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citizens of heaven now. The body of our humiliation, by which we hold converse with the world, which is liable to pain, decay and death, which is subject to much that is humbling and distressing, will be fashioned anew when the Saviour comes. When that moment arrives (perhaps today!), Paul and all the saints in Christ Jesus will have attained the end that God has in view: conformity to the image of His Son.

‘Be this our one desire;  
Thyself our Object here;  
The goal to which our hearts aspire,  
To meet Thee in the air’.

## ‘FINALLY’

W. FRASER NAISMITH

Paul had been applying truth to the consciences and hearts of the Corinthian saints, and he emphasised the fact of restoring grace despite the manifold wrongs which existed in that assembly of believers. He had to correct three grievous errors. Paul had hardly lifted the quill to communicate with the saints when he found it necessary to trounce them for their sectarian outlook. Such is abhorrent to God: and though this is outwardly manifest today it was working as leaven inside the assembly then. This could only be a barrier to the full enjoyment of the fellowship into which they had been called through the faithfulness of God: 1 Cor. 1:9. The introduction of a party spirit is to bring God’s Christ down to the level of men, and God will never tolerate that! It is noticeable that when Peter on the mount of transfiguration suggested three tabernacles—‘one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias’—the Father’s voice was heard saying ‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him’. What a rebuke this was to Peter; and he could never forget it, for in his last letter he makes reference to that scene and twice over alludes to the voice which came from the excellent glory. Those in Corinth who said ‘I am of Christ’ were equally sectarian with those who

said 'I am of Paul, and I of Appolos, and I of Cephas'. The challenge of 1 Cor. chapter 3, verses 3 and 4 emphasises the fact that sectarianism is a carnal product, and is not of God. This attitude has been adopted by many today, but any spirit that boasts in sectarianism is not the spirit of Christ!

There was also moral sin of a very grievous character in that assembly as is mentioned in 1 Cor. 5. How solemn is the censure upon one who has been guilty of such a horrid crime against God and against humanity. Apostolic power required that he be handed over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. The leaven was working assiduously, and as leaven is ever a type of sin in its activity it must be purged from the lives of those who know the Lord as Saviour. Christ, our passover, has been sacrificed for us—the passover had its fulfilment in Christ's death: now we should keep the feast—the feast of unleavened bread, which was inseparably connected with the passover—when the Israelite put all evil out of the house. The feast of unleavened bread was kept for seven days. This is not the Lord's Supper, but the fact that it is expected, as we would 'show the Lord's death till He come' each Lord's Day, that the seven days between should be characterised by purity. That, I suggest, is the reason John does not describe the institution of the supper: what he does is he brings the fact of the feet-washing before us and thus emphasises that God requires a moral suitability to the Son of His love. The final summing up of this chapter is in the counsel of the apostle—'put away from among yourselves that wicked person'.

Doctrinal error had reared its ugly head amongst the believers in Corinth and in 1 Cor. 15 we are treated to that masterly dissertation on 'Resurrection'—the finest extant. From v. 12 we adduce that there were those who were saying 'there is no resurrection of the dead'. One of the basic truths of the Gospel is the resurrection of Christ. If He is not risen from the dead then His own witness is unreliable, for He said 'destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' John 2:19. If Christ is not risen from the dead then there is no Christian church: for, consequent upon His ascension he sent down the Holy Spirit who baptized

believers into one body: vide 1 Cor. 12:13. If Christ is not risen then we are yet in our sins and are of all men the most miserable. Paul brings forward adequate proof of the resurrection of Christ; and testifies in Rom. 4:25 that He 'was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification'.

Such reprimands from Paul's pen had been productive in that the transgressors had sorrowed unto repentance—2 Cor. 7 (8-13). The truism is confirmed that 'discipline is administered in view of restoration'. When the saints are repentant then they are on the highway to blessing.

#### 'BRETHREN'

This word 'brethren' brings all the saints of God into proper alignment with the mind of the Lord. Whatsoever the designation men may pronounce upon gathered believers, or individual ones, the Lord Jesus is not ashamed to call them 'brethren'. It is a relationship established on the death and resurrection of Christ—as Christ indicated to Mary of Magdala in John 20:17 when He said 'Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father; and to My God, and your God'.

Christ had designated His followers 'disciples'—those who learnt to follow, and followed to learn. Such an appellation required much in the way of sacrifice as Luke indicates in ch. 9:57-62. When you find anyone saying 'Suffer me first' or 'let me first', as indicated in verses 59 and 61, such a person never can be a disciple of the Lord. In ch. 14 Christ reaffirms this and emphasises the fact by saying 'If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren and sisters, yes, and his own life also he cannot be my disciple'. In the following verse He states 'whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple'. Then in verse 33 He further presses the claims of the Lord over His disciples by saying 'whosoever he be that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple'. The Lord has called His followers 'servants'; for He affirmed in Jno. 15:15 'Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth'. He also calls them 'friends'; saying 'ye are my friends,

if ye do whatsoever I command you:' Jno. 15:14. Now, our Lord in resurrection alludes to His followers as 'brethren'. We ought to be happy to use this divinely given appellation.

'FAREWELL', or 'REJOICE'

The word 'Farewell' has a touch of pathos about it: for there is contained in it the hidden tear-drop, the aching heart, and the poignant grief. One of the most apt illustrations of this may be found in Acts 20 (36-38). The elders at Ephesus 'fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more'.

J. N. Darby translates this word—"farewell"—as 'rejoice'. That puts a different aspect on things. The word 'chairò' may have given rise to the word in common use today when we part company from a friend we say 'cheerio': this word incorporates the sadness of a farewell with the brightness of a possible reunion. The sorrow is displaced by the prospect of another meeting allowing the sunshine to break through the gloom of the parting, and displacing the agitation of the moment with that tranquillizing hope. No matter who the saint may be there is ever the blessed hope of a re-union on high with those whom we have loved and lost awhile.

'BE PERFECT' (UNITY)

This commences a series of inducements from the apostle to the believers. This word means to 'fit thoroughly'. How necessary it is today, as in that day, to be united in motive. 'Unity is strength'—and this adage can be translated in terms of spiritual activity. What governs us in our service? Is it done for self-aggrandizement? It is preferable to have the plaudits of the Lord rather than the applause of our fellows. Let our motive be pure, then our activities will be acceptable to the Lord. We ought to be perfectly united in service too. Many there are who love to work in 'single harness', but refuse to pull together with others who may be yoked with them. We are labourers together; and should know what it means to be 'striving together for the faith of the Gospel'. Let us be perfectly united in enthu-

siasm. Half-heartedness will accomplish nothing for the Lord. The enthusiasm evinced by the Lord at the age of twelve comes as a challenge to us all; for He could say 'I must be about my Father's business'. This could be designated the Bond of the heart. The mainspring of the being is the heart; so 'keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life'. Prov. 4:23.

'BE OF GOOD COMFORT' (UPLIFT)

These are days of declension and such a word of persuasion will stimulate the soul that is depressed and downcast. The exhortation of Hebrews 12 (12-13) would apply here—'Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed'. Many are feeling languid, as they realise their strength abating: let us lift up the hands that hang down! When God would give victory to Israel over Amalek Moses stood on the top of the hill with the rod of God in his hand, and Aaron and Hur held up his hands—for 'Moses' hands were heavy'. When Moses' hands were upheld then Israel prevailed: see Exod. 17. It cannot be properly estimated what may be accomplished when the hands are lifted and the knees strengthened. This is the Bond of Desire.

We, who are comforted of God, can comfort one another.

'There are lonely hearts to cherish,  
While the days are going by:  
There are weary souls who perish,  
While the days are going by.  
If a smile we can renew,  
As our journey we pursue;  
O! the good we all may do,  
While the days are going by.'

'BE OF ONE MIND' (UNANIMITY)

God desires unanimity amongst His people. It is not the thought of agreeably agreeing to disagree, but being of one mind in the Lord. Paul when writing to the Philippians ch. 1:27 exhorted them to 'stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel'. To stand fast in one spirit

is to demonstrate the unity expected to be maintained amongst the saints; and the striving together in one mind emphasises the unanimity of objective and desire. Later on in that same epistle Paul had to refer to two sisters who were not acting as they should—he said 'I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord'. Ch. 4:2. The lack of unity and unanimity will hamper the progress of the good work of the Lord. Let us lay aside all petty differences and cleave to the Lord and to the Word of His grace. In the same letter Paul brought into that wonderful apologetic of ch. 2 (5-11) the mind of Christ, and persuaded the believers to let that mind which characterised the Lord be seen in them. It was a humble mind—'He humbled Himself'; it was an obedient mind—'He became obedient unto death'; it was a loving mind—'Even the death of the cross'.

#### 'LIVE IN PEACE' (UNISON)

When we strive together, as Paul encouraged the Philippians to do, we cannot live at enmity with one another. This 'striving together' is not a tug-of-war. Living in peace would be indicative of the fact that there is a unison, or harmony, in the activities of the believers. This is the Bond of Practical Fellowship. To have thoughts of war and not of peace would be to deny this precious truth. John writing his first letter reminds us that if we hate our brother we are murderers: 1 Jno. 3:15. Solemn words these are, and they ought to make us examine ourselves lest there be any bitterness such as sprang up in Cain with such dread results. Hatred is the embryo of murder: avoid it as you would the plague! When our Lord was about to leave this scene He said to His own 'Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you'. Peace in the abstract and peace in the concrete are ours through Christ. He would have us live in peace and enjoy it—a peace which is akin to that which He ever enjoyed with His Father. It is no armistice of time that He provides, but a peace pact divinely drafted and signed by the God who produced it. Peace and love walk hand in hand through the tangled labyrinth of this scene and shall be forever in each others embrace. If the one is absent one need never look for the other.

## 'THE GOD OF LOVE'

'The God of love' acquaints us with the author of love. God is love! Love is desire determining on its object for good; and love has its spring in God!

'Love sees no obstacle! Love has no "ought"!  
 "Must" is unknown to her, In word or thought.  
 Love heeds no measurement: Love goes beyond:  
 Earth is not far from heaven: Love is the bond.'

Love is the revelation of God's great heart. Calvary is the indubitable evidence of it, for there stands the monumental witness to the love of God.

'Love has a hem to its garment,  
 That touches the very dust;  
 It can reach the stains of the streets and lanes;  
 And because it can: it must!'

The daily experience of the believer is to prove the love of God as moment by moment he enjoys what that love has provided. The origin of all relative affection is witnessed in the love that existed forever between the Father and the Son. Love is first mentioned in scripture in Gen. 22 and it is the love of the father for his son. God would have a transcript in this scene of that affection which has ever existed on high between the Father and the Son. Love is the very atmosphere of heaven: we should be constantly breathing in that atmosphere, and learning more of the God of love.

## 'THE GOD OF PEACE'

Peace is not expressed when we gaze on the face of a departed friend: that is death! It is not climbing the mountain-side and gazing intently into that still and motionless mountain tarn, for that is stagnation! The hymn writer had the true idea of peace in the words—'When peace like a river attendeth my way'. The river rushes on its course: it is not static, it moves with a mighty energy. The term—'The God of peace'—indicates the One from whom all peace springs: He is its author. We learn peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Thereafter we



get to know the peace of God acting as a garrison around our hearts, to keep our affections. Then we learn something about the peace of Christ which arbitrates in our hearts. Now God desires that we should know the companionship of the God of peace all along the pilgrim pathway. The promise abides that the God of love and peace shall be with us.

“Why should I ever careful be  
When such a GOD is mine?  
He watches o'er me night and day  
And tells me Mine is thine.”

If we know the God of love and peace with us we will experimentally know love and peace walking hand in hand along the dusty roads of time and drawing us nearer and nearer to the heavenly goal, the Father's House.

“Peace! perfect peace!  
The future all unknown:  
Jesus, we know,  
And He is on the throne.”

“Now, the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen”.