

The Gospel Standard

“Go through, go through the gates; cast up, cast up the highway; gather for the people,” Isa. 62:10



prepare ye the way of the people; out the stones; lift up a standard

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The Gospel Standard, March/April, 2012 Issue

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Editorial

The world knows only war, and the ways of war. The world has never known peace. What the world calls peace is only a cessation of war. Peace is different. Peace about which the Bible teaches, is that quality which does not depend upon external circumstances. In fact, the child of God can know peace even while wielding the sword. That is what our Lord taught his disciples.

Jesus, knowing what lay ahead for all of his followers, especially for the apostles, and eventually for all who teach and preach the word, both warned and strengthened them in the same teaching regarding the matter. Jesus said to the apostles, in summarizing what he had said about the matter in John 16:33: "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Note the division Jesus makes: (1) In me, and (2) In the world.

Disciples following Jesus, always find themselves in these circumstance. In, but not of the world; in Jesus, and of Jesus. Our citizenship is in heaven when we are in Jesus, Philippians 3:20. We must live in this world, but at the same time we must serve as lights unto the crooked and perverse world in which we live, Philippians 2:15. One of the ways we can do this is to show the world what real peace is, and how they can attain this peace we have. We can show them in two ways. (1) By our life, we can demonstrate this peace in life. (2) We can show them by the word of God. This is the life of a disciple in summation. This is following in the steps of Christ, 1 Peter 2:21. This is what peacemaking is all about.

In a world of uncertainty, we can show them stability. In a world of despair, we can show them hope. In a world of blindness, we can show them real sight. In a world of darkness, we can show them light. In a world gone mad with sin, we can show them sanity of thought; rationality in service to, and worship of God. In a world turned wrong side out with sin, we can show them truth in life and in word. In a world where dead carcasses of sinners walk, we can show them living spirits walking in faith and by the faith.

It is high time that we awake from our self induced sleep. Paul wrote, "...our salvation is nearer than when we first believed," Romans 13:11. It has been far too long that we have accepted works of darkness as faithfulness, instead of reproving them, Ephesians 5:11. We have accepted regret for trying hard to do the right thing in the face of severe opposition: instead of resolving to try harder. We have accepted regret for making sacrifices, when all around us were those living in ease and luxury: instead of giving more. We have accepted the spirit of helplessness, when those all around us demonstrated indifference; instead of taking up the sword of the spirit in the name of the Lord and wielding it in faith. Yes! It is past time that we awake from the sleep of self-pity, arise in the strength of the faith of Jesus Christ, and declare to the world and unbelieving church members, "Enough is enough; from this day forth I shall take my stand with my Lord, and renew that commitment each day I live. So long as I live, and keep my sanity; as long as there is strength in my body, my life shall demonstrate the peace of God; even during the necessary warfare that we Christians must engage in, so help me God."

It is our prayer that everywhere good people are found, whose first priority of life is to please God, that we can unite together in the name of our Lord, under his banner, in his kingdom, to make war with the common enemy; Satan. It is our prayer that we all shall be able to discern between the imperative and the indifferent teaching; between the necessary, and the optional. If that day when we can discern properly ever arises, then we can settle our differences on the imperatives, and get on with the business of the Lord.

We used to sing a song, "Time is filled with swift transition..." Time passes swiftly when people truly have a mission in life. Each day seems to end a little quicker for this preacher. Each day I seem to have more of an urgent sense of completing tasks than we ever had before. In my thinking, each task becomes more important because I see more souls hanging in the balance, and needing teaching more than ever before. My wife and I have never had a lot of spare time for social activities, because of our work commitments. Today we go less and work more than ever. We also, although we work together much of the time, spend less and less time in relaxation together Why? The older we get, the more

urgency there is attached to our labor of teaching and spreading the gospel of Christ. We have given up vacations, fishing trips, days off, picnics, and even dinner with friends in order to accommodate opportunities to teach and, or in some way help the lost. There has been no regret for such. Why? We believe that is all in the routine day of a child of God, serving God and his fellow man.

In either a recent book or an article, I do not remember since all I write sooner or later runs together as one, I wrote that when I yielded my heart to serve righteousness (Romans 6:16), at that moment I became a willing slave (bond servant) to God, and to his word. As a slave of God, I am also a captive of His written word in the same sense in which I serve him. I know many will disagree with me at this point, but that does not make it untrue. For almost sixty years, I have been a willing captive of the word of God. I yielded my heart to it, and my heart has, and still does rejoice in that decision. That one choice has itself made thousands of other choices for me. That one choice always makes any decision which must be made by me about the word, and about what remarks I shall make about the written word of God. That one choice at the beginning settled forever many questions. Any action which demands more thought about the written law of God, is ultimately settled by that decision.

Christians, the Called Out, Saints, children of God, disciples of Christ, all cover pretty much the differing aspects of the children of God. It all translates into a person who is at peace with God, and with all others who are also at peace with God. All persons who are at peace with God, are those persons who are peacemakers. They all learned in the process of becoming at peace with God, how to truly be a peacemaker. Peacemaking is a natural product of being a Christian; a citizen of the kingdom. A child of God is the person who does the works of God. One work of God is effecting peace through Christ Jesus our Savior. Is one of your works "peacemaking?" Read on to find out how to be a peacemaker.

Blessed Are The Peacemakers

Melvin Elliott

Let me remind you again that these beatitudes are the foundation principle upon which man must shape his character and through which God's blessing flow. I will introduce a lot of things knowing space will not allow making all the needed applications. I will show the correlation between peace and being in the kingdom of God. In Matthew 5:9; "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." Many of the beatitudes may be neglected but this one is often overtly abused. How often have I seen, when difficulties arise, rather than following the Scriptures to see how to make peace with God and all others who are at peace with God, we substitute the ideas of men. We try to reach consensus between right and wrong by advocating that one or both make concessions. This requires that we give up principles of truth and compromise with evil, and the root problem remains to fester another day. The tragedy is that we attempt to justify such corruption under the guise of making peace. Let me emphatically say, appeasement is not peace and will never produce the genuine peace that comes only from conformity to the will of God. All that such actions show is a lack of common understanding and judgment and especially ignorance of the Scripture. Worst of all, it is open rebellion against the judgments of God, and so it fails to make peace with God. To be a scriptural peacemaker and a child manifesting the character of God, we must understand the nature of God's peacemaking.

First, we must learn there are some things with which a Christian cannot be at peace. In fact, we must be at war with them. Paul tells Timothy about how to be a good soldier of Christ and also speaks of the weapons of our warfare. Let me be most clear with this statement; if you are not willing to do battle with the devil and sin standing upon biblical principles, you simply cannot be a peacemaker. Note these passages: James 4:7; "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." It is also interesting to note that this passage is followed by, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded." Submitting to God is equal to drawing near to God. To resist the

devil is to cleanse hands and purify hearts. The results are, God draws near to us but the devil flees. Cleaning the hands is symbolic of cleaning up the life and to purify the heart in this passage is to cease from being double minded. One word in the original is translated double minded and it literally means two spirited. Such a one vacillates between two positions. Therefore, to be at peace with God we must be hostile to evil and actively war against the Satanic inspired substitution of mans ways for God's.

Peace Demands Sober-mindedness and Vigilance

Now we read I Peter 5:8-9; “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.” The word resist in this and the above passage comes from a compound word meaning against and to stand. So we say, stand against. It also has the force of the middle voice so each one is responsible to take his stand regardless of what others do. Peter emphasis this by requiring we be steadfast in our resistance of evil. Steadfast means to be firm, strong, solid, stable, established. The opposite of this is the double-minded man that is unstable. This is why he has to purify his heart because a double-minded heart cannot steadfastly resist the devil and so draw night to God. II Peter 3:16; “As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.” Did you notice what the unstable do? They twist the scriptures and follow man's carnal wisdom rather than steadfastly following the faith. So they reject what the Bible teaches on making peace as we showed above. To be steadfast in the faith, we must stand against the devil and all his followers as instructed by the faith.

Neither can we be at peace with all men. Some men and women will not allow one to be at peace. They won't allow it because they are carnally minded, servants of Satan and disrupt peace. Paul tells us in Romans 6:17 that we are the servants of whomsoever we obey. Now look In Romans 8:5-7; “For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded

is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Directly implied is that peace comes from subjecting ourselves to God's law. The carnally minded are enemies of God because they are hostile to his word. Although they are sitting on the front seats of church houses they are carnally minded and reject God's rule. They do not love righteousness (the sum total of God's word) and the peace it works but instead are active foes of it. God is righteous and therefore, a God of peace, Hebrews 13:20-21. As they hate peace, they hate God. Their carnal mind-set by its very nature. makes them haters of righteousness and the peace it produces. As Christians are spiritually minded and so follow the rule of Christ, they work peace. So the life of a Christian is a rebuke to the strife the carnally minded causes; so they hate us for the same reason they hate God. John 15:18; “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.” You can't make piece with haters of God without compromising righteousness.

A Clarification of Peacemaking

To better see what peace making is; we will look at the works of men that substitute their standard for the truth of God. Today, we have the church concept of Christianity. Among those in these churches, we find some will fellowship the adulterer, another will not but they will accept the liar. Others will accept the gossip and troublemaker and so on until you can find about every sin in the book being fellowshipped. The point is, churches follow their own standards and reject God's standard of conduct. Regardless of what is or is not allowed, none are in harmony with God's word. To adequately show how churches rebel against God's rule, consider what usually happens to a person who questions the fellowshipping of openly practiced sin. First, the powers that be will attempt to pass it off by making various excuses. If such a one insists we adhere to the Scripture, he is rejected and often falsely accused of disrupting the peace of the congregation. But ignoring and fellowshipping sin does not bring God's peace. I know of a case where one that rebelled against certain scriptures being taught, was accepted and the one teaching the truth was rejected and it was specifically stated it was necessary to, “Keep peace in the family”

meaning in the “church.” In another similar case a person was accused of, “...rebellng against the eldership,” and fellowship was withdrawn. To be in fellowship with these churches one has to reject the word of God at least in some things. Since the kingdom is the rule of God in the hearts of men, one has to reject the kingdom, (rule of God) to be fellowshipped by these man made churches following man made rules! If all such are not in the kingdom, how can they be the peacemakers God blesses? They are not: but they are the ones that are the cause of strife.

How different from the peace in the kingdom of God. Romans 6:11-13; “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.” Note again this concluding statement of obvious truth: Romans 6:16; “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” Let me emphasize this statement; “...obedience unto righteousness?” Keep this in mind, as we will return to it later to draw an important conclusion.

We need to look at some of the words in the above passages. First is the word *yield*. The word means to set or place alongside, to set before or to present. To present is probably the best understanding here because of the context. The word obey is a compound word meaning literally, under and to hear. So we are to present ourselves to the attentive hearing of God's law in view of submissive compliance. In every usage and situation, obey implies hearing. To put it in the vernacular, we would say, “To whom do you listen?” To put it sarcastically and colloquially, we would say, “Who are you listening to?” Keep in mind the concluding statement; it is the inescapable outcome that we make ourselves the servant of whomsoever we follow and in so doing, we manifest their characteristics. Paul is simply saying we are not to present ourselves to hear unrighteousness but unto God to hear his word and to submit to it because it is a fact that you are the servant of whom you obey. We must ask ourselves, am I hearing God and

becoming like him or do I refuse to submit and become rebellious like the devil?

When ungodly behavior disrupts the peace in our midst, those who advocate dealing with it according to Scripture are often falsely treated as troublemakers. Such a response accuses truth and those who advocate truth to be the troublemaker and not peacemakers. However, is it evil that causes strife! So, when we ignore or attempt to justify sin, we show we are hostile toward the law of God and so we are fleshly, carnally minded and God's enemy. Paul said it best in Galatians 5:19-21; "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." By this he means, those who reject the rule of God will not inherit the blessings of peace that comes through righteousness, i.e., obedience to the sum total of the rule of God.

To show the correctness of the above and to interject another necessary point to our understanding of the peacemaker, look at Isaiah 32:17-18; "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places;" Here it is specifically stated that peace comes from working righteousness; it is a product of righteousness. It is interesting to note the Old Testament word for peace is shalom. This word is broad and comprehensive. It was used by the Hebrews for a common greeting up to wishing for one the sum total of God's blessings. So the peacemaker is one who works righteousness to be at peace with God, to help his fellow man to be at peace with God and as the result, to be in peace with each other. Note again, Paul said, "...but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." The carnal mind is not subject to God's law so only the spiritually minded that do keep the law can be at peace. Peace is to set at one; the harmonious relationship between God and man that results in shalom, the sum total of the blessing that results from righteousness so one can be at peace.

Let us briefly see the role of Christ in this matter. In Genesis 49:10; “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.” Shiloh means peace, the prince of peace. In Isaiah 9:6; “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” The prince of peace means the author of peace, the ruler of peace so his rule brings peace, the sum total of God's blessings. Note Paul's usage of this in Ephesians 2:12-14; “That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;” Without compliance to the will of Christ, they were aliens and without citizenship with God's people.

Now, In verse 17 Paul concludes by saying that Christ came and preached peace to all resulting in them being made citizens in the kingdom. Christ is the shalom of God. How is this done? Romans 5:1-2; “Therefore being justified by [the] faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by [the] faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” As we showed in the beginning, peace can only come through the spiritually minded that attentively hear and submit to the faith, the rule of God in the heart of man. Paul further speaks of this in Romans 12:2; “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” To be in the kingdom, one goes through a transformation, a metamorphosis of will to change from the carnally minded to the spiritually minded. Paul also speaks of this in Colossians 1:13; “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:”

To make our point, we emphasize the statement, “...obedience unto righteousness?” Righteousness is the sum total of God's requirements. As peace is the product of righteousness, it is the

result of following the sum total of God's requirements. Only the spiritually minded are yielded to the law of God and so they are servants of righteousness that produces peace. Subjection to the rule of God is to be in his kingdom so peace is realized in the kingdom. Therefore, a peacemaker is one who follows the rule of God being in the kingdom and is at peace with God. If such makes me a peacemaker, it will also make others peacemakers. It is only then that we can be at peace with others. Ephesians 1:17-22; "And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

Conclusion: Peace and the Kingdom of God

This is the rule of God in the spirit of man, the heart of man, the kingdom of God in you. I cannot be at peace with congregation A, and yield to God's law on adultery; congregation B, and yield to God's law on lying; C, unless I fellowship the teaching of certain schools; D, unless I fellowship certain false teachers and so on. All such are hostile to the rule of God and so they are carnally minded, who reject the rule of God to follow the rule of men. All such "churches" are man made, and cannot be the kingdom of God nor their members, peacemakers. They are not yielded to God, and so cannot be servants of God. They follow their own system of righteousness and have not yielded from the heart to God. What about those who don't agree but are silent? They remind me of John 12:42-43; "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."

How different is this "church doctrine" of man from simply yielding to the rule of God and being translated into his kingdom. No man stands between God and me. The twenty first century church is not the kingdom of God because they do not practice the

rule of God. Their self-made standard of righteousness in practice opposes the rule of God and as such they are the cause of strife. They are not peacemakers in harmony with God's rule and cease to be the children of God.

Note now the contrast, Philippians 3:17-21; "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.) For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." Why? Because they follow righteousness, the sum total of God's commandments, that brings peace in the kingdom of God.

The Devil Opposes Peacemaking

Charles A. Pledge

Jesus declared that the peacemaker shall be blessed. Satan says, I will make the peacemaker miserable. As has been pointed out, the peacemaker is one who effects peace. But not peace as the world considers peace. It is only when the peacemaker understands what it means to be a peacemaker that he will be blessed of God, because his making peace is primarily between man and God. This is not to say that we are not to be concerned about peace between men. Rather we need to first emphasize peace between man and God. If a man is at peace with God, then he will be at peace with all others who are at peace with God.

On the other hand, if man is a peace maker in truth, it is going to be peace between man and God that he shall primarily be concerned about. But most people in general, many of whom are touted as being great peacemakers, are themselves the enemy of

God. The carnal/fleshly/worldly mind thinks of a worldly peace; a peace between man and man. This person can think only in terms of the world, with rare moments when a spiritual thought may enter as a stranger.

God tells us about the worldly minded person and how that person thinks. Paul tells us that those who are of this world/flesh, are those who mind the things of the flesh, Romans 8:5. He then tells us that to be carnally minded is death, verse six of Romans eight. He explains why in Romans 8:6: "Because the carnal mind is hatred (enmity) against God." Paul tells us in that verse that the carnal mind can not be subject to the law of God. Why? Because that mind hates God, 8:7. The conclusion stated in 8:8 is that the carnal mind can not please God.

What is the carnal mind? Let us see for a moment where it is situated. It is the opposite of the spiritual mind, 8:9. One is not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwells in that one. If any man has not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Notice careful what Paul is arguing in Romans 8:9.

1. Not in the flesh but in the spirit; IF so be that the spirit of God dwells in one. To dwell is to live in a place. For Deity to live in one merely means that Deity rules that one. Deity rules one if the spirit of Christ lives in, or rules one. Let us restate this in a clear manner.

All persons in whom God lives, are those persons whom God rules.

God lives only in those in whom lives the spirit of Christ.
Therefore God rules only those in whom lives the spirit of Christ.

All persons in whom the spirit of Christ lives are those persons whose spirits live.

Each person in whom the spirit of God lives is a person whose spirit lives.

Therefore the spirit of Christ and the spirit of God are the same spirit.

All of those in whom lives the spirit of Christ, are those whose spirits live.

No spirit lives in one in whom the spirit of God does not live. Therefore if the spirit of God does not live in one, then the spirit of Christ does not live in one.

The spirit of Christ in this passage, is the mind-set of Christ. The spirit of God in this passage, is the disposition of godliness. The mind-set of Christ, and the disposition of godliness are the same spirit in this passage. This has been illustrated through the syllogisms above.

Paul is arguing in this passage that all who live before God are those who have the mind-set of Christ, or the disposition of godliness. He states then, in verse ten, that if one does have the mind-set of Christ, that the body shall still physically die because of sin, but the spirit shall live because of the righteousness guaranteed by the presence of the mind-set of Christ. But if one has the disposition of godliness, then even though the mortal must die physically, that mortal body shall live by being an instrument of righteousness while it physically lives. It can thus be a part of a living sacrifice unto God, Romans 12:1. The disposition of godliness, or the mind-set of Christ, is that by which the mortal body is made alive in the sense just stated, Romans 8:11.

In view of this, Christians are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the dictates of the flesh, 8:12. To live by following the dictates of the flesh we shall die spiritually (be separated from God), Romans 8:13. But if we through the mind-set of the spirit put to death the deeds of the body (fleshly dictates), then we shall live with God (in fellowship with him).

The explanation given by Paul is that the spirit of God (disposition of godliness, or mind-set of Christ) leads all the sons of God, 8:14. Paul says in effect that all who are sons of God are led by this spirit, and none are sons of God who are not led by this spirit. Paul explains in 8:15 what sort of spirit this is; it is the spirit of sonship as opposed to the spirit of bondage, or slavery, 8:15. This disposition of godliness, or the mind-set of Christ testifies to our inner man/our heart/ intelligence, will, affections, emotions, etc, that we have been in harmony with the will of God all along, therefore we are sons of God, Romans 8:16. In a book, *The Nature of Christianity*, I deal with this, and also more extensively in a book, "An Outline Study Guide of Romans With Class Notes."

It is provable by context, and syntax that the Holy Spirit is not mentioned in Romans chapter eight. In the original edition of 1611, the KJV translators used the lower case in every mention of the word spirit. The context proves them right. I can prove grammatically that if it were the Holy Spirit under consideration, then man can not do a single thing in order to live spiritually. We have a simple choice of either Calvinism, or truth. We have two spirits mentioned in Romans chapter eight: The spirit of God and the spirit of Christ are the same. The disposition of godliness is the mind-set of Christ. The second spirit mentioned is the spirit of man; the inner man, the spiritual part of man. We return now to the carnal mind which precipitated this lengthy explanation of the mind of the spirit. The spirit, or mind-set of Christ, or the disposition of godliness has to do with the minding of the things which are in the best interest of the inner man, which things are the eternal values of God. This is where the emphasis of life resides; on the spiritual things; those things above where Christ sets on the right hand of God, Colossians 3:1-2.

The opposite is the carnal/fleshly/worldly mind. The carnal is that which is fleshly in nature. Worldly is that which is physical, or after this physical world, in nature. Although we have been lengthy to this point out of necessity, we shall now sum it up quickly.

To have a carnal mind is to place the emphasis of life on physical things. Things which refer to our bodies, and to this world; to the here and now. To be spiritually minded is to have the mind-set of Christ in us; the disposition of godliness in which we place the emphasis of life on the eternal values which are all in the best interest of our inner man. With the mind-set of Christ, or the disposition of Christ, our bent of the mind is to do what the Father wills at all times. Most of our decisions are made before it is even necessary to make a decision as to which we shall do when the choice is forced upon us.

The carnal mind is the opposite of peace. It is the carnal mind which genders strife and division. Paul told the Corinthian Christians that he could not speak to them as unto spiritual people, but he had to speak unto them as unto carnal/fleshly/worldly people. In chapter three and verse three, Paul told them that they were carnal; a very plain statement. Then he offered as proof that

because there was division approved among them, that proved that they were carnal. In effect, God said by Paul's statement that all division is caused by the carnal mind at work. Since they were divided, that proved that worldly thinking produced the division.

Think for a moment: all strife and all division is caused by the carnal mind at work. If that be the case, then when carnal minded people lead in making decisions about difficulties, they will only produce more difficulties. Can you now plainly see and understand that if we have worldly minded leaders, then they will lead us away from God, Christ, righteousness and peace? It is imperative that religious leaders be those chosen primarily because of their character, their faithfulness in teaching, and their disposition/or mind-set; not merely personality and worldly advantages. The number one fatal mistake the people of God usually make, is to choose carnal minds to lead them. When Israel wanted a king like the nations around them, they rejected God and chose carnality over spirituality. Just look at their subsequent choices and results.

The carnal mind says in effect, I don't care what the Bible says, we will not do it like that, but this is the way we shall go. There is no law under heaven approved of God that says his people have to follow that mentality, or mind-set. God expects us to submit to his written word regardless of what men may say or do. That submission, or lack of it shows what faith we have, or do not have. However, this is the mentality, or mind-set which is seen in the "professional peace makers" among us. By that I mean, the organizations devoted to going into churches to effect peace among troubled groups. I have been introduced to their methods and talks, by those zealous at compromising situations which could only be fully, and faithfully, settled by following the word of God.

The devil opposes peace. Where genuine peace of God reigns, we have righteousness. The devil flees righteousness because there is no opportunity for him to take over. Satan hates righteousness as badly as God hates sin. That should make us stop and consider our own ways and thoughts.

Because Satan hates peace and unity, we can expect him to use every opportunity that can be used to destroy the unity, peace and righteousness which exists. The devil is not Mr. Nice Guy. He will use every dirty, evil trick he can use to destroy all the good he can.

Therefore, if you are ever involved in a situation where unity and peace are in danger, be cautious; Satan has a henchman lurking around the corner, or else one directly involved. The latter is probably the case. Remember all strife is caused by carnality. All unity pleasing to God, is effected by spiritual minds united as one, working together to honor and glorify God in ways harmonious with the written word of God. To be a true peacemaker, one must be attempting to unite men with God, to walk in agreement with God, Amos 3:3. ***Are you a peacemaker?***

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It is Time To Say: Enough!

Charles A. Pledge

For soon to be sixty years I have heard it repeatedly said that, “We must follow our elders and/or leaders. If they lead us wrong they will have to answer for our mistakes.” **I beg to differ.** This is a wrongheaded idea and contrary to holy Scripture. Each child of God is accountable to God for what each of us do. If we sin in following a bad leader, we are accountable. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:10 that we shall all appear before the judgment seat to give an answer for what we each do. Neither ignorance nor elders offer any excuse for us at the judgment bar.

Every child of God is a priest unto God, 1 Peter 2:5,9. Jesus Christ is our high priest, unto whom we answer, and not man. The eldership is a work, not an office held. No man, nor any group of men, has the moral right to command any Christian to act in any way contrary to the written will of God. No person has a moral right to fellowship one from whom God withholds his fellowship, or any sinful conduct, or condition which God condemns.

On the other hand, the people of God are splintered and bruised by sin, and we have no moral leadership to help us out of that condition. But then, that is little wonder. Our concept of leadership is based on the world's definition of leadership and not on God's. Our idea of fellowship is based more on the world's concept of association, than on Holy Scripture teaching of fellowship. In short, we have allowed worldly, carnal minds to take the leadership among us, and that without even a whimper.

It is little wonder then that every man can cut loose and start his own little church and prosper. All he has to do is to appeal to, and pamper the carnal minds closest to him, and he has an immediate flock. Drive around your county, or large city, and count the number of strange religious names gracing the signs on church buildings and lawns. If someone should accidentally begin something on the right foundation of truth and mercy, he would get precious few to help. So it is with peacemaking. Peacemaking is a spiritual work, not a worldly endeavor. Carnal mindedness is the root cause of all trouble among the people of God. At the point the people of God agree with worldliness/carnality, they find themselves in trouble and in need of a peacemaker among them.

Today we have colleges and universities, as well as private institutions devoted to the concept of peacemaking. I know one university which has, for many years, had a "Conflict Resolution" team that helps business, government, and churches resolve their "people" problems. It is a pragmatic, carnal minded team which, although claiming to be "Christian," has a long distance to go to be what they claim. They have publicly stated in their seminars and on college lectureships, that their efforts are successful in government, in business, and in all churches except most xxx churches.

Why are they successful everywhere except in most xxx churches. Notice they did not say in all xxx churches. Let me give you an example of how they operate and you can see why some are offended by their attitude. I was "prepared" for a meeting with some of this group. I was given a tape to listen to, and material to read. Then a meeting was arranged between me and a small representative group of xxx church members. The situation was that four preachers among xxx churches in that state rejected the plenary, verbal inspiration of Holy Scripture. Their actions,

preaching, and influence was accepted by their churches. I had statewide influence because of my radio preaching in that state, coupled with a paper I was editing, in meetings and workshops with churches, etc. and was quite vocal about the matter. Although I never mentioned a name of church affiliation, preacher, or anyone, they felt the scrutiny of people upon them because **their teaching and actions were public**. Two of them were publically exposed by their own members for severe immoral problems. One situation was described in their local newspaper.

As I sat with that group, I was asked why I could not fellowship them. I handed the group leader a copy of a sheet I had prepared with a view of that question being asked. It was a list of 31 specific sins condemned plainly, and emphatically by the written word of God. The spokesman was taken aback by the sheet. After a careful perusal and giving some thought, he collected his faculties and began the rehearsed solution offered. First, I was asked if I considered the cross of Christ worthy of, and necessitating peace. My reply was: absolutely! Then, he merely read slowly each charge as related to the sin committed. He would read a sin and the evidence it was committed, and say: Okay, that takes care of that. This was the same all the way through the thirty one sins. In conclusion, he said, "Well, we have gotten those out of the way. Now, why can't we have peace and fellowship?" I asked a simple question: Did you, and your brethren repent of those actions yet?" His answer was negative. My reply was, what do you think you accomplished by reading all of those, admitting to them, and yet, refusing to repent of any of them? He said, "I thought you admitted that the cross of Christ made peace mandatory?" I replied in the affirmative and added, "But that same cross also makes mandatory, that before we receive a single benefit of it, we must first surrender our will and life to him on the cross. When you brethren do that, we will automatically have peace because you will stop your preaching of error and practice of sin." He replied that they could never do that. My reply as I stood up to leave was, "You people have deliberately wasted your time and mine. If you can not submit to the Lord, you certainly can not submit to your brethren in peace, Ephesians 5:21."

Their efforts (of the “peacemaking corp,” and those brethren) were based on compromise, not the will of God. Business and government have latitude for compromise because their problems are usually just people problems where ego and misunderstandings get in the way. Companies can even amend their policies which offend workers. But church problems always involve sins which must be repented of. Some churches willingly ignore the will of God; therefore fail to settle their problems. Others will not compromise. The “Conflict Resolution Group” is not very successful when churches refuse to compromise the written word of God.

All of the foregoing was stated in order to focus our minds on the fact that looking in the wrong direction for help will never work righteousness, and effect peace with God. All Christians, have only one divine manual to follow for successful outcome. That manual is the word of God for the present age; the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the word of God alone, which has the exclusive moral authority to settle any spiritual problem which disrupts peace among brethren. Jesus Christ, through his gospel, must be submitted to. Heaven, and heaven alone, holds the sole moral authority to settle any spiritual matter. To turn to the wrong source for peace is to reject the Lord, and accept the carnal mind solution.

Man has no authority to inject himself into God’s process and interrupt that process. Man only has the right to submit to that process, and encourage others to follow his example. Peace makers recognize this truth, 1 Corinthians 11:1. Even Paul the apostle, speaking to brethren whose peace had been disrupted by carnal minds, said “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.” Some men however, hold to the carnal way of doing things, and think themselves to be the moral authority of every occasion. I could fill this whole issue with examples of ludicrous efforts by absurd people to effect their kind of peace, and still have enough examples to fill a large book. Let me offer some suggestions for each to think about.

1. God, through Jesus Christ rules all hearts which willingly submit to him..
2. For today, Jesus alone has the authority to settle kingdom matters.
3. The authority of Jesus is clearly set forth through the gospel.

4. No person has the authority, nor any ability, other than by walking in the steps of Jesus, and offering that as an example, to effect peace through the gospel.
5. No genuine peace can ever be enjoyed until each participant in the troubles, and in the solution, is willing to submit to the Lord's will in their life and allow God to rule their life through Jesus Christ and his gospel.
6. No compromise of truth of any degree is allowed; only humble submission to the will of God. Then righteousness shall flourish, and peace which is a work of righteousness, Isaiah 32:17, shall follow.
7. The kingdom of God is the rule of God in the heart of man. Where the kingdom of God is, there will be the peace of God. Men do not have the wisdom, nor any other divine powers to effect peace. Only God, through Christ, through the gospel can effect peace. The peacemaker, in view of this, is always a great worker in directing people to the Kingdom, wherein peace always reigns as the Umpire, and makes every close call among the children of God, Colossians 3:15.

Are you a peacemaker? Does God rule in your heart? Do you practice humility as a part of your character? Do you seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness? Are you willing and ready to speak out and say, "It is time to say: Enough?"

Let us each allow God to rule in our heart. This will solve every problem. To the extent that we fail, we shall have spiritual problems abounding whether we recognize them for what they are, or not. The old idea that "Where we have people, we have problems, so let us just learn to ignore all we can, and learn to live with the rest that we can't ignore," is a fatally flawed solution offered by no less than Satan. Ignoring problems never caused the problem to go away. Ignoring Hitler was a tremendous example of the flawed thinking that problems left alone just go away.

Christ living in us is the only heavenly approved solution any person will find to spiritual problems. Be it spiritual problems in my life, or spiritual problems in your church, the only real, lasting solution is Jesus Christ in us. Let us all be the peacemaker God wants us to be, and in that manner imitate God and Christ.

Memorials

Those who give memorial gifts do a two fold service and honor to the one given in memory of. First, there is the honor or public remembrance. It declares that one was of a character worthy of remembrance. Second, it enables others to have an opportunity to read gospel teaching by means of supporting this paper with the gifts. The person being remembered is the occasion of good work being done.

A gift was sent by Madelyn Elliott-Smith in memory of **Clinton Elliott.**

A gift was sent by Mary S. Hogue in memory of **Bobby Lee Hogue.**

A gift was sent by Melvin and Jean Elliott in memory of Anthony Priola.

May the remembrance produce eternal flowers that never lose their bloom.

In Living Honor

A Contribution was made by Madelyn G. Elliott-Smith in honor of the work **Melvin and Jean Elliott** have done for our Lord Jesus Christ in their lifetime.

The Parting Word

A medley of matters shall need to be covered, or uncovered, depending on your perspective. First, we have had so many issues with our web site that many are confused about access to it.

It is a secure place to do business. The only business done on the site is registration and the shopping cart; the collection of personal information necessary to do business. Those two parts are secured. Both are secured by SSL (Security Sockets Layer encrypting) Certificates. That represents all security at whatever level or purpose on secure web sites. The web site itself has no financial business done on it. All the financial aspects is taken care of by PayPal, one of the oldest, most

trusted institutions on the Internet of its kind. Our shopping cart only deals in electronic signals from your click to relay the signal to PayPal. It is securely, electronically relayed to this side where PayPal registers it. I know several who have used PayPal for years with never an issue with them. I am told by those who know Internet workings well, that our site is as secure as it can be made to do business with our arrangement.

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A Special Issue in July /August

The next special issue is a badly needed issue for the welfare of the Lord's people, and for religious people in general. It is a rebuttal of the foundations of Calvinism. It will be different. It will attack the foundation upon which the Calvinist TULIP rests. It will be devastating to that error. Calvinism affects nearly every person in the world who claims to believe and follow Jesus Christ. It will take away their "Sugar Sticks," to the point that they will have nothing left with which to fight. It will, we believe, be one of the most complete, and devastating expose' of error ever made on Calvinism, and certainly the most decisive arguments, to our knowledge, ever launched.

We have access to addresses of most Fundamental Baptists Churches in America. We would like to mail the issue to at least one thousand of them. We would also like to mail the issue to as many people as each reader will send us the complete mailing address of, whom you believe will be willing to consider the material. We also would like to be able to mail it to all whom we mailed the last special issue. We are looking at a minimum of more than 5,000, closer to 6,000 copies of the special issue. Inflation is predicted to rise before June this year so we have no way of obtaining even a near figure of cost. We will need three or four volunteers to help prepare it for mailing. The mailing cost alone, counting all related costs, will be more than \$1,000.00. It will be a 40 page issue, so we can not offer any figure except a less than minimum cost at this time. That will be more than \$5,000.00. For that much, we consider that normally 2.5 people read each copy mailed, we are talking 14,500 readers. All who are helped by that issue, will likely see that double their family readership will have access to it. It is highly likely that at least 26,000 people will read the special issue.

We do not know any religious group, including churches of Christ, which are not directly affected by the doctrines of Calvinism. Some may have modified it, but it will still destroy the foundation for understanding the Bible, when practiced in any form. Calvinism is the most far reaching false doctrine of which we know. It has been around so long

that those affected by it think it is scriptural. Its most basic appeal is to the carnal/worldly mind. Help us go beyond our minimum goal of 6,000 printed copies. We shall begin preparing addresses, including email addresses, within a few days.

Will you help us find, in your community, members of The Fundamental Baptist Church. Members of that particular denomination have been trained in semi-conservatism much more than any other denomination. They believe many fundamental truths but they misapply what they have learned. We believe that among all the denominations, these are more likely to be helped than most any other. If you find any, please send us their complete mailing address including zip code.

Also, if any of you who have fewer responsibilities demanding your time and would like to help, if you have a computer please get in touch. Our mailing address, both email and land address is on the front page of each issue. We will be needing several hundred addresses typed in label format. I will need to give you the label format to use.

We will be getting in touch with several congregations and individuals for financial help with this special issue. If any of you could influence some congregations to put aside several hundred dollars for this effort, it would be a tremendous help. We anticipate a large follow up need involving a number of those who will likely be motivated to get in touch with us about this issue. That could easily last several months on a large scale requiring extra printing and mailing. I have dozens of articles already written in our bulletin which have been preserved by me in anticipation of follow up. These will answer many questions by Calvinists, which could be raised by the special issue. We shall try to be as well prepared for this as we possibly can before we actually print the issue. Please pray for brother Elliott and me as we prepare, that we may be ready for whatever question is raised.

Please pray fervently that we shall be able to mail several thousand copies of this important special issue to those who can be helped by it.

Let us speak where the Scriptures speak, and let us be silent where the Scriptures are silent. Let us have **liberty** in matters of judgment, **unity** in matters of the faith, and in all things **love**.
