Acts 28:17?

137. When was salvation sent to the Gentiles?

## THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES #2

This book is tied up with former activities in several ways. One outstanding way is in the fulfillment of a promise that had been made to the apostles in Luke 24:49. They were told of a promise to be sent upon them. This promise is defined as being *endued with power from on high*. Then the Lord left them and ascended into heaven.

We have already shown that Acts is a continuation of Luke's gospel. So we are prepared to look for the fulfillment of this promise. We find it in Acts 2:1-4, 43. It is according to the definition. They were endued with power from on high and they spoke in tongues (languages) and did many miracles and signs.

The actual acts of the apostles then were dependent upon the fulfillment of this promise made in Luke. For it was only by this power that the apostles were enabled to go out and do this wonderful ministry. So here we have the key to the book, *endued with power from on high*. Test this for yourself.

Not only the 12 (including Mathias) were the recipients of this promise, but Stephen, and later Paul, as well as Gentiles such as Cornelius and his household. When Paul wrote his first letter to Corinth, he wrote the 12th chapter to the Gentiles, how they were to make use of the power from on high.

Yet from beginning to end, the Acts of the apostles were in view of the hope of Israel, the kingdom and its King. The day that that hope was removed for the time being and the salvation of God was sent to the Gentiles, the power from on high was no longer in evidence and has not been till this day. This is a fact that should make all Bible students stop and think. And if they did think, they would cease mixing the church and the kingdom. They would see that no church began at Pentecost, but there was only a continuation of what had been going on before.

Altho Paul was not one of the 12, yet he was able to speak in tongues, heal the sick, raise the dead, and handle a poisonous serpent--that is, up to the end of Acts. After that he was not even able to heal his fellow-workers, and he himself suffered illness.

Later in Acts, When Paul was writing to the Hebrews he speaks of this power from on high as tasting of the heavenly gift, partaking of the holy ghost (power from on high), and powers of the age to come (millennial kingdom). So we can safely say that the events of Pentecost, a Jewish feast, were a foretaste of the kingdom to come.

But there are many today who know better. They correct God by saying that Pentecost was the birthday of the church of the dispensation of the mystery. Men's ideas and the Scriptures seem to run in opposite directions.

Men take it for granted that Gentiles were at this feast of the Jews and that they came into this same group too. But just when and where and why did Gentiles finally get to join this group? That is a good question and we shall take it up next time.

## THE QUICK AND THE DEAD #22

DENTON C. ABBEY

As we mentioned previously, too much importance should not be attached to the interpretation of a single passage or verse of Scripture. Our interpretation must, and should be, as to context and general teaching of the Bible as a whole. The phrase from 2Co 5:8 we have been studying is often given from the pulpit and it comes out like this; *Absent from the body, present with the Lord*. Without a doubt this gives a very specific meaning to the phrase. As we mentioned in closing last month's article, this verse should be studied carefully. In actuality the sentence, if used correctly, would be somewhat as follows; *We are confident, I say and would be well pleased rather to go abroad from the body and to be at our abode with the Lord*.

Now it is not the policy of TFT or your author to be dogmatic about our views, but rather that thru our studies you might benefit. You can readily see that the usual mode of saying this verse is a far cry from the one I have given from the original Greek. I hasten to add that I am a rank amateur at Greek, but the problem doesn't necessarily arise from the interpretation of the Greek, but in the choice of words.

Absent, in the English, is from the Greek *ekdeemo*, meaning, to go abroad; travel; to be abroad; to be on our travels. To substitute one of these for *absent* in 2Co 5:8 is the problem. However if the true meaning is to be preserved from the teaching of the Bible, the phrase, *to be on our travels* would seem to be the correct choice. For Heb 11:13 tells us that, THE FATHERS CONFESSED THAT THEY WERE STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS ON THE EARTH. Psa 119:19 repeats this, I AM A STRANGER IN THE EARTH. Peter in his first epistle says the same. So if we are travelers and pilgrims in this earth, then *absent* should be translated in spirit, if not in letters, to imply that we would rather travel, or go abroad from this home (body) and take up our rightful home or abode. And this, I feel, is what Paul is trying to assure his readers. In Eph 2:19 he says, NOW THEREFORE YOU ARE NO MORE STRANGERS AND FOREIGNERS, BUT FELLOW CITIZENS WITH THE SAINTS, AND OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD.

To try to base a case for or against the dogma of immortality on this verse, to me, seems completely out of context. Nowhere does Paul teach the immortality of man, but rather the great theme of resurrection. And if resurrection is his theme, why would he in this verse inject a new teaching? The context is not one concerning immortality or mortality, but one of ministry. If we have a key verse in this whole discourse, it would be 4:14, rather than 5:8, KNOWING THAT HE WHICH RAISED UP THE LORD JESUS SHALL RAISE UP US ALSO BY JESUS, AND SHALL PRESENT US WITH YOU.

Sorry that this article is somewhat of a technical nature, but I did want to show you some of the problems that arise in translating one language over into another, and especially from Greek to English. There are times when no exact equivalent can be found. There are times when a word has to be expanded into a phrase.

## INTERROGATIONS

## THE EDITOR'S DESK

12. What is the meaning of Ex 6:3, AND I APPEARED UNTO ABRAHAM, UNTO ISAAC, AND UNTO JACOB. BY THE NAME OF GOD ALMIGHTY, BUT BY MY NAME JEHOVAH WAS I NOT KNOWN UNTO THEM?

This has been a real puzzle. Most of the commentators and even the Companion Bible think that, altho the name was known, He was not recognized as the great I AM in any covenant relationship. But this does not seem to be so very satisfactory. There is still a question.

It is more likely that Genesis was written by Adam and others in 12 tablets or installments and that Moses compiled these at a later date. In order to distinguish the God (Elohim) of the Hebrews from the many elohim (gods) of the heathen, Moses used the name Jehovah so that those recently in Egypt and delivered by the Strong Arm might know that it was not by any of the gods of the land. For a fuller discussion of this problem, read New Discoveries in Babylonia About Genesis by P. J. Wiseman, Marshall, Morgan & Scott, publishers.

13. From the descriptions in the gospels, a conservative estimate would indicate that John the Baptist must have baptized about 3 million people. How could it have been possible?

In the first place, baptism by immersion is totally unknown to the Bible. Apostate Israel did begin to practice it and it is known in the Talmudic writings, but not in our Scriptures. Moses baptized a similar number of people in Exodus 24:8. The method you will find in Ex 12:22. Also see Ps 51:7.

14. What are the main distinctive points that describe the dispensation of the mystery?

(1) It is made up of saints and faithful who were chosen in Christ before the overthrow. (2) These are blest with every spiritual blessing in Christ in the heavenlies. (3) They will be glorified with Christ where and when He will be glorified. (4) Their ministry is to make known the manifold wisdom of God to principalities and powers of the heavens. There are other details, but these are a good start in this great study of what is the dispensation of the mystery.

15. Did the body of which Christ is the Head start somewhere before Acts 28:28?

Can find no possibility that this could be true. Romans, written well toward the end of Acts, speaks of those who have the law and those who do not have the law. It speaks of the Gentile believers as being grafted into the good olive tree, Israel, and partakers of her spiritual blessings. The Jew is first, both in reward and in punishment. Gentile believers during Acts were blest with faithful Abraham. The promises and covenants were still held out to the faithful of Israel and after Acts 13 Gentile believers could partake of them, but the middle wall of partition was still up.

Also during Acts there were the Pentecostal gifts, carnal ordinances, and the hope of the Lord's return to the earth to set up His kingdom. Acts begins with the apostles being instructed in the kingdom, not the church. Further study as to the status of the Gentile believer before and after Ac 28:28 is recommended.

TRUTH FOR TODAY is published monthly by Truth For Today, Inc. It is sent to anyone anywhere free upon request. The telephone is under the name of Oscar M. Baker (editor). Atwood exchange Ulysses 8-2684.

BIBLE DISCUSSIONS each Sunday morning 10:30 to 11:30, and each Tue. nite 7:30 to 9. The place is the home of your editor on county Rd. 100S, first house west of 600W (¼ mile back a lane). Follow these directions carefully.

RAPIDOGRAPH fountain pen uses waterproof India ink. Fine for marking your Bible. \$4.95.

THE COMPANION BIBLE. After Sept. 1st the prices will be \$15 for it in buckram and \$19 for it in ¼ leather. In the meantime you may order them at \$12.95 and \$16 resp. Order now!

TAPE RECORDERS. If you wish to listen to the lessons on tapes by Welch, Allen, Streets, and others, we have a fine little recorder that will do a good job of playing them for you. The price is only \$65 each f.o.b. Warsaw. Send for the descriptive circular.

TAPES. For free use of above mentioned tapes, write to Lt.- Col. Arthur P. von Deesten, 357 South Curson Ave., Los Angeles 36, Calif. You also may buy these tape recordings.

TO OUR NEW READERS: This little paper is for those who realize that they must give an account to God for what they believe and do. It will not appeal to those who follow the leader and refuse to think for themselves. It is your right to question what is said and to disagree without being disagreeable. Your questions are welcome, no matter how trivial.

CONCORDANCES. We have Strong's concordance at \$14.75. Also Young's concordance at \$12.75, or \$14.50 if thumb-indexed. If you do not have an English concordance, better get one now.

VISITORS are welcome. Several have come and more are blanning to. We have an extra room or two. You can ask all the questions you want to. But be sure to let us know. We might not be at home, as has happened in the past.

THANK for all the nice letters.

Truth For Today  
R 2, Warsaw, Ind.

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U. S. POSTAGE PAID  
Warsaw, Ind.  
Permit No. 20