

A Last Apostolic Word

To All Faithful and Righteous
Servants of the Word

2 Tim. 4, 1—5

By

DR. C. M. ZORN

Done into English by

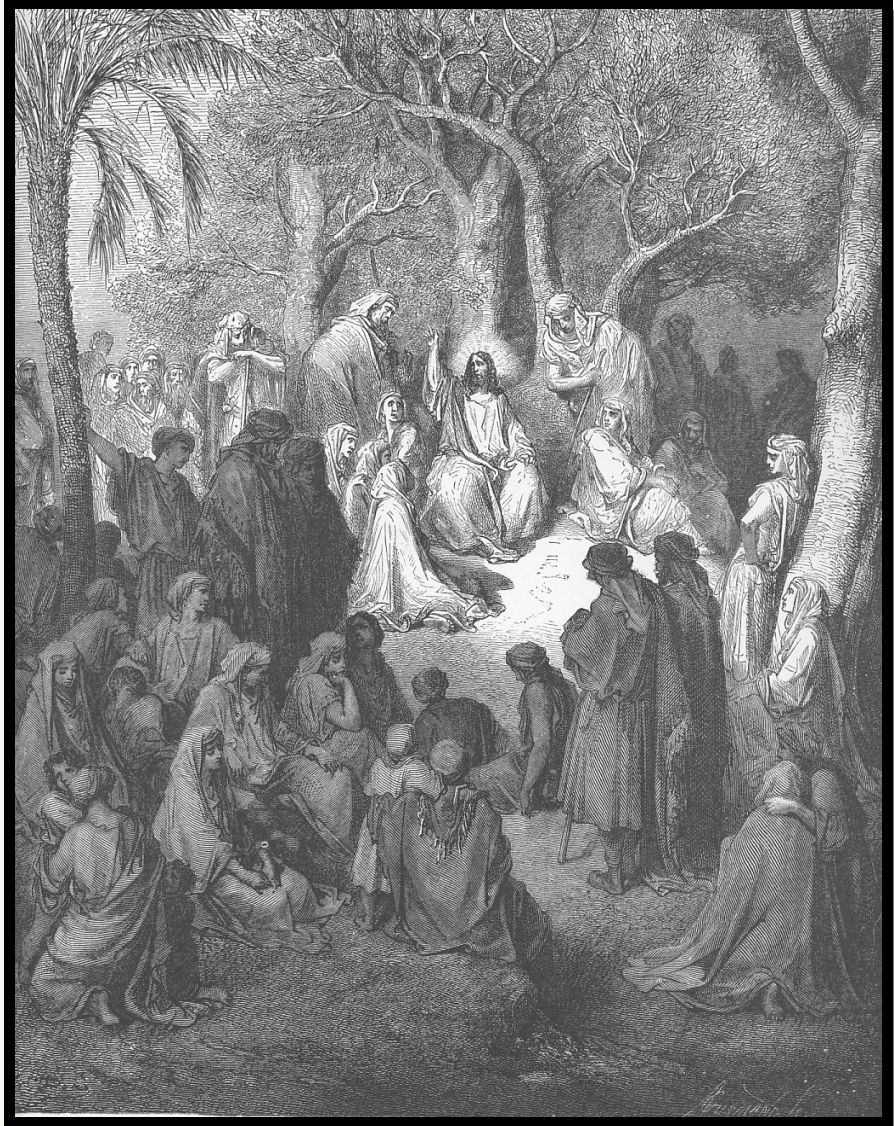
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Sermon on the Mount
by Gustave Doré
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Michael L. McCoy

Preface

As the title shows, this book is addressed to servants of the word, but all Christians should read it. The apostolic word of which it treats is recorded in Holy Scriptures, which are intended for every one. Christians should have a clear knowledge as to who is a faithful and righteous servant of the Word and what he is to do. And to such a Servant of the Word, Christians should adhere, and him they should faithfully follow.

God grant that in these last days of sore distress His Word may shed a powerful light and do its blessed work in the hearts of men!

C. M. Z.

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER - GREETING!

During a conversation about the German original of this publication the author requested me to help introduce an English edition of it in case he should decide to issue one. Deferring to his wish and because of the circumstances under which the request was made I consented.

I wish to say for this LAST APOSTOLIC WORD, now that it comes before an English-reading public, that the subject-matter of the author's discussion is as old as the New Testament. Through all the centuries since the Church started on her mission of mercy and truth in Christ Jesus to the nations of the earth her members have listened with awe to the solemn admonitions which the aged Paul addressed in his farewell remarks to his spiritual son Timothy. In their struggles with the appalling forces that opposed them in the world at large and with the more sinister forces of insincerity in their own midst – for at no time has the church been without her Judases – the loyal followers of Jesus have found guidance and heartening in the earnest appeal which the Spirit uttered through the departing Paul. Nor have these words ever been without fruit: they have roused the drowsy out of spiritual ease and complacency; – for there are always Laodiceans in the Church; – they have quickened the timid and feeble into action and restored the erring; – for the Church has always had faltering Peters.

This book carries, indeed, a particular message to the body of which the author is an honored member and to our people at this present time. Every thoughtful reader will be impressed with the seriousness of this English appeal of the author, just as many of us were impressed with the original German appeal. But in its general aspects and viewed as a whole the appeal concerns every earnest and consistent Christian as much as 2 Tim. 4, 1–5 concerns him. For the author's remarks are in reality nothing but a careful explanation and consistent application of this word of God.

One danger to the unhindered and healthy development of the spiritual life of a Christian congregation is strongly stressed in this treatise – the danger of lodgism. That it is a danger, and a very great danger, no one will dispute who, on the one hand, has examined the antichristian principles and aims of the religion of the lodges and, on the other hand, has observed the fatal outworking of those principles and aims in the lives of individual Christians and of Christian congregations. The religion of Christ and the religion of the lodge do not

supplement, but exclude, each other. The two cannot dwell together in the same house: one will ultimately force out the other. That has been the invariable experience in the history of Christian congregations. There is no case on record where the attempt to allow both to coexist in peace and amity has not first lowered the Christian consciousness and force of conviction in the congregation, then paralyzed its Christian courage and zeal, and, lastly, smothered Christian life in indifference. The combination perverts the three great essentials of Christianity: faith, love, and hope; for to each of these the Christian creed and the creed of the lodge attach an altogether different meaning.

It is, therefore, a paramount duty of the Christian Church, primarily of her ministers, to combat the evil lodge religion. One way of doing this is by a publication like this, which bears public testimony against the evil and puts Christians on their guard against it. This testimony can never be dispensed with as a safeguard to those who have not yet been caught in the lodge-net, even though comparatively few who have been thus caught should actually be reclaimed. However, the most efficient and, in nearly every case, indispensable way of resisting the encroachments of the lodge religion upon the Christian churches is by direct approach to the individual. The strongest safeguard against lodgism is the faithful ministration of the pastor to those members of his flock who may be drawn into the lodge. The work of the pastor must be supported by the members' themselves practising that brotherly admonition which the Lord has laid down as the rule for congregational life in Matt. 18. The members of the congregation oftentimes are aware of the erring of some brother or sister long before the pastor learns of it. The exercise of this duty of personal approach to a trespasser is very much more difficult and requires a higher degree of Christian love, courage, and wisdom than the writing of a pamphlet or book, or preaching a sermon against lodges. But it can be as little dispensed with as the duty of bearing public testimony against the lodge. The work required of faithful servants of the Lord in this respect is only half done by public testimony against the lodge. Really, if brotherly admonition were practised as zealously and persistently by the members of the Church, there would be less need of the multitude of antilodge literature that is being produced and that may lead to an excessive emphasis being placed on this one evil in the churches.

In conclusion I would say to every brother who is engaged in the arduous task of resisting the evil of lodgism, both by publicly bearing witness against it and by faithful pastoral work with individuals, that he must not permit himself to become discouraged by reports of others who are said to be less strict than

himself, or by descriptions of inroads which the lodges have made upon the churches, that would make his own efforts seem futile. Every servant standeth or falleth to his master, and each one must give an account to the Lord of his own stewardship. Let each one of us work with singleness of purpose to please Him, only Him, who has made us overseers to feed the Church of God, which He has purchased with His own blood. It is not the praise or blame of man that constitutes the measure of our success, nor will men be our judges, but Jesus, the All-seeing, the All-knowing, who requires of a steward in his Church nothing but that he be found faithful.

W. H. T. Dau.

St. Louis, Mo., Jubilate Sunday, May 3, 1925.

I.

We call the words of the Apostle Paul, 2 Tim. 4, 1-5, "a *last* apostolic word." The apostle himself says immediately after: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."

These words are addressed to "*all* faithful and righteous servants of the Word." True, they were originally addressed to Timothy, the faithful companion and assistant of the apostle. But as such, Timothy had the same duties as our pastors and teachers,¹ missionaries,² visitors,³ synodical presidents,⁴ and professors.⁵ Hence these words are addressed to *all* faithful and righteous servants of the Word, yes, to all *faithful and righteous* servants of the Word who would be like Timothy. To slouchy, lazy, and unfaithful mercenaries and gluttons the apostle addresses altogether different words. For such, Scripture has altogether different texts.

All these – pastors, teachers, missionaries, visitors, synodical presidents, professors – are "servants of the *Word*." They are to do their heaven-appointed work by means of the *Word of God*. They are "*stewards of God*."⁶ As stewards of God they are to administer that which God has graciously given His Church, the *Word of God*. Therefore we say: They are to do their work by means of the *Word of God*. According to Scripture their duties are the following: They are to teach the Word of God,⁷ to feed the Church of God with the Word of

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- 1 **1 Tim. 4, 12-16.** - Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.
 - 2 **Acts 19, 22.** - So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season. **1 Cor. 16, 10** - Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do.
 - 3 **1 Cor. 4, 17.** - For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.
 - 4 **1 Tim. 1, 3.** - As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine.
 - 5 **2 Tim. 2, 2.** - And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.
 - 6 **Titus 1, 7.** - For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre.
 - 7 **1 Tim. 5, 17.** - Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. **1 Tim. 3, 2.** - A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach. **Titus 1, 9.** - Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

God,⁸ and to take care of the Church with it.⁹ As teachers they are to speak the Word of God,¹⁰ with it watch for the souls entrusted to their care,¹¹ exhort and rule them,¹² with it labor among them, be over them, and admonish them,¹³ with it edify the "body of Christ."¹⁴ Thus God, "according to His dispensation," wants the stewardship administered.¹⁵ Then, and then alone, are they truly stewards of God: "ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God."¹⁶

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- 8 **Acts 20, 28.** - Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own Blood. **1 Pet. 5, 1. 2.** - The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.
- 9 **1 Tim. 3, 5.** - For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?
- 10 **Heb. 13, 7.** - Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.
- 11 **Heb. 13, 17.** - Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you. (**Heb. 13, 24.** - Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you. **Acts 15, 22.** - Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole Church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren. **Rom. 12, 7.** - Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching.)
- 12 **Rom. 12, 8.** - Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.
- 13 **1 Thess. 5, 12.** - And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you.
- 14 **Eph. 4, 11. 12.** - And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ:
- 15 **Col. 1, 25.** - Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God (Greek - ἡς ἐγενόμην ἐγὼ διάκονος κατὰ τὴν οἰκονομίαν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι εἰς ὑμᾶς πληρῶσαι τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ); **Col. 1, 26-29.** - Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labour, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily. **1 Tim. 1, 4.** - Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do. (Greek - μηδὲ προσέχειν μύθοις καὶ γενεαλογίαις ἀπεράντοις, αἵτινες ἐκζητήσεις παρέχουσιν μάλλον ἢ οἰκονομίαν θεοῦ τὴν ἐν πίστει.) **Eph. 3, 2.** - If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward. (Greek - εἴ γε ἠκούσατε τὴν οἰκονομίαν τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ τῆς δοθείσης μοι εἰς ὑμᾶς.) **Eph. 3, 8. 9.** - Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, Who created all things by Jesus Christ. (Greek - Ἐμοὶ τῷ ἐλαχιστοτέρῳ πάντων ἁγίων ἐδόθη ἡ χάρις αὕτη, τοῖς ἔθνεσιν εὐαγγελίσασθαι τὸ ἀνεξιχνίαστον πλοῦτος τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ φωτίσαι πάντας τίς ἡ οἰκονομία τοῦ μυστηρίου τοῦ ἀποκεκρυμμένου ἀπὸ τῶν αἰώνων ἐν τῷ θεῷ τῷ τὰ πάντα κτίσαντι.)
- 16 **1 Cor. 4, 1.** - Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

The servants of the Word are to do their work by means of the Word of God and nothing but the Word of God. The Word of God defines all their official duties, rights, and activities. God's Word *limits* their office.¹⁷ It is of the greatest importance that this be borne in mind at all times. To arrogate to oneself more than the public administration of this office in the service of the Church of God is antichristian; those doing this follow in the footsteps of the Pope.

They are "*servants of the Word.*" We have already shown that they are "ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God."¹⁸ This is often abused; the "Again it is written,"¹⁹ which Christ addressed to the devil when the latter misused a word of Scripture, is often disregarded. The servants of the Word as "ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God" are *not placed over the congregation.* They have no right arrogantly to say to the congregation: "As ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God *we* stand between you and Christ, *we* are the mediators between you and Christ, *we* proclaim to you God's Word, and you must listen to *us* without offering any objections; we administer the mysteries of God, and you must accept them without any questioning or doubt." No, no, no! The servants of the Word as such are *under* the congregation. They are "servants" of the *congregation* because they are "ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God," according to "the dispensation of God," and as such God wants them to administer their stewardship.²⁰

This will now be shown from the Word of God.

17 **Matt. 23, 6-12.** - And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted. **2 Cor. 1, 24.** - Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand. **2 Cor. 4, 5.** - For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. **1 Pet. 5, 3.** - Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

18 **1 Cor. 4, 1.** - Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

19 **Matt. 4, 7.** - Jesus said unto him, "It is written again, 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.'"

20 **1 Cor. 3, 5. 6.** - Who then is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. **1 Cor. 3, 21-23.** - Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ *is* God's. **2 Cor. 4, 5.** - For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. **Col. 1, 25.** - Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the Word of God; (Greek - ἡς ἐγενόμην ἐγὼ διάκονος κατὰ τὴν οἰκονομίαν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι εἰς ὑμᾶς πληρῶσαι τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ).

Whom has God exalted to the highest position, so that it is impossible for anything to stand between this "who" and Christ, impossible for a mediator to be between this "who" and Christ? *The congregation of saints*, "the whole Christian Church on earth," they whom Christ knows and acknowledges as His own.²¹ For Christ is always with His own, in the midst of them;²² Christ is in them, dwells in them;²³ they are *one* spirit with Christ;²⁴ Christ and the Father make their abode with them;²⁵ they are the temple of the Triune God;²⁶ the Church of the living God is the house of God;²⁷ the congregation of saints is the *bride* of Christ.²⁸ How, then, could any one stand between Christ and the

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- 21 **2 Tim. 2, 19.** - Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."
- 22 **Matt. 18, 20.** - For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them. **Matt. 28, 20.** - Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.
- 23 **John 17, 22, 23.** - And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are One: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me. **Eph. 3, 17.** - That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love.
- 24 **1 Cor. 6, 17.** - But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.
- 25 **John 14, 23.** - Jesus answered and said unto him, "If a man love Me, He will keep My Words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him."
- 26 **Eph. 2, 19-22.** - Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens 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 Cornerstone; in Whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. **1 Cor. 3, 16.** - Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? **1 Cor. 6, 19.** - What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? **2 Cor. 6, 16.** - And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the Living God; as God hath said, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."
- 27 **1 Tim. 3, 15.** - But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the House of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.
- 28 **John 3, 29.** - He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom: but the friend of the Bridegroom, which standeth and heareth Him, rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. **Rev. 21, 2, 9.** - And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ... And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, "Come hither, I will shew thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife." **Rev. 22, 17.** - And the Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And let him that heareth say, "Come." And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely. **Ps. 45, 10.** - Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house. **Song of Sol. 4, 8-12.** - Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards. Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck. How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices! Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon. A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. **Song of Sol. 5, 1.** - I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.

congregation of saints? How could there be a mediator? Furthermore, *who* is the *pillar and ground of the truth*? The congregation of saints.²⁹ *Who*, therefore, is the *preacher of the Gospel*? "Zion," "Jerusalem," the congregation of saints.³⁰ This congregation of saints, the Church, is "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation," that she, she, should show forth the praises of Him who hath called her out of the darkness into His marvelous light.³¹ The congregation of saints is "the Jerusalem which is above," is from heaven, and goes to heaven, and she, she, is the mother of all believers; she gives birth to, and nourishes, children of God through the Gospel.³² Even as Christ is sent from the Father that He should proclaim the Gospel,³³ and even as He has the keys which lock hell and death and open heaven,³⁴ even so He sends forth *those who are His, those who believe in Him*, sends them as preachers with the

29 1 Tim. 3, 15. - But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the House of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

30 Is. 40, 9. - O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!"

31 1 Pet. 2, 9. - But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him Who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous Light.

32 Gal. 4, 26. 27. - But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, "Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband."

33 Isa. 61, 1-3. The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me; because the LORD hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified. **Luke 4, 16-22.** - And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath Day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto Him the Book of the Prophet Esaias. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the LORD." And He closed the Book, and He gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him. And He began to say unto them, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?"

34 Rev. 1, 18. - I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. **Rev. 3, 7.** - And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; "These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth."

power of the keys, sends individuals, two or three, sends them regardless of age and sex.³⁵ They should let the Word of Christ dwell among them richly in all wisdom,³⁶ comfort one another with the words of the Gospel,³⁷ warn those who are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men;³⁸ as every man hath received the gift, even so they should minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.³⁹ Hence all Christians are *stewards of God: the congregation of saints* herself is the steward of the Word of God. And in the so-called "visible Church" it is this congregation of saints alone which God looks upon, and acknowledges, as His Church.

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- 35 Matt. 16, 15-19.** - He saith unto them, "But whom say ye that I am?" And Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." And Jesus answered and said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. **Matt. 18, 17-20.** - And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them. **John 20, 19-23.** - Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, "Peace be unto you." And when He had so said, He shewed unto them His hands and His side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, "Peace be unto you: as My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained. **Luke 24, 33.** - And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them. **Acts 1, 13-15** - And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty).
- 36 Col. 3, 16.** - Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.
- 37 1 Thess. 4, 18.** - Wherefore comfort one another with these words.
- 38 1 Thess. 5, 14.** - Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.
- 39 1 Pet. 4, 10.** - As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

Now, what are the servants of the Word, who are also called "stewards of God,"⁴⁰ "stewards of the mysteries of God,"⁴¹ of God's Word? The servants of the Word are *given by Christ to the congregation of saints for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry; they are given to the congregation of saints for the edifying of the body of Christ, to give this body of Christ, namely, the congregation of saints, unity and perfection.*⁴² They are given to the congregation of saints as her *instruments* for the public administration of the duties of the office given to the *congregation*. Thus they are "*servants*" of the congregation, as stated above,⁴³ according to the dispensation of God.⁴⁴ And thus they are *under* the congregation, responsible to the congregation for their stewardship, subject to the judgment of the congregation.⁴⁵ Even the apostles

40 Titus 1, 7. - For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre.

41 1 Cor. 4, 1. - Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

42 Eph. 4, 11-14. - And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.

43 1 Cor. 3, 5. 6. 21-23. - Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. ... Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's. **2 Cor. 4, 5** - For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

44 Col. 1, 25. - Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the Word of God.

45 1 John 4, 1. - Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. **10, 5.** [sic John 10, 5. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.] **Matt. 7, 15. 16.** - Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? **Matt. 24, 4. 5. 24.** - And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in My Name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. **Rom. 16, 17.** - Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. **2 John 10, 11.** - If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds. **1 Cor. 4, 2.** - Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. **Gal. 1, 6-9.** - I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. **1 Cor. 14, 29.** - Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. **1 Thess. 5, 20. 21.** - Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. **2 Thess. 2, 2.** - That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. **1 Thess. 5, 12.** - And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you. (In order to be acknowledged, they must prove themselves faithful servants of the Word); **Acts 20, 29. 30.** - For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

were judged, and desired to be judged, by the congregation.⁴⁶

But it must be remembered that the congregation must judge her servants of the Word as *God* wants them to be judged. God is the Lord; both the congregation and her servants are under God. Hence the servants of the Word are not at all *servants of men*. True, they are servants of the congregation, but as such they are servants of the *Word*, ministers of *Christ* and stewards of the *mysteries of God*. Hence they are not to please "men," the old Adam of the members of the congregation, or even false brethren who have crept into the fold, but should hold fast to the Word of God.⁴⁷

All this to explain the phrase: "A last apostolic word to all righteous servants of the Word."

We shall now proceed to the study of 2 Tim. 4, 1–5.

46 Acts 17, 11. - These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. **1 Cor. 10, 15.** - I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say. **1 Cor. 2, 15.** - But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

47 1 Cor. 4, 1-5. - Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, 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. **Gal. 1, 10.** - For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

II.

The apostle introduces his remarks with words which emphasize the sacred meaning and importance of that which he has to say. At the very outset he would have every servant of the Word realize that both for him and for the welfare of the Church, everything depends upon doing that which he, the apostle of the Lord, now says.

Reading these introductory remarks of the apostle, every believing and righteous servant of the Word must be stirred in his soul and moved to exclaim: O God, God, help me to do what Thou art telling me to do by the mouth of Thy apostle!

"I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom." Thus writes the apostle.

Before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing, the apostle earnestly and solemnly charges¹ every righteous servant of the Word;² and he does this with reference to³ the future appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ and His kingdom, the Kingdom of Glory, which will then be established. The apostle *charges* every servant of the Word before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will come to judge the quick and the dead; he *charges* every servant of the Word by this future appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the eternal salvation to do something, to do that which he will now say. The apostle means to say: You servant of the Word, I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will come again to judge the quick and the dead, what you are to do as a servant of the Word; and I charge you by this Judgment, from which none can escape, and by the eternal salvation which you hope to receive for yourself and hope to give to those who hear you,⁴ that you do that which I shall now tell you.

Truly, these are solemn words with which the apostle prepares the heart and mind of the servant of the Word for that which will now be said to him and demanded of him. Truly, it was a serious matter to the apostle. And the

1 See the Greek word. [Διαμαρτύρομαι].

2 Let See explanation given under I.

3 *Kata* [Κατα].

4 **1 Tim. 4, 16.** - Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

apostle speaks with words which the Holy Ghost teaches.⁵ Hence it is God, the holy, almighty God, and *the Lord Jesus Christ*, the one Judge and Savior, who speaks these words through the apostle to every servant of the Word and charges him to do what is now told him.

You servant of the Word, you pastor, you teacher, you missionary, you visitor, you synodical president, you professor, would you hurriedly and carelessly merely glance at these words? Would you lightly pass over them? Would you offer all kinds of excuses? Would you try to evade this or that point in some manner? You will now hear what the apostle of the Lord says to you. Would you meet it with a "but" of your own human reflections? Would you first look at what others are doing? Would you continue in the same old routine as good enough? Would you carelessly and indifferently read what the apostle has to say and then lay this book aside, light your pipe, take a nap, or do something else to show that it made no impression on you? Will you *not* hear, obey, arise, and be ready just as though God and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself stood before you visibly and spoke to you? – How will you stand before God and the Lord Jesus Christ? How will you stand before Him on Judgment Day? How will you be saved? Be a *doer* of the Word, and not a hearer or reader only, deceiving your own self.⁶ *Do* what you are told to do! Then you will be a faithful servant of the Word, a faithful steward, "meet for the master's use and prepared unto every good work."⁷ The least little word of God should make the world too small for you, as Luther says. And behold, here the apostle, speaking by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, *charges* you to do what he tells you is God's Word.

What that is we shall now see.

5 **1 Cor. 2, 13.** - Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

6 **Jas. 1, 22** - But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. **Matt. 7, 24. 25.** - Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. **Luke 6, 46.** - And why call ye Me, "Lord, Lord," and do not the things which I say? **Matt. 21:30.** - And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, "I go, sir;" and went not.

7 **2 Tim. 2, 21.** - If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

III.

"Preach the Word!"

Whenever, as here, it merely says "the Word,"¹ the *Gospel* is meant, as can readily be seen from the passages noted below. "Preach the Word" is the same as the command of Jesus, "Preach the Gospel."² Referring to the Greek word for "preach," we find that "preach the Word" means: proclaim the Word loudly and publicly like a herald. So also with this last passage. There the risen Lord says to His disciples: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," proclaim it publicly.

1 **Matt. 13, 20-23.** - But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the Word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the Word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the Word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the Word, and he becometh unfruitful. But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the Word, and understandeth *it*; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. **Mark 2, 2.** - And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive *them*, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the Word unto them. **Mark 4:33.** - And with many such parables spake he the Word unto them, as they were able to hear *it*. **Mark 8:32.** - And He spake that saying openly. And Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him. **Mark 4, 14.** - The sower soweth the Word. **Mark 16, 20.** - And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the Word with signs following. Amen. **Luke 1, 2.** - Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the Word. **Acts 4, 4.** - Howbeit many of them which heard the Word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand. **Acts 6, 4.** - But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the Ministry of the Word. **Acts 8, 4.** - Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the Word. **Acts 10, 36.** - The Word which *God* sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—He is Lord of all (Greek - τὸν λόγον ὃν ἀπέστειλεν τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραὴλ εὐαγγελιζόμενος εἰρήνην διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, οὗτός ἐστιν πάντων κύριος). **Acts 10, 44.** - While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word. **Acts 11:19.** - Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the Word to none but unto the Jews only. **Acts 14, 25.** - And when they had preached the Word in Perga, they went down into Attalia. **Acts 16, 6.** - Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the Word in Asia. **Acts 17, 11.** - These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. **Gal. 6, 6.** - Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. **Col. 4, 3.** - Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds. **1 Thess. 1, 6.** - And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the Word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost. **Titus 1, 9.** - Holding fast the faithful Word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. **Jas. 1, 21-23.** - Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass. **1 Pet. 2, 8.** - And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the Word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. **1 Pet. 3, 1.** - Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the Word, they also may without the Word be won by the conversation of the wives.

2 **Mark 16, 15.** - And He said unto them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

"Preach the Word!"

Servant of the Word, where do you find the Word, the Gospel, which you are to proclaim publicly, as herald of God? *In the Holy Scriptures, in the Old and in the New Testament.*

Aye, you find the Word, the Gospel, in the *Old Testament* Scriptures. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the promised and divinely confirmed real and only Preacher of the Word, the Gospel,³ He, in whose service all servants of the Word are,⁴ refers to the Gospel written in the Old Testament.⁵ The apostles of the Lord refer to

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- 3 **Deut. 18, 15.** - The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall hearken. **Isa. 61, 1-3.** - The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me; because the LORD hath anointed Me to preach Good Tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He might be glorified. **Luke 4, 16-21.** - And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath Day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto Him the Book of the Prophet Esaias. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the LORD. And He closed the Book, and He gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him. And He began to say unto them, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." **Matt. 17, 5.** - While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, "This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." **John 1, 18.** - No man hath seen God at any time; the Only Begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him. **Heb. 1, 2.** - Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds.
- 4 **1 Cor. 4, 1.** - Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. **Luke 10, 16.** - He that heareth you heareth Me; and he that despiseth you despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me despiseth Him that sent Me.
- 5 **Luke 18, 31-33.** - Then He took unto him the Twelve, and said unto them, "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished. For He shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: and they shall scourge Him, and put Him to death: and the third day He shall rise again. **Luke 24, 25-27.** - Then He said unto them, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. **Luke 24, 44-47.** - And He said unto them, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me." Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

the Gospel written in the Old Testament.⁶ The whole Epistle to the Hebrews refers to the Gospel recorded in the Old Testament and to its promises and types.

But the Gospel in all its fulness and perfection, resplendent in the light of the fulfilled prophecies, is found in the *New Testament Scriptures*.⁷

6 Acts 2, 16-36. - But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; “And it shall come to pass in the last days,’ saith God, ‘I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on My servants and on My handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable Day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord shall be saved.” Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know. Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain, Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning Him, “I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope, because Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of Life; thou shalt make me full of joy with Thy countenance.” Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the Resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear, for David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, “The LORD said unto my Lord, ‘Sit Thou on my right hand, until I make Thy foes Thy footstool.” Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, Whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. **Acts 26, 22. 23.** - Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that He should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew Light unto the people, and to the Gentiles. **1 Pet. 1, 10. 11.** - Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. **Matt. 1, 22. 23.** - Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, “Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His Name Emmanuel,” which being interpreted is, “God with us” - and many similar passages. **2 Tim. 3, 15-17.** - And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. **Rom. 3, 21.** - But now the Righteousness of God without the Law is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets.

7 Heb. 1, 1. 2. - God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds. **1 John 1, 1-4.** - That which was from the beginning, which we have

footnote 7 continued →

So God has placed before you *in writing* what you are to proclaim as His messenger. Yes, servant of the Word, as God's messenger you are to proclaim and publicly preach the *written* Word, the Word recorded in Holy Scriptures. You are not blindly to follow any "spirit" who might boast of having received a special revelation.⁸ It is hardly necessary to say that. And to listen to the absurd traditions of the papacy would be ungodly.

"Preach the Word!"

The Word, the written Word, reveals "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven."⁹ It reveals the eternal plan of God to save lost and condemned mankind, which Christ Jesus carried out in the fulness of time.¹⁰ This divine plan of redemption is truly and in the fullest sense of the term a *mystery* in all its parts and details.

heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life; for the Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that Eternal Life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us. That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. **Luke 1, 1-4.** - Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the Word; it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed. **2 Pet. 3, 15.** - And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you. **Gal. 6, 11.** - Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand. **1 John 2, 8.** - Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in Him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true Light now shineth. **1 Tim. 3, 14.** - These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly. **Rev. 1, 11.** - Saying, "I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What thou seest, write in a Book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea." **1 Pet. 1, 10-12.** - Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

- 8 2 Thess. 2, 2.** - That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the Day of Christ is at hand. **1 John 4, 1.** - Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.
- 9 Matt. 13, 11.** - He answered and said unto them, "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given."
- 10 Acts 2, 22-24.** - Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know; Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by

footnote 10 continued →

No man knew or divined anything of this plan until God revealed it.¹¹ Not even the angels in heaven knew or divined this plan before God revealed it.¹²

Even after God had revealed this plan, even when the Scriptures which reveal it are preached, taught, heard, read, and studied, even then it remains a "mystery" to every man, because man cannot understand, accept, or believe this revelation. Man regards it as foolishness *until* the Holy Spirit enlightens and regenerates him with the Holy Scriptures, in which this divine plan is revealed and which is preached, taught, heard, read, and studied.¹³

This divine plan of redemption remains a "mystery" even to the regenerated and enlightened Christian. In the first place, it always remains incomprehensible to his natural mind.¹⁴ In the second place, God does *not*

wicked hands have crucified and slain; Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it. **Acts 4, 28.** - For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. **Acts 20, 20.** - And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house. **Acts 21, 27.** - And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him. **Luke 7, 30.** - But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him. **1 John 1, 1-4.** - That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life; for the Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that Eternal Life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us. That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

11 1 Cor. 2, 9. 10. - But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. **Eph. 1, 9.** - Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself. **Col. 2, 2.** - That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ. **1 Tim. 3, 9.** - Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

12 1 Pet. 1, 12. - Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into. **Job 4, 18.** - Behold, He put no trust in His servants; and His angels He charged with folly.

13 John 3, 3. 5. 6. - Nicodemus saith unto Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" ... Jesus answered, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." **1 Cor. 2, 14.** - But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. **1 Cor. 2, 16.** - For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ. **Matt. 16, 17.** - And Jesus answered and said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven."

14 1 Cor. 2, 5. - That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. (See also under ¹³.)

give a logical, systematic, full, and perfect revelation of His plan of salvation in the Scriptures which satisfies our reason, but reveals it to us piecemeal.¹⁵

But the Scripture, the Word of God, the written Word of God, just as it is given us, is a power of God to work faith in the heart and to give salvation and divine consolation.¹⁶ But, we repeat, this Word alone has such power.¹⁷

"Preach the Word!"

Since the *word of Scripture alone* has the power to work faith in the heart of man and to give him salvation, and since that which the Scriptures reveal is a "*mystery*" to all men, therefore, as a messenger of God, preach, proclaim, *only and alone* this word of Scripture. In all your preaching and proclaiming of the Word you must always be able to say, "*It is written,*" and, "*Thus saith the Lord.*" "*Preach the Word.*" That, and nothing else, is the command of God to you as His messenger, His herald.

However, a twofold warning is in place here.

The first warning: When preaching and proclaiming the Word, *banish all thoughts, ideas, and reflections of your own.* At best these are only "wood, hay, and stubble." Preach and proclaim nothing but the "gold, silver, and precious stones" of the written Word of God.¹⁸ Can your own thoughts, ideas, and reflections work faith in any man's heart? Can they save him? Surely not. And what do you know of your own accord? Nothing at all. The divine revelation of Scripture is as much a mystery to you as to all other men. And are you not a messenger, a herald, of God? What is the duty of a herald? His duty is to proclaim what he has been told. May a herald add to, or omit,

15 **1 Cor. 13, 9. 10.** - For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. **1 Cor. 13, 12.** - For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face. Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

16 **1 John 1, 3. 4.** - That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. **Rom. 1, 16. 17.** - For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

17 **1 Cor. 1, 18-25.** - For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God, because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

18 **1 Cor. 3, 12.** - Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble.

anything of his own accord? Surely not. Neither dare you do so.¹⁹ Only *this* privilege is granted you: you may explain the Scripture-passage which you are treating of in your sermon or proclamation by adducing other passages of Holy Writ, and, like the Lord Jesus Christ, you may illustrate it, and impress it upon the mind of your hearers, by means of parables taken from life.²⁰ That is right and praiseworthy and salutary. However, it is *not* right and praiseworthy and salutary when theologians take that which God has revealed only "in part" and "in a dark word"²¹ – sufficient, however, to work a glad and firmly grounded faith – and attempt to add to it and explain it with their own thoughts, ideas, and reflections and thus make it a logical, systematic whole. Theologians are at liberty to arrange in systematic order *only those truths* which God has clearly revealed in His Word. Farther than that they have no right to go, and even then they must confess that much remains dark, that many questions remain unanswered, and that the connection between one point and another one often is not clear to them.

The second warning: *No apology!* That is to say, Do not attempt to defend the Word as it is revealed in Holy Scriptures; do not attempt an apology because it is a mystery and is revealed only "in part" and "darkly." Men will shake their heads and take offense when they hear or read the Scriptures. Do not try to defend the Scriptures against such reception through all kinds of "reasonable," but unscriptural apologetics. Such efforts to defend them are altogether wrong.

That such apologetics are wrong is evident from the following.

1) *God*, who alone is wise,²² gave His Word exactly as we have it to-day. Through His Word He works in us faith in Christ Jesus and keeps us in this

19 **Deut. 4, 2.** - Ye shall not add unto the Word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you. **Deut. 12, 32.** - What thing so ever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it. **Prov. 30, 6.** - Add thou not unto His Words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar. **Rev. 22, 18. 19.** - For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this Book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this Book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the Book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this Book.

20 **Matt. 13, 52. 3.** [sic 53?] -Then said He unto them, "Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these parables, He departed thence.

21 **1 Cor. 13, 9. 10.** - For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. **1 Cor. 13, 12.** - For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face. Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

22 **Rom. 16, 27.** - To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen. **1 Tim. 1, 17.** - Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen. **Jude 25.** - To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

faith. And by the mouth of His apostle He says to every servant of the Word: "Preach the Word?" If, now, you would do more or otherwise than God has done, if you want to do better than God, would be wiser than God, would try to defend His Word, – would that not be a rash, impudent, and, at the same time, very foolish act?

2) The *faith* of the regenerated is wrought and preserved in their hearts through the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, the Word of Truth.²³ And that is the Word of Scripture, the Word which we now have in our Bible. Through this Word the Holy Spirit operates.²⁴ Through it He guides the believers into all truth²⁵ indeed, *through this Word*; for not even the Holy Spirit, the true God, speaks "of Himself," but whatsoever He has heard, that He speaks.²⁶ And thus faith is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."²⁷ Hence *faith* does not shake its head when it hears the Word of God, but does shake its head when efforts are made to defend it; it scorns all apology. And if you try to defend the Word of God before believers, you try to do more and otherwise than the Holy Spirit has done. You would be – a fool.

3) Over against whom would you therefore defend the Word of God? Of course, only over against human *reason*, which indeed shakes its head at the Word of God. Aye, carnal reason shakes its head at the divine Word of Scripture. But when you try to defend the Word of God over against this carnal reason, the very opposite of that which you aimed at takes place; namely, carnal reason is not convinced of the truth of the Word of God. No, it judges and condemns the Word of God according to its own carnal opinion. And this opinion is always hostile to the Word of God. If, therefore, you try to defend the Word of God over against carnal reason, you thereby *hinder* the divine power which is inherent in the Word. No, no, you servant of the Word, do not try to defend the Word! The weapons which God has given you for your warfare are

23 **1 Pet. 1, 23.** - Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. **Jas. 1, 18.** - Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures. **Rom. 10, 17.** - So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.

24 **John 6, 63.** - It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the Words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are Life.

25 **John 16, 13 a.** - Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth.

26 **John 16, 13 b.** - For He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak and He will shew you things to come.

27 **Heb. 11, 1.** - Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

not carnal weapons. Your weapons are *the words of Scripture*,²⁸ mighty through God; with them you can pull down strongholds, cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.²⁹ For reason must be *taken captive* and judged, not liberated and made the judge through efforts at defending the Word of God. Servant of the Word, and you, O Christian, we appeal to your own daily experience. Unless you simply say: Thus it is written, and that settles it; if you listen to attempts made at defending the Bible, or if you yourself try to make the Word of God plausible to carnal reason, a thousand questions will arise within you, questions asked by your Old Adam, just as wasps arise when their nest is disturbed.

4) If, as stated above, you try to defend the divine Word over against carnal reason, you thereby *set yourself in opposition to the clearly revealed gracious will of God*. For we read in Holy Scriptures: "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God *by the foolishness of preaching*³⁰ to save them that believe.³¹ For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a *stumbling-block* and unto the Greeks *foolishness*, but unto them which are called,³² both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God and the Wisdom of God, because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."³³ What does this passage tell us? The whole world, with all its wisdom, cannot discern God's wise plan of salvation which the crucified Christ carried out. The Gospel of Christ is a stumbling-block

28 **Eph. 6, 17.** - And take the helmet of salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

29 **2 Cor. 10, 4. 5.** - For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

30 Greek: by the foolishness of the herald's message - διὰ τῆς μωρίας τοῦ κηρύγματος.

31 Greek: to give salvation to the believers - σώσαι τοὺς πιστεύοντας, *i.e.*, to bring them to faith and salvation.
Rom. 1, 16. - For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek; comp. **Eph. 2, 8.** - For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.

32 who are regenerated.

33 **1 Cor. 1, 21-25.** - For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

and foolishness unto the world. Since this is so and since God knows this, what is now the pleasure of God? To have this His plan defended before the world? No, no! It is the pleasure of God *to work faith in the heart of man and save him through this same Gospel, which is a stumbling-block and foolishness unto the world.* And God accomplishes that. For that which men call the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and that which men call the weakness of God is stronger than men. And the apostles and evangelists did according to this good pleasure of God; they administered their office through the simple, ordinary, undefended preaching of Christ crucified. Go and do likewise and do not try to defend the Word of God over against, and make it plausible to, carnal reason.

5) To sum up: You are a *messenger of God*, and as such you are to proclaim the divine message exactly as God has revealed it in His written Word. God has not told you to defend it over against man. He is a poor messenger indeed who would proclaim the message given him and then try to defend and excuse it because of its "foolishness" and "weakness."

Only one kind of *defense*, – if we would call it so, – altogether different from that mentioned above, is permitted by God: *When human reason objects to the divine Word, you may show how futile and flimsy these objections will appear even to the wisdom of man.* You may set the wisdom of man against the wisdom of man. But bear in mind: Unless you have learned enough to be thoroughly familiar with the wisdom of man and able to set wisdom against wisdom, do not attempt even that, but merely preach the Gospel in a simple and firm manner. Otherwise you might expose yourself to ridicule and scorn and only harm not only yourself, but also your sacred office and God's holy cause.

"Preach the Word!"

When the risen Savior appeared to His disciples in Galilee,³⁴ as He had promised to do,³⁵ and gave them His Great Commission, He said to them: *"All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have*

34 Matt. 28, 16. 17. - Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw Him, they worshipped Him: but some doubted. **1 Cor. 15, 6.** - After that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

35 Matt. 26, 32. - But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. **Mark 14, 18.** - And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with Me shall betray Me." **Mark 16, 7.** - But go your way, tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see Him, as He said unto you.

commanded you. And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."³⁶

These words of our Lord and Savior clearly reveal the full meaning of "Preach the Word!"

Although these words have been correctly rendered from the Greek into good English, we will now give a *literal* translation of those words which are most important here³⁷ in order to make the matter still clearer. Literally translated, these words read: "*Therefore, going out, make disciples³⁸ of all nations by teaching, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*"

What is the will of our Lord and Savior, the will which will be in force until the end of days? This: His disciples should go out to all nations, make disciples of them by preaching the Gospel,³⁹ baptize them into the name⁴⁰ of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and teach them to observe all things whatsoever the Lord Jesus has commanded them, to wit, all His disciples.

"Preach the Word!" therefore means: Preach and teach the Gospel of the grace of God in Christ Jesus in all its truth and purity, exactly as God has revealed it in His Word, and make disciples of men and baptize them – Baptism is the great and only Sacrament through which a sinner enters the Church of Christ⁴¹ – and *teach the disciples of Christ to observe all things whatsoever He has commanded them.* This is the point with which we are chiefly concerned now. The duty of preaching the Word, the Gospel, to all

36 Matt. 28, 18-20. - And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

37 Vv. 19. 20 a. - Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you

38 It can be readily seen that the Greek word has this meaning. μαθητεύσατε

39 However, not all men obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. **2 Thess. 1, 8.** - In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. **Rom. 2, 8.** - But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath.

40 Rom. 6, 3. - Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?

41 Rom. 6, 4. - Therefore we are buried with Him by Baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. **Col. 2, 12.** - Buried with Him in Baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, Who hath raised Him from the dead. (See my book *Der Apostolische Brief an die Kolosser* with reference to this passage.) **1 Pet. 3, 21.** - The like figure whereunto *even* Baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

nations also includes the duty of teaching them *to observe and do all things whatsoever the Lord has commanded His disciples to observe and do*. The Gospel is not only a saving, but also a salutary, a life-giving doctrine.⁴² As a servant of the Word you are to make disciples of poor sinners and teach them how to live and walk as such disciples of Christ.⁴³ You are to proclaim the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ in all its truth and purity; you are to proclaim the doctrine of sanctification by faith in Christ Jesus in all its truth and purity.

And as for this last-named doctrine, you are not only to teach and proclaim it in a pleasing manner or write about it, you are also to teach people to *observe* it and to *do* accordingly.⁴⁴ "Teaching them to *observe* all things whatsoever I have commanded you," says our Lord. A poor servant of the Word it is who, while correctly teaching and proclaiming these doctrines in theory, like Eli indifferently looks on while his hearers do not do accordingly.

"Preach the Word!"

At the beginning of this chapter we said, and showed and proved from Scripture that "the Word" is the *Gospel*. Most certainly! The Gospel is the message which you, a messenger of God and a servant of the Word, are to proclaim. But besides the Gospel the Scripture contains still another Word, of an altogether different character. Not only *may* this, but it *must* and *should* be added to the Gospel. That is the *Law*. The Law must be added to the Gospel "because of transgressions."⁴⁵ It must be shown by the Law that all men are sinners,⁴⁶ that sin is directly and absolutely opposed to God, and that the

42 **1 Tim. 1, 10. 11.** - For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; according to the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

43 See the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. 5-7.

44 **Jas. 1, 22-25.** - But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect Law of Liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the Work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

45 **Gal. 3, 19.** - Wherefore then serveth the Law? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

46 **Rom. 3:20.** - Therefore by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight; for by the Law is the knowledge of sin.

consequence of sin is death and damnation.⁴⁷ And why must that be shown by the Law? In order that, when the Gospel is preached, the grace of God in Christ Jesus may be perceived and penitently accepted.⁴⁸ And not only in the case of the unregenerate must the Law be added to the preaching of the Gospel and perform its work, but also in the case of the regenerate, the Christians; for the latter that they may remain truly penitent and not allow their Old Adam, the sinful depravity still in them, to seduce them to self-righteousness,⁴⁹ sin-service,⁵⁰ and all manner of self-elected piety.⁵¹

As a servant of the Word, therefore, preach the Gospel, but also, in all firmness and sharpness, the Law. But do it in the manner just pointed out and keep within the right and proper bounds.⁵² Tell the unregenerate, those who refuse to heed the Gospel, the ungodly and self-righteous, that they are still under the Law with all its demands and its curses.⁵³ But tell the believing Christians, those who are justified by faith, are children of God, and are ruled by

47 Rom. 7, 7-13. - What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the Law: for I had not known lust, except the Law had said, "Thou shalt not covet." But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the Law sin was dead. For I was alive without the Law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the Law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

48 Rom. 5, 20. - Moreover the Law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

49 Rom. 7, 14. - For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin.

50 1 Pet. 1, 14-16. - As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, "Be ye holy; for I am holy." **Gal. 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.

51 Ps. 119, 9. - Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to Thy Word.

52 1 Tim. 1, 8. - But we know that the Law is good, if a man use it lawfully.

53 1 Tim. 1, 9-11. - Knowing this, that the Law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; according to the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust. **Gal. 3, 10** - For as many as are of the works of the Law are under the curse: for it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them."

the Spirit of God, that they are no longer under the Law, but under grace.⁵⁴ Take care lest you cause them to become confused and to despair of grace when you preach the Law.⁵⁵ Take care lest you mislead them to legalistic ways, which are contrary to the faith.⁵⁶

All that has been said in this chapter is included in the admonition, "Preach the Word!"

Now will follow further explanations, provisions, and injunctions of this "*Preach the Word!*" all of them, like that word itself, included in the earnest and solemn charge of the apostle which we are considering.⁵⁷

54 Rom. 6, 14. - For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the Law, but under Grace. **Gal. 5, 23.** - Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. **1 Tim. 1, 9** - Knowing this, that the Law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers.

55 Gal. 5, 1. - Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. **Gal 5, 10.** - I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded; but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.

56 Gal. 4, 9-11. - But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

57 . - V. 1 (2 Tim. 5:1)

IV.

"Be instant!"

The Greek word rendered "Be instant!" really means: *"Stand fast!"* The servant of the Word should stand by the *Word*; for the apostle had just said, "Preach the *Word!*" The servant should steadfastly stand by the Word as a herald steadfastly stands by what he has been told to proclaim. After carrying out his orders, an ordinary herald leaves and concerns himself no more about it. The herald of God, a servant of the Word, however, should *continue steadfastly* to stand by the Word, should continually proclaim the Word without ceasing. As a valiant soldier of Christ Jesus¹ the servant of the Word should stand by the Word entrusted to him like a faithful soldier stands by his flag. "Thou, therefore, endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ"; endure whatever afflictions may come over you because of the Word.² Continue steadfastly to stand by the Word until you have either gained the victory, – and then continue to stand by the Word, – or until you fall, – and then you have fought a good fight and kept the faith, and the crown of righteousness is laid up for you.³ Servant of the Word, stand by the Word in such a manner that you cannot be separated from the Word, that you are one with the Word, that the Word is the only thing you know, and want, and understand, and acknowledge, and recognize. Be girded and equipped with the Word. Be ready and prepared at all times to proclaim and maintain the Word: *every* word which God has revealed to you in Holy Scriptures. That is what that faithful servant of the Word, the Apostle Paul, did, through whom God is now speaking to you.⁴ Indeed, should you, a servant of the Word, disregard a *single* word of *God*? If any one dares to lay hands on, or disregard, a single word of God, then, servant of the Word,

1 **2 Tim. 2, 3.** - Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

2 **2 Tim. 2, 3.** - Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. **2 Tim. 1, 8.** - Be not thou therefore ashamed of the Testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel according to the power of God.

3 **2 Tim. 4, 7. 8.** - I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.

4 **Acts 20, 20. 21.** - And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. **Acts 20, 27.** - For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. **Acts 20, 31.** - Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

stand by the Word, stand up for every single word of Scripture, quickly draw from its scabbard "the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God,"⁵ raise it up high, and smite all gainsayers and, with it, cast down all contradiction and opposition.⁶ Surely as a servant of the Word you *cannot* do otherwise since you are to fear God and His Word with holy awe and fear.⁷ Thus God desires you to be, thus He admonishes and adjures you through His apostle.⁸

*"In season, out of season."*⁹

You are to stand by the Word and proclaim it always, at all times, under all circumstances, be the time favorable or not. Favorable time or unfavorable – that dare not influence your standing by the Word; that dare not be a condition, dare not change you, dare not make you firmer or weaker. Certainly not! The Lord God gave His Word for all times,¹⁰ and He gave you¹¹ as a servant of the Word. You are steadfastly to stand by the Word at all times and not to ask whether the time for its proclamation is favorable or unfavorable. The apostle of the Lord charges you "before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom, Preach the Word!" Stand by the Word "in season, out of season"! Never forget that!

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- 5 **Eph. 6, 17.** - And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.
- 6 **Titus 1, 9.** - Holding fast the faithful Word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.
- 7 **Ps. 119, 120. 121.** - My flesh trembleth for fear of Thee; and I am afraid of Thy judgments. I have done judgment and justice: leave me not to mine oppressors.
- 8 **II. V. 1.**
- 9 Greek: at a favorable or an unfavorable time - εὐκαίρως ἀκαίρως
- 10 **Is. 40, 6-9.** - The voice said, "Cry." And he said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the Word of our God shall stand for ever. O Zion, that bringest Good Tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest Good Tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! **1 Pet. 1, 23-25.** - Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you.
- 11 **Eph 4, 11.** - And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.

What time is *favorable* for a servant of the Word to stand by the Word? When the Lord opens the door unto the Word,¹² as, for instance, when heathens throng to the Word, ask for instruction and baptism, or when Christians in large numbers awaken from spiritual slumber and seek the true and pure Word of God, – that is a favorable time. Such a time was the time of the apostles, in spite of opposition, in spite of persecution, on the part of Jews and Gentiles. Such a time was the time of Luther, in spite of the fury of the Pope and his followers. Such a time was the time of Walther, in spite of bitter opposition against his steadfast testimony on the part of so-called Lutherans who were infected with the spirit of the sects and the Calvinists, and on the part of the sects and the Calvinists themselves. "In spite of"? Yes. When opposition and persecution arise against the Word, then the time is favorable for the Word to prove its divine power.¹³ For then the light shines so much brighter in the darkness, then the Spirit lusteth so much more against the flesh.¹⁴ The time of peace, the time when the Church of Jesus Christ is not

12 1 Cor. 16, 9. - For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries. **2 Cor. 2, 12.** - Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's Gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord. **Col. 4, 3.** - Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds. **Rev. 3, 8.** - I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My Word, and hast not denied My Name. **Acts 14, 27.** - And when they were come, and had gathered the Church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

13 1 Cor. 16, 9. - For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.

14 John 1, 5. - And the Light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. **Gal. 5, 17.** - For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. **Rev. 2, 8-11.** - And unto the angel of the Church in Smyrna write: These things saith the First and the Last, which was dead, and is alive. I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of Life. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death. **Rev. 3, 7-13.** - And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My Word, and hast not denied My Name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the Word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the Name of My God, and the Name of the City of My God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from My God: and I will write upon him My new Name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

troubled, but rather regarded highly – such a time is prayed for,¹⁵ longed for, regarded as a favorable time, as a time when the Word has an open door. But – think of the time which was granted the Church during the reign of Constantine the Great – what happens so easily? The Christians abuse such privilege and grace and open door and become listless, indifferent, cold, and worldly-minded and thereby spoil this gracious gift of God.

When is the time *unfavorable* for such steadfast standing by the Word? When rank unbelief becomes rampant in the world and the antichristian spirit of the lodge spreads itself in the Church to such a degree that the simple, childlike faith in the Word of God is laughed at, ridiculed, and regarded as foolishness which has come down from the Middle Ages, – that surely is an unfavorable time. But there is a still more unfavorable time. When is that? When a Church, a denomination, which God has richly blessed with the correct and pure knowledge of the Word becomes lukewarm and indifferent and tired of the pure Word of God and worldly-minded and no longer shows the spirit of true repentance; when this denomination is infected with the spirit of the sects and lodges round about it and becomes unionistic; when "Thus it is written" no longer is regarded as divinely authoritative, but is met with all manner of man-made opinions and objections and explanations; when this same denomination opens its doors and suffers in its midst those who have taken an oath in the antichristian lodge; when the Christian training of the children is neglected; when family devotion and reading of the Bible is but rarely found; when even many servants of the Word, pastors, teachers, missionaries, visitors, presidents, and professors either become infected with all this and take part in it, or else are blind to it, or do not regard it as being as bad as it is and try to excuse it, or even think and say that everything in that denomination is as good as can be expected, that it always has been so; when the leaders instead of raising their voices and calling upon their people to report, to examine themselves, whether they are in the faith, and to turn from their ways, step before the public and boast about the greatness and the works of their denomination, – *then* the time is unfavorable; *then* a servant of the Word who faithfully stands by the Word will, get little attention; then he will, as a rule,

15 1 Tim. 2, 2. - For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

be either ignored or looked upon as eccentric and fanatic, and his voice, his testimony, will be hushed.¹⁶

But, O servant of the Word, the apostle charges you: "*Preach the Word: be instant in season, out of season!*"

V.

"Reprove!"

"Reprove" is a word which does not quite give the full meaning of the Greek word. The Greek word means: in a convincing manner to *convict* one of wrong¹ and therefore also to *censure* and even to *chasten*.²

Here you servant of the Word are simply told, "Reprove!" What does that mean? It means that *in a convincing manner you are to uncover everything that contradicts the Word of God and show it up as such; and you are to convict it of its ungodliness.*

The Church of God is surrounded by unbelieving false science, false doctrine, ungodly life, and service of sin. "Reprove" that! And by such "reproving" warn the Christians against becoming infected by it. Of course, you

16 Guided by what the apostle says vv. 3 and 4 of the falling away which would soon be noticeable in the Apostolic Church, I here show what "a denomination which has been richly bless by God with the pure and correct knowledge of God's Word" may come to in the future. This I am endeavoring to show in a manner adapted to the organization and life of the Church of our times. If this would happen, then it would be the most unfavorable time for the steadfast standing of a servant of the Word by the Word.

1 **1 Cor. 14, 24.** - But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all. **Jas. 2, 9.** - But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the Law as transgressors. **John 8, 9.** - And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. **John 8, 46.** - Which of you convinceth Me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe Me? **John 3, 20.** - For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. **Eph. 5, 11.** - And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. **Eph. 5, 13.** - But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. **Titus 1, 9.** - Holding fast the faithful Word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. **Titus 1, 13.** - This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith. **Titus 2, 15.** - These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

2 **1 Tim. 5, 20.** - Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. **Luke 3, 19.**—But Herod the tetrarch, being reprov'd by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done. **Matt. 18, 15.** - Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. **Heb. 12, 5.** - And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him. **Rev. 3, 19.** - As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

do not take this to mean that you are to search the history of the world and of the church, bring forth every false science and false doctrine which at one time or another reared its head, and oppose and refute it, but you are to "reprove" that which *at your time is* endangering the Church of God.

Because of sin which is still in the Christians and because of false brethren who sneak in, much is found in the Church of God that is contrary to God's Word. "Reprove" that above all else lest the poison have a fatal, deadly effect, the cancer spread, and the Church of God be ruined. Servant of the Word, pastor, teacher, missionary, visitor, president, professor, bear in mind at all times that you are to "reprove"! If you neglect that, then answer the question: Are you dumb because you will not speak righteousness and judge uprightly? Would you really permit righteousness to be dumb? Do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men,³ ye who are subject unto God and must give account to Him? Aye, if you will not "reprove," you are like the watchmen that are dumb dogs, men who cannot reprove.⁴ Surely you do not wish to be such! It surely is a poor watchdog that does not bark when he sees thieves breaking into the house. And you are appointed to guard and watch the house of the living God!⁵

"Rebuke!"

When you see that Christians of the flock over the which the Holy Ghost has made you overseer to feed it with the Word of God⁶ will not let themselves be warned by your "reproving," but rather listen to those who set themselves in opposition to God's Word, then rebuke them. Censure them sharply and earnestly because they are so foolish and let themselves be misled not to obey the truth which God has so graciously given them,⁷ and, rebuking them,

3 **Ps. 58, 2.** - Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.

4 **Is. 56, 10.** - His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.

5 **1 Tim. 3, 15.** - But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the House of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. Read **Acts 20, 28-31.** - Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the Flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own Blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

6 **Acts 20, 28.** - Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the Flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own Blood. **1 Pet. 5, 12.** - By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.

7 **Gal. 3, 1.** - O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

threaten them that God will give them over to a reprobate mind if they refuse to listen;⁸ that God will become their enemy and war against them if they rebel against His Holy Spirit and vex and grieve Him;⁹ that God will reject them if they reject His Word.¹⁰

However, you are responsible not only for all that happens in the flock which is directly entrusted to your care, and give an account of it to God,¹¹ but also for all that happens in the *church-body* to which you belong and with which you are one in faith, in doctrine, and in confession, and together with which you are making your pilgrimage to the heavenly goal. True, this applies to all Christians. No Christian should look on silently while his Church is erring in doctrine or practise; he should raise his voice in testimony against it. That is God's will.¹² But least of all should you, who are to teach and lead the Christians and be an example to them,¹³ silently look on while error creeps in; *you* above all others should raise your voice in testimony against such error and

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- 8 **Rom. 1, 28.** - And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.
- 9 **Is. 63, 10.** - But they rebelled, and vexed His Holy Spirit: therefore He was turned to be their enemy, and He fought against them. **Eph. 4, 30.** - And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the Day of Redemption.
- 10 **Hos. 4, 6.** - My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to Me: seeing thou hast forgotten the Law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.
- 11 **Heb. 13, 17.** - Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.
- 12 **Eph. 5, 11.** - And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. **Phil. 3, 2** - Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. **2 Tim. 2, 18-21.** - Who concerning the Truth have erred, saying that the Resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are His." And, Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work.
- 13 **1 Pet. 5, 1-3.** - The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. **Phil. 3, 17.** - Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. **2 Thess. 3, 9.** - Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us. **Titus 2, 7, 8.** - In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

wrong practise. Let the Apostle Paul, whose last word you are now studying, be an example to you in this respect; he withstood the great Apostle Peter, who one day, for fear of the Jews, did wrong, and rebuked him and those who had permitted themselves to be misled by his example; he rebuked them "before them all."¹⁴ Peter and those who were misled by his example allowed themselves to be rebuked. But if those in your church-body will *not* heed what you say, if they disregard and despise your reproving, then *rebuke*. Threaten them that Christ will remove their candlestick from its place if they will not repent;¹⁵ tell them that Christ will spew them out of His mouth if they will not change and amend their lives.¹⁶ However, you are not to reprove and eventually to rebuke only when you see false *doctrine*, but also when unscriptural *practise* is commonly found and permitted, even though the doctrine be pure and Scriptural. Peter, whom Paul rebuked, as shown before, certainly had not taught false doctrine; he had erred in a certain point by not practising what he preached. Where the Word of God is taught in all its truth and purity, hence, just where the knowledge of the will of God is as bright as daylight at noon, it is there that the vials of God's wrath are poured out first of all and above all when His will nevertheless is disobeyed. There rebuke with the word of our Lord Jesus Christ: "That servant which *knew* his lord's will and prepared *not* himself, neither *did* according to his will, *shall be beaten with many stripes*. But he that knew not and did commit things worthy of stripes shall be beaten with few stripes.

14 Gal. 2, 11-14. - But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, "If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?"

15 Rev. 2, 5. - Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

16 Rev. 2, 14-18. - But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass.

For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required, and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."¹⁷

Rebuke them with the word of our Lord Jesus Christ: "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; *but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.*"¹⁸ Hold up before them the word of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and *do not* the things which I say?"¹⁹ Rebuke them with the word of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Every one that heareth these sayings of Mine *and doeth them not* shall be likened unto a foolish man which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, *and it fell; and great was the fall of it.*"²⁰ Aye, that church-body which has, holds, and professes the pure doctrine of Scriptures, but has left its first love,²¹ or has and suffers those in its midst who hold and do things hateful to God,²² should repent, else our Lord Jesus Christ will quickly remove its candlestick out of its place,²³ will come unto it quickly,²⁴ and cast it into a bed

17 Luke 12, 47-48. - And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

18 Matt. 13, 12. - For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. **Matt. 25, 29.** - For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. **Mark 4, 25.** - For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath. **Luke 8, 18.** - Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.

19 Luke 6, 46. - And why call ye Me, "Lord, Lord," and do not the things which I say? **Matt. 7, 21.** - Not every one that saith unto Me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. **Jas. 1, 22.** - But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

20 Matt. 7, 26. 27. - And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

21 Rev. 2, 4. - Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

22 Rev. 2, 14. 15. - But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. **Rev. 2, 20.** - Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

23 Rev. 2, 5. - Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

24 Rev. 2, 16. - Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.

of great tribulation, together with those evil ones whom it had and suffered in its midst.²⁵ Rebuke in that manner!

Christians should and will gird up the loins of their mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto them at the revelation of Jesus Christ; *as obedient children*, not fashioning themselves according to the former lusts in their ignorance, but as He which hath called them is holy, so they should be *holy in all manner of conversation*, because it is written: Be ye holy; for I am holy. And if they call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, they should pass the time of their sojourning here in fear, forasmuch as they know that they were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from their vain conversation received by tradition from their fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot.²⁶ That is what the Holy Ghost teaches us through the *Gospel*. If they refuse to heed this doctrine, they again come under the *Law* with its stern threats, demands, and curses.²⁷

In that manner "*rebuke*" in all earnestness. And "let no man despise you."²⁸
"*Exhort!*"

The primary meaning of the Greek word is *to bid a person come near*.²⁹ It also has the meaning of preaching to,³⁰ speaking to, and beseeching.³¹ In the

25 **Rev. 2, 22.** - Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.

26 **1 Pet. 1, 13-18.** - Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the Revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as He which hath called you is Holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, "Be ye holy; for I am holy." And if ye call on the Father, Who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear; forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers.

27 **Deut. 27, 26.** - Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this Law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen.

28 **Titus 2, 15.** - These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

29 **Acts 28, 20.** - For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain. **Acts 28, 17.** - comp. v. 17 And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, "Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans."

30 **Luke 3, 18.** - And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

31 **Matt. 8, 5.** - And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto Him a centurion, beseeching Him. **Matt. 18, 29.** - And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all" (and many other passages).

New Testament it is also used in the sense of *spiritual admonition*,³² of *comforting, encouraging, and strengthening*.³³ In this sense, however, it is used *only when Christians are addressed*, never when unbelievers are spoken to.

What does "exhort" mean here? This: You servant of the Word are to bid the Christians come to you, *to the Word*; you are to admonish and beseech them to abide by the Word of God steadfastly and in all simplicity; you are to show them that the Word of God alone gives true and lasting comfort, and thus you are to encourage and strengthen them to hold fast this Word.

And remember: When you thus "exhort" the Christians, you are an instrument of the Holy Ghost.³⁴ The Holy Ghost exhorts the Christians through you. Let that comfort, encourage, and strengthen you. Furthermore: The Holy Ghost dwells in the hearts of the Christians.³⁵

When, therefore, the Holy Ghost exhorts the Christians through you, the same Holy Ghost responds in the hearts of the Christians and gives His, your, exhortation life and strength so that they say Amen to it and do accordingly.³⁶ Such exhortation is part of the "new commandment."³⁷ And this commandment is truly being fulfilled by those who believe in Jesus Christ as it was fulfilled by Christ. Jesus Christ fulfilled this commandment perfectly; His Christians fulfil it the longer, the better, for in them the darkness of sin is constantly passing away, and the true light of sanctification is shining in them like the first dawn

32 Rom. 12, 1. - I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. **Rom. 12, 8.** - Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness (and many other passages).

33 2 Cor. 1, 4. - Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. **2 Cor. 2, 7.** - So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow (and many other passages).

34 John 15, 26. 27. - But when the Comforter is come, Whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning. **John 16, 13.** - Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come. **1 Cor. 2, 13.** - Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

35 1 Cor. 3, 16. - Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

36 1 John 2, 20. - But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. **1 John 2, 27.** - But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him.

37 John 13, 34. - A new commandment I give unto you: That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

of eternity.³⁸ So your exhortation will not be in vain. What a comforting thought! How that ought to encourage you to exhort the Christians!

Very properly the word "exhort" is placed after "reprove" and "rebuke." For the "reproving" and "rebuking" should have only this one purpose, of preparing the heart for the proper reception of the exhortation, just as a field is plowed to prepare it for the reception of the seed. And what is the sum of all "exhorting" or the "new commandment"? This: *Christians, believe on the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and love one another, as He, Jesus Christ, gave us commandment.*³⁹ This fully embraces all true Christianity. For *faith* on the name of Jesus Christ saves and is the eternal fountain of obedience,⁴⁰ and love is the fulfilling of the Law.⁴¹

Reprove, rebuke, exhort "*with all long-suffering and doctrine.*"

"*With all long-suffering.*"

Because of the Old Adam, who still dwells in the Christians, your reproving and rebuking as well as your exhorting will not immediately have a telling effect. True, there are isolated instances when an individual Christian is brought to a state of Christian perfection – as far as it can be reached in this life – by being reprovved, rebuked, and exhorted only once. Such is never the case, however, with an entire congregation or church-body. Whatever may be your field of action, reprove, rebuke, and exhort therefore with all *long-suffering and patience*. Behold the long-suffering and patience of the Savior with regard to you and all Christians.⁴² Surely you dare never become impatient and

38 1 John 2, 8. - Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in Him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

39 1 John 3, 23. - And this is His commandment: That we should believe on the Name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment. **John 13, 34.** - A new commandment I give unto you: That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

40 John 7, 38. 39. - He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.) **1 John 3, 9.** - Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

41 Rom. 13, 8-10. - Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the Law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the Law.

42 2 Pet. 3, 9. - The Lord is not slack concerning His Promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. **2 Pet. 3, 15.** - And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you.

discouraged. Surely you never dare slacken and grow languid. You must continue to reprove, rebuke, and exhort. You must devote your whole life to it. It can never be wholly in vain.⁴³ Your Lord vouches for that. One thing may, of course, happen; and when this happens, your Lord is telling you to leave the field of your present activity. And what is it? When a large and dominating majority of your congregation or your church-body positively rejects and despises your preaching and therefore God's Word, when it positively rejects and disregards your and, therefore, God's reproof, rebuking, and exhorting. Then, in that case shake off the dust of your feet for a testimony against them.⁴⁴ In that case, "long-suffering" would be disobedience and sin. Even if you would continue to reprove, rebuke, and exhort, you would be unequally yoked together with them if you remained,⁴⁵ for your action would not agree with the testimony of your mouth, and you would become guilty of base denial.⁴⁶ And all who heed your testimony for the truth must depart with you.

43 Is. 55, 10. 11. - For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

44 Matt. 10, 14. - And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. **Mark 6, 11.** - And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city. **Luke 9, 5.** - And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them. **Luke 10, 10. 11.** - But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. **Acts 13, 50. 51.** - But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. **Acts 18, 6.** - And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.

45 2 Cor. 6, 14-18. - Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the Living God; as God hath said, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people." Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

46 Matt. 10, 32-39. - Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven. Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it. **Luke 12, 8. 9.** - Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God; but he that denieth Me before men shall be denied before the angels of God.

"And *doctrine*."

Your reproving, rebuking, and exhorting must be combined with *doctrine*, with all doctrine. All your reproving, rebuking, and exhorting must be founded upon the pure, unadulterated, and therefore wholesome doctrine of God's Word, must be drawn from it and follow it. Take, for instance, the "exhorting." You are to exhort "by the mercies of God,"⁴⁷ in no other manner. Hence you must first of all *teach* the Christians, teach them clearly and thoroughly, what "the mercies of God" are, in order that they may be reminded of it by the Holy Ghost with power, have a lively conviction of it, and the knowledge of the mercy of God thus become in them the eternal fountain out of which springs all that is pleasing to God, the fire which consumes all that is displeasing to God.

It is not enough to quote the various Scripture-passages relating to your reproving, rebuking, or exhorting. Certainly these passages are to be quoted, and the Christians should be taught them. But they must be accompanied by "all doctrine." If you wish to "reprove," if, in a convincing and convicting manner, you wish to uncover everything that is in opposition to the Word of God, and set it forth as such, and array the divine Word against it, then you certainly must at the same time, or even before that, teach the Christians the Word of God and the truth. If you wish to "rebuke"; if you wish earnestly and sharply to censure and admonish the Christians because they are so foolish as to permit themselves to be misled not to obey the divine truth; if you wish to impress upon them that God will pour out upon them the vials of His wrath and judgment unless they change and amend their sinful lives, you must first teach them the truth in a clear, convincing, and enlightening manner, as the Apostle Paul did in his letter to the foolish Galatians. We have already shown that the same is true when you wish to "exhort" Christians, call upon them to accept the truth and persuade them to abide by the truth. "All" doctrine must constantly accompany it, else your reproving, rebuking, and exhorting will be in vain.

A single example may further illustrate this.

At the present time the antichristian lodge⁴⁸ has gained such power and strength that it is sweeping through the lands like a roaring flood, threatening to engulf everything in its path. Now, you servant of the Word are to "reprove," "rebuke," and "exhort," especially if you see that your congregation or church-body is also being touched by the deadly flood of this stream. And in order to

47 **Rom. 12, 1.** - I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

48 Founded in England in 1717.

do this in a proper manner, so that you may hope for success, it is necessary that you first show and prove undeniably that the lodge is really antichristian, that it holds tendencies and has aims which are in direct opposition to Christ and His Word. At the same time you must teach. Teach what? Above all you must teach and show *what Christ and His Gospel really are; what and who a true Christian is; that a true Christian dare not, will not, and cannot have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but must reprove them;*⁴⁹ that a true Christian must therefore *leave the antichristian lodge, come out from among them and be separate.*⁵⁰ And to this add the following doctrines: Every Christian congregation and synod, in its true and divinely acknowledged essence, or inmost nature, is a "*church of God,*"⁵¹ of which only "the sanctified in Christ Jesus," "the called saints,"⁵¹ are members, whom the Lord acknowledges as His own and who *depart from iniquity.*⁵² The Church of the living God is the *temple of God,* and the Spirit of God dwells in it.⁵³ This Church is the *pillar and ground of the truth.*⁵⁴ It cannot therefore *halt between two opinions,* cannot serve two masters.⁵⁵ He that is not resolutely and positively *with Christ is against him,* and he that *gathers not with Him scatters abroad.*⁵⁶ No Christian

49 **Eph. 5, 11.** - And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. **2 Cor. 6, 14-16** - Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

50 **2 Cor. 6, 17, 18.** - Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

51 **1 Cor. 1, 2.** - Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.

52 **2 Tim. 2, 19.** - Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are His." And, Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ depart from iniquity.

53 **1 Cor. 3, 16.** - Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

54 **1 Tim. 3, 15.** - But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the House of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

55 **1 Kings 18, 21.** - And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him." And the people answered him not a word."
2 Kings 17, 41. - So these nations feared the LORD, and served their graven images, both their children, and their children's children: as did their fathers, so do they unto this day. **Matt. 6, 24.** - No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

56 **Matt. 12, 30.** - He that is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad.

should *offend* his brother through an evil or misleading example.⁵⁷ *God will destroy him* who defiles the temple of God, namely, the Christians.⁵⁸ It is the express will and command of God that Christians *withdraw themselves* from every brother that walks disorderly and not after the tradition which he received through the Word of God, in other words, who has joined the lodge, that they have no fellowship with him, least of all take Holy Communion with him.⁵⁹ However, Christians should not look upon him as an enemy, but "admonish" him as a brother, make every effort to cause him to see the error of his ways and to return.⁶⁰ Teach furthermore that in a church-body, or synod, hands be not laid upon any one too soon, that no one taking a wrong position in this matter be prematurely admitted to the holy ministry, lest the synod become partaker of other men's sins.⁶¹ – All this you must *teach*. And then "reprove" and "rebuke" wherever there is occasion to do so, wherever necessary. Then "exhort" the Christians to keep themselves aloof from the lodge and all fellowship with it. The lodge may be more dangerous to the Christians at one place than at another, but everywhere it threatens to infect the Church; indeed, sad to say, at many places it has already succeeded in doing so.

And remember: The apostle charges you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels to observe these things which have been told you in the Scriptures regarding the administration of your office, to observe them without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality to please men.⁶²

Right here let us note a few things regarding doctrinal sermons, doctrinal lectures, and doctrinal articles in church-papers. – They may fall short of their mark even if they are perfectly Scriptural and to the point. This is the case

57 Rom. 14, 13. - Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. **Matt. 18, 6. 7.** - But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

58 1 Cor. 3, 17. - If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

59 2 Thess. 3, 6. - Now we command you, brethren, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

60 2 Thess. 3, 15. - Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

61 1 Tim. 5, 22. - Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.

62 1 Tim. 5, 21. - I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

when they are altogether "abstract," when they present the doctrine, but do not apply it to the person or circumstance; still more so when they are "abstruse," presenting the doctrine in such a way that no one can understand it; when they use none but old and well-worn expressions and phrases; when, both as regards proof-passages quoted and explanations offered, they confine themselves strictly to that which even Christians who have but a limited knowledge of the Christian doctrine, have known for a long time; when they continue in such dry monotony that anybody who is somewhat familiar with such a style always knows in advance what will follow. When the doctrine is presented in such a manner, the hearers will not pay attention, but allow their thoughts to be diverted to some other subject, or will even fall asleep, and readers of an article of the kind described will lay the paper aside or look for some other reading-matter. Thus such doctrinal sermons, doctrinal lectures, and doctrinal articles fall short of their mark. Do not misunderstand us, however. The abstract doctrine must be taught, yet not in an abstruse form; it is of the greatest value that old and well-known expressions and phrases be used again and again; what is known must again and again be called to mind, and every Christian must immediately recognize that which is presented to him to be the faith which he cherishes. But a servant of the Word should present the abstract doctrine in *a clear and concrete* manner, whether he preach, lecture, or write; he should apply it to his time and the prevailing conditions, as Christ and His apostles did. He should delve in the Scriptures and be filled with this wondrously manifold and yet so harmonious Book and its words and phrases and out of this treasure bring *things new and old*. Then he will be a scribe who is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven.⁶³ Therefore "give attendance to reading" and also to teaching.⁶⁴ Then you will be a useful instrument of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us now sum up all that has been said. Whether you speak or write, whether your field of action is small or large – *be a herald of God, steadfastly stand by the Word of God, be the time favorable or unfavorable, in season or out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine. Most earnestly and solemnly does the apostle of the Lord charge you to do this.*

63 Matt. 13, 52. - Then said He unto them, "Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."

64 1 Tim. 4, 13. - Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

VI.

The apostle now gives a special reason why he so earnestly and solemnly charges the servant of the Word steadfastly to stand by the Word, to be instant in season and out of season, to reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all long-suffering.

The apostle writes: *"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables."*

We know, of course, that these words were addressed, in the first place, to Timothy. What did the apostle say to Timothy? The time will come when "they," they to whom the sound doctrine is preached, will not endure this doctrine, will not like it, but their lusts and desires they will make their norm and call teachers and preachers, great numbers of them, after their heart; they will have ears itching to hear things that will please them; they will turn away their ears from the divine truth and turn to "fables," to opinions of men, false doctrines.

False teachers, heretics, who taught fables and presented all kinds of questions, speculations, and theories in place of what God had prepared, revealed, and offered for the salvation of man and which must be accepted in faith; vainglorious prattlers, who posed as teachers of the Law, but themselves understood not what they said or taught, – such men were found already at the time of Paul and Timothy.¹ Already at that time there were false teachers who had put away their good conscience and concerning their faith had made shipwreck and departed from the truth.² Already at that time there were pernicious teachers who consented not to wholesome words, but were proud, knew nothing, and doted about questions and strifes of words, men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who made a profitable business out of their sham

1 1 Tim. 1, 3-7. - As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do. Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned; from which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; desiring to be teachers of the Law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

2 1 Tim. 1, 19. 20. - Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck; of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme. **2 Tim. 2, 17. 18.** - And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the Resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

piety.³ Already at that time there were many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, especially they of the circumcision, who taught things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.⁴ And already at that time these false teachers met with some success among unsteady and weak Christians.⁵ But at that time they could not gain the upper hand.

Now, when was that time to come which the apostle predicts in these words? *Soon*. In the very near future, after the death of the apostle and perhaps also of Timothy a number of Christians would depart from the faith and give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, the doctrines of such as speak lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron, who, in self-elected piety and crass legality, would burden the disciples with man-made laws; for instance, forbid to marry and command to abstain from meats, which God has created to be received by the Christians with thanksgiving. This the Holy Ghost had expressly told the apostle.⁶ That all this would take place soon, in the very near future, soon after the death of the apostle and perhaps also of Timothy, is evident from the fact that the same apostle tells the church at Ephesus that after his departure grievous wolves would enter in among them, who would not spare the flock; yes, of their own selves men would arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.⁷ This is evident also from

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- 3 **1 Tim. 6, 3-5.** - If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.
- 4 **Titus 1, 10. 11.** - For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision; whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.
- 5 **2 Tim. 2, 17. 18.** - And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the Resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. **Titus 1, 11.** - Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.
- 6 **1 Tim. 4, 1-3.** - Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. (Note here that the words "in the latter times," literally translated, would read: "in the following times." This is not to be understood as meaning the same as "in the last days," of which the apostle speaks 2 Tim. 3, 1, and with which he means the last days of the world.)
- 7 **Acts 20, 29. 30.** - For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

the fact that the same apostle writes to the Thessalonians that the mystery of iniquity was already then working; "only he who *now* letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way."⁸

Now we understand this prophecy of the apostle. Now we perceive how the apostle substantiates his admonition to Timothy with this prediction, the admonition to be a herald of the Word, to stand firmly by the Word, be the time favorable or unfavorable, to rebuke, reprove, and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. Because false teachers had already arisen, because they were already misleading many Christians, because the Holy Spirit had expressly told him that their pernicious activity would in the very near future spread out more and more, therefore Timothy should not sit back with his hands in his lap, timidly complaining, nor be satisfied merely to proclaim the Word in the steady routine of his daily labors and to lead the Christians. No. *He should reprove, rebuke, and exhort. He should mightily oppose all the evil which was already raising its head and would soon spread itself throughout the Church. He should set himself firmly against it, check it, resist it, and thus do all he can to preserve the Christians from it and save them. All this he should do with the Word of God, the only weapon of his warfare and the only means of salvation.*

And how do matters stand *now*? How do matters stand in these "last days?"⁹

How do matters stand in our time, you servant of the Word? What the apostle predicted as coming soon has now been fulfilled. The Church is to-day flooded with false teachers. Christendom far and wide suffers; it no longer cares for the pure and true doctrine of the Word of God. Those who call themselves Christians make their own lusts and desires their norm and call teachers and preachers, great numbers of them, after their heart; they have ears itching to hear things pleasing their lusts; they turn away their ears from the divine truth and turn to fables and speculations of all kinds, to false doctrines which have sprung from the minds of men. Verily, the Church to a great extent has become a dreary desert. O my God, yes, so it is!

But thank God, in this desert there are still to be found oases where, to a greater or lesser extent, the water of life yet flows and gives life. The Word of God is still preached and heard at these oases in a more or less unadulterated form. Children of God are still being begotten and born here on earth and kept in the true faith unto eternal life. But even in these oases the leaven of false

⁸ **2 Thess. 2, 7.** - For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. (Read vv. 1-12.)

⁹ **2 Tim. 3, 1.** - This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

doctrine and ungodly mind is at work. Even there the devil is busily engaged sowing tares among the wheat, mingling children of iniquity among the children of the kingdom. Aye, these are the last days of sore distress.

But by the grace of God there is now in this world a Church *having the pure Word and Sacraments*, an "orthodox" Church, a Church in which the Word of God is taught in truth and purity and in which the Sacraments are administered according to divine institution, even though this Church is, relatively, a very small body. This Church is manifestly "a pillar and ground of the truth."¹⁰ This Church bases all its teaching solely on the foundation of God's Word, confesses the Word of God, proclaims it, and places it on the candlestick that it might give light to all nations. No false doctrine of any kind is suffered in this Church. The water of life flows in this Church; it does not always flow in a mighty stream, but it does flow pure and clear. To God be honor, praise, and glory!

True, much sin is found also in this Church. But that does not confuse us. It cannot be otherwise; "for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."¹¹ Even the great Apostle Paul bitterly bemoans the fact that sin still cleaves to him.¹² The fact that even gross transgressions of God's Law occur in this Church does not confuse us. Even the great Apostle Peter fell.¹³ The fact

10 1 Tim. 3, 15. - But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the House of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

11 Rom. 3, 23. 24. - For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

12 Rom. 7, 14-25. - For we know that the Law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the Law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the Law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the Law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

13 Matt. 26, 69-75. - Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, "Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee." But he denied before them all, saying, "I know not what thou sayest." And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, "This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the Man. And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, "Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee." Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, "I know not the man." And

footnote 13 continued →

that in this Church there are some who are "weak," weak in Christian faith and knowledge,¹⁴ weak as to Christian conduct,¹⁵ does not confuse us. It was thus even in the Apostolic Church, as is evident from the passages referred to. Those who are "strong" must in charity bear with this condition and endeavor to improve it. It is also certain that there are hypocrites and false brethren in this Church, among the laymen as well as among the servants of the Word. Judas Iscariot was one of the twelve apostles. Several false brethren had come into the first congregation at Jerusalem unawares;¹⁶ and the appearance of the Church of God here on earth is always likened unto a net in which there are good and bad fish.¹⁷ Therefore also this must not make us entertain any doubt as to its being the true visible Church, or when mistakes are made by the leaders of this Church or by the Church itself through its representatives. Nothing else need be expected. In spite of it all Christ is with this Church and so governs all things that they work together for its welfare. With respect to all this a righteous and faithful servant of the Word should firmly and steadfastly preach the Word, reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.

This is necessary in these last days especially with reference to one particular danger.

And what is that? This we will now show and consider in the fear of God.

Even the Church of the unadulterated Word and Sacraments, laymen as well as servants of the Word, is infected with the *spirit of the times*.

In so far as this spirit manifests itself in purely outward, non-essential things, nothing can be said against it. For instance, the fact that many churches now have ushers, who assign seats to the worshipers; that the audience is no

immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the Word of Jesus, which said unto him, "Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly." **Gal. 2, 11-13.** - But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed, for before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

14 Rom. 14.

15 Rom. 15, 1-3. - We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not Himself; but, as it is written, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on Me."

16 Gal. 2, 4. - And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage.

17 Matt. 13, 47-50. - Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind; which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

longer separated according to sex; that we are no longer satisfied with the old-fashioned double school-benches, but use single desks in our schools; in short, that we desire to be up to date in these and many other respects, – who would object to such things?

But, alas! the spirit of the times is not confined to this. It manifests itself in the true visible Church also with respect to other things. And *God will surely pour out over it the vials of His wrath and judgment* unless it calls a halt, shrinks back, amends its ways and repents, purges itself of the spirit of the times, and permits the Holy Spirit to guide it through the Word of God.

And there indeed a faithful servant of the Word should be a herald of God, steadfastly and firmly standing by the Word of God, reproving, rebuking, and exhorting with all long-suffering and doctrine. The *danger* to which he sees his beloved Church exposed, *obedience* to the apostolic word of the Lord, which shows him how he should try to save his Church, and *love*, a burning, fervent love for his Church and the kingdom of Christ here on earth, in short, *the obedience of love*, should move him to do this. – Far be it from a faithful servant of the Word to manifest a spirit of cold, proud, even hateful criticism, accusation, judging, and condemnation. If he were to show such a spirit, he would be altogether unlike his Lord and Master, who also reproved and rebuked whenever it was necessary, but then gave His life for us poor sinners.¹⁸ Far be it also from a faithful servant of the Word to flee from his church because he sees evil and danger there. On the contrary, he should remain and do all in his power to help.¹⁹

What are the signs, the symptoms, which make it evident that also the Church of the unadulterated Word and Sacrament is, to a dangerous degree, infected with the spirit of the times?

First we would point out some general symptoms. – When, as is right and pleasing to God, faithful men of God of the true visible Church insist upon it that the Word of God alone should be the rule and norm in practise as well as in

18 John 15, 13. - Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. **1 John 3, 16.** - Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His Life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

19 Prov. 17, 17. - A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity. **Prov. 18, 1.** - Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom. **Prov. 24, 11. 12.** - If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, "Behold, we knew it not;" doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it? and He that keepeth thy soul, doth not He know it? and shall not He render to every man according to his works? **John 10, 12. 13.** - But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

doctrine,²⁰ we often meet, among lay members as well as among the servants of the Word, with such expressions as these: Oh, they are old fogies; they are men with old and out-of-date ideas; they have not progressed with the times! Such expressions are very dangerous, and their word eats as doth a canker²¹ and causes Christians to depart from the Word of God.

Such expressions, such thoughts lead to *unionism*. What is the true nature of unionism? Indifference toward the Word of God, dissatisfaction with the express instructions of God, the desire to make one's own thoughts the rule and norm of life and doctrine. In His Word God has set certain, definite bounds and limits for church-fellowship. These unionism breaks down. True, even unionists do not want to unite in fellowship with such churches as manifest their false faith in name and confession. But if a church calls itself Evangelical Lutheran, as our Church does, if a Church displays upon its banner a profession of loyalty to God's Word and the Book of Concord of 1580, as our Church does, then many lay members as well as servants of the Word show a desire to unite in fellowship with that Church, *even though that Church deviates from the Word of God and the Book of Concord of 1580*. Do you not see that *this very thing is exceedingly dangerous and deceptive, that it causes indifference to God's Word and dissatisfaction with the express directions of God, that it arouses the desire to make one's own thoughts the rule and norm of life and doctrine?* Would we not in that case let the name and outward appearance count for more than truth and the real substance? Does not Satan himself transform himself into an angel of light?²² And would we have fellowship with *him*? Do not all lies, all that is

20 Ps. 119; see especially v. 9 - Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word. **Luke 6, 46-49.** - And why call ye Me, "Lord, Lord," and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to Me, and heareth My sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.

21 2 Tim. 2, 16. 17. - But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus.

22 2 Cor. 11, 14. - And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

contrary to the Word of God, originate with Satan?²³ Ought we therefore to permit ourselves to be deceived by the name and the outward appearance of a Church? Are we to sit down and labor together with those who call themselves Evangelical Lutheran, just as we do, but who contradict God's Word in many, or even only in one doctrine, and oppose it! Would not *this very thing* give offense? Would it not lead to evil? Would *that* not be a very fine satanic beginning of a unionism gradually developing into one of a most liberal type?

The Church of the true faith often and earnestly testifies against the *antichristian lodge* and shows that a Christian must not join it. Yet many congregations and their servants of the Word admit to membership such as have taken an oath in the antichristian lodge and refuse to sever their connection with it; they admit them to the Lord's Table as long as they confess the Christian faith. What an awful unionism! Such servants of the Word try to excuse this offensive action by saying that they desire to "educate" these erring brethren through the Gospel which is proclaimed in their church in order that they may learn to know the truth and then leave the lodge. But how do matters stand at many places? The lodge-members remain members of the congregation and members of the lodge until their death. Yes, there are congregations in which the lodge is so powerful that the pastor would be deposed from office if he dared to testify against the lodge. And what is the consequence? The Christians are becoming perplexed and confused. More and more frequently we hear such expressions as these: At one place strong opposition is offered to the lodge, at another place the door is opened wide; the opposition to the lodge also belongs to the old-fashioned and obsolete prejudices which will soon be forgotten like so many others.

The *parochial school*, the Christian day-school, is by far the most effective means to give our children a Christian education and training. The secular state cannot, dare not, have and support Christian schools. Yet many parents and even pastors seem to be satisfied with the inadequate Sunday-school, aye,

23 Gen. 3, 1-5. - Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" And the woman said unto the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, 'Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.'" And the serpent said unto the woman, "Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. **John 8, 44.** - Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. **1 Kings 22, 21. 22.** - And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him. And the LORD said unto him, "Wherewith?" And he said, "I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets." And He said, "Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so."

even speak against the parochial school. Day after day the children are sent to the irreligious and even antichristian schools of the state. How little does the generation now growing up know of God's Word! But, thank God! strenuous efforts are now again being made at many places to keep and elevate the Christian parochial school.

Daily family devotion as well as the *reading of the Bible* by the individual is becoming rare in many places.

Many, many of our Christians no longer *attend divine services regularly and diligently*. Many, many of our pastors are not without fault because of their *mechanical preaching*.

Oh, how can everything that accuses us before God be even enumerated?! *Indifference* and *worldliness*²⁴ are spreading and rapidly gaining ground. That is the "bitter root" of all the evil in the Church.²⁵

Let us now sum up all that has been said: *We frequently DO not according to the teachings of the Word of God and the Church of the true faith, of which we are members; in theory we are fine, but our PRACTISE does not conform to it; and we PERMIT AND SUFFER such ungodly practise; we act contrary to the earnest admonition of the Lord to hear His Word and DO it.*²⁶

24 **Rev. 3, 16.** - So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth. **1 John 2, 15-17.** - Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

25 **Deut. 29, 18.** - Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the LORD our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood. **Heb. 12, 15.** - Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.

26 Read **Matt. 7, 21-27.** - Not every one that saith unto Me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that Day, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy Name? and in Thy Name have cast out devils? and in Thy Name done many wonderful works?" And then will I profess unto them, "I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. (Also **Jas. 1, 22-25.** - But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect Law of Liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.)

However, many who see all this and bemoan it think that it is nothing but "weakness" and must be "borne." But what is "weakness" according to Scriptures, and what does "bearing" mean? Read the 14th chapter of Romans. There you will find that "weakness" is the overly tender and overly timid conscience of many sincere, but weak Christians who believe that they dare not do this or that, although it is not forbidden by God, or that they must do this or that, although God has not commanded it. There you will also find what "bearing" means, namely, that strong Christians should charitably consider those who are weak and not judge and condemn them; that they should not "offend" them by their inconsiderate use of things which are neither commanded nor forbidden and by their example cause them to do likewise, but "with offense," "doubting," thinking that thereby they are committing sin. Then read the first three verses of the 15th chapter of Romans. There you read: "We, then, that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves." By speaking of "the infirmities of the weak" the apostle means to say that such Christians have not yet achieved the spiritual maturity and strength to overcome all temptation, but are "overtaken in a fault."²⁷ With such weak brethren we should "bear"; we are not self-complacently to despise them and consider them unchristians, but restore them in the spirit of meekness, considering ourselves lest we also be tempted.²⁷

But as to the evil which raises its head in the Church of the true faith and which we have described in the foregoing, dare we simply call that "weakness" which must be "borne" and therefore allay our fears? Surely not! Would it be right for us to believe the question therewith properly to be disposed of, even though our *practise* contradicts our *doctrine*? Surely not! If we thought and acted thus, we would only expose ourselves to well-merited scorn and derision. Thus a false Lutheran, a pastor, some time ago derisively said to one of our pastors: "You accept lodge-members *under* protest, I accept them *without* protest." No, no; those are destructive evils, springing forth from the spirit of the times, and they must be withstood most earnestly with the Word of God. If all those evils are continually "borne" as "weakness," God will finally pour out the vials of His wrath upon us, withdraw His grace from us, and give us over to a reprobate mind.²⁸ And finally we shall come to the point

27 Gal. 6, 1. - Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

28 Ezek. 22, 30. 31. - And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none. Therefore have I poured out Mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord GOD. **Ezek. 13, 5** - Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the House of Israel to stand in the battle in the Day of the LORD.

to which Christendom in general has come: that we, too, cannot endure sound doctrine, but after our own lusts will heap to ourselves teachers and turn away our itching ears from the truth and unto fables. Through fault of the Christians the Church of the true faith has always *soon* reached that point. Luther saw it coming and declared that the Word of God is like a passing shower, remaining at no place longer than fifty years. Soon after the death of Luther this very thing came to pass through fault of the Christians. And soon we, too, shall reach that point unless we heed the words of Christ: "*Remember from whence thou art fallen and REPENT and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou REPENT.*"²⁹

Oh! we love to bask in the light of the true doctrine given us; we love to pride ourselves with this most precious of all treasures and do not consider the responsibility of him who has this treasure nor the fact that much is required of him who has the pure doctrine.³⁰

O servant of the Word, make up the hedge for the Church of God, go up into the gaps, stand in the battle in the day of the Lord!³¹ Raise your voice, call to repentance, be a herald of Christ, take a firm stand by the Word in these last days of sore distress; reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine! Set yourself firmly against the evil which is raising its head, resist it, arrest its progress, turn your Church from the road to ruin, save your Church! The Holy Ghost, through the apostle, who wrote these words when he was nearing the end of his pilgrimage, solemnly and earnestly charges you to do this.

29 Rev. 2, 5. - Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

30 Luke 12, 48. - But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

31 Ezek. 13, 5 - Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the House of Israel to stand in the battle in the Day of the LORD. **Ezek. 22, 30.** - And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.

VII.

The apostle furthermore says: "*But watch thou in all things.*"

Servant of the Word, watch "in all things," in every respect, at every side! Do not become intoxicated with the poisonous, stupefying spirit of the times. Let the *Word of God alone* guide and rule you; and think and mean only *that*. Do not become disconcerted because of the evil which you see in your church-body; do not become discouraged, do not despair, but be courageous. Know that you have the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, that spiritual weapon which is mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God.¹ Draw this sword out of its sheath, brandish it high, and with it smite all evil. *All evil!* Be watchful and sober; in the light of God's Word and with the aid of the Holy Spirit carefully examine *what* is really evil and *how* to smite it; strike and hit *that* and *in the manner shown you in the Word of God*. Do not in sheer desperation, wildly and foolishly, strike at everything and anything; do not beat the air.² Thereby you would only expose yourself to justifiable scorn and derision, but in no way benefit your church. Let the Word of God and His Spirit teach you not to call something sin, not to strike at something as sin, which is not really and truly contrary to the Word of God. If you are not sober and careful in this respect, if you reprove something as sin which really is no sin, you will only harm the cause of Christ and His Church. How? As soon as your error becomes evident, – and it will and *should* become evident, for only the Word of God may obtain, – inexperienced and weak Christians will be offended and will not believe you even when you reprove actual sin. They will say: Ha! he called that a sin even though it was not sin; in this case it will be the same. – Watch thou in all things!

"Endure afflictions!"

As a faithful servant of the Word be ready and willing to endure all afflictions which come over you because of your loud proclamation of the Word of God, your steadfast standing by the Word, your unswerving reproofing, rebuking, and exhorting with all long-suffering and doctrine. You will be hated by those who already resolutely have chosen the way of error and *want* to go that way. In

1 **Eph. 6, 17.** - And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. **2 Cor. 10, 4. 5.** - For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

2 **1 Cor. 9, 26.** - I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air.

every possible way they will endeavor to silence you and get you out of the way. And those who close their eyes against the evils and dangers threatening the Church or refuse to regard them as serious; those who think that nothing can be done since it was so always and would therefore continue in the same quiet routine and avoid all trouble, – such people will look upon you with disfavor, call you eccentric, wag their heads over you, endeavor to undermine your reputation, and render you and your testimony "harmless." Endure all this patiently and gladly. Yes, gladly; for if you watch in all things and reprove, rebuke, and exhort only where, according to the Word of God, there really is something to reprove, rebuke, and exhort, then it is the *Word*, the Word of God, which endures these afflictions, and as a servant of the Word you stand by the Word and endure with the Word. Rejoice because of it! Woe unto you if every one speaks well of you! That is what the apostate Christians do of those who preach to them according to their lusts and desires.³ The righteous, whose one and all is the Word of God, will compass you about and stand by you.⁴

And the apostle says: "*Do the work of an evangelist.*"

What is the work of an evangelist? What does God demand of an evangelist? He is to *teach* and *resist*. That this is his duty has clearly been shown in the foregoing. You servant of the Word, you preacher of the Gospel, should be a herald of God and proclaim His Gospel. That is the *teaching* demanded of you. And you should reprove, rebuke, and exhort. That is the *resisting* you are to do. The Apostle Paul, this great preacher of the Gospel, not only taught, he also resisted.⁵ A shepherd not only tends his flock, but also offers resistance to the wolf. In the days of the prophet Isaiah God complained that the spiritual watchmen were blind; "they are all ignorant,

3 **Luke 6, 26.** - Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.
Matt. 5, 11. 12. - Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

4 **Ps. 142, 7.** - Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Thy Name: the righteous shall compass me about; for Thou shalt deal bountifully with me.

5 **Gal. 1, 6-9.** - I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel; which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. **Gal. 3, 1.** - O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the Truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? **Gal. 4, 19. 20.** - My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you. **Gal. 6, 7. 8.** - Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting (and many other passages).

they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark."⁶ Would you have Him say that of You? Do the work of an evangelist: teach and resist!

Summing up his whole admonition in one word, the apostle says in conclusion: "*Make full proof of thy ministry!*"

In Chapter I we showed what the office of a servant of the Word, the ministry, your ministry, is. Your ministry *is the office which was conferred upon you by a Christian congregation or by a number of Christian congregations imposing the obligation upon you publicly to proclaim the Word of God in the name and stead of the congregation and firmly to uphold it in all its parts,*⁷ *so that not a word of it may fall, no wind of false doctrine may sway it, and no false teachers may mar it with additions or false interpretations; that it may not be neglected through unfaithfulness, not left unguarded through blindness and indifference, but be preserved to the Christians in all its divine power and beauty, in all its glory and greatness.* That is your duty, your ministry. And in this your office, your ministry, you *are a minister of Christ and a steward of the mysteries of God.*⁸

Now be faithful!⁹ Make full proof of thy ministry. Do your duty continually, gladly, courageously, to the fullest extent. Daily call upon God and ask Him to give you the necessary ability.¹⁰ God will most certainly do it.¹¹

What does the apostle say to you? "*I charge thee, therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.*"

6 Isa. 56, 10. - His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.

7 1 Tim. 3, 15. - But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the House of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the Truth.

8 1 Cor. 4, 1. - Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

9 1 Cor. 4, 2. - Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

10 2 Cor. 3, 5. - Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.

11 Jas. 1, 5. - If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

Lord Jesus Christ, with us abide,
For round us falls the eventide;
Let not Thy Word, that heav'nly light,
For us be ever veiled in night.

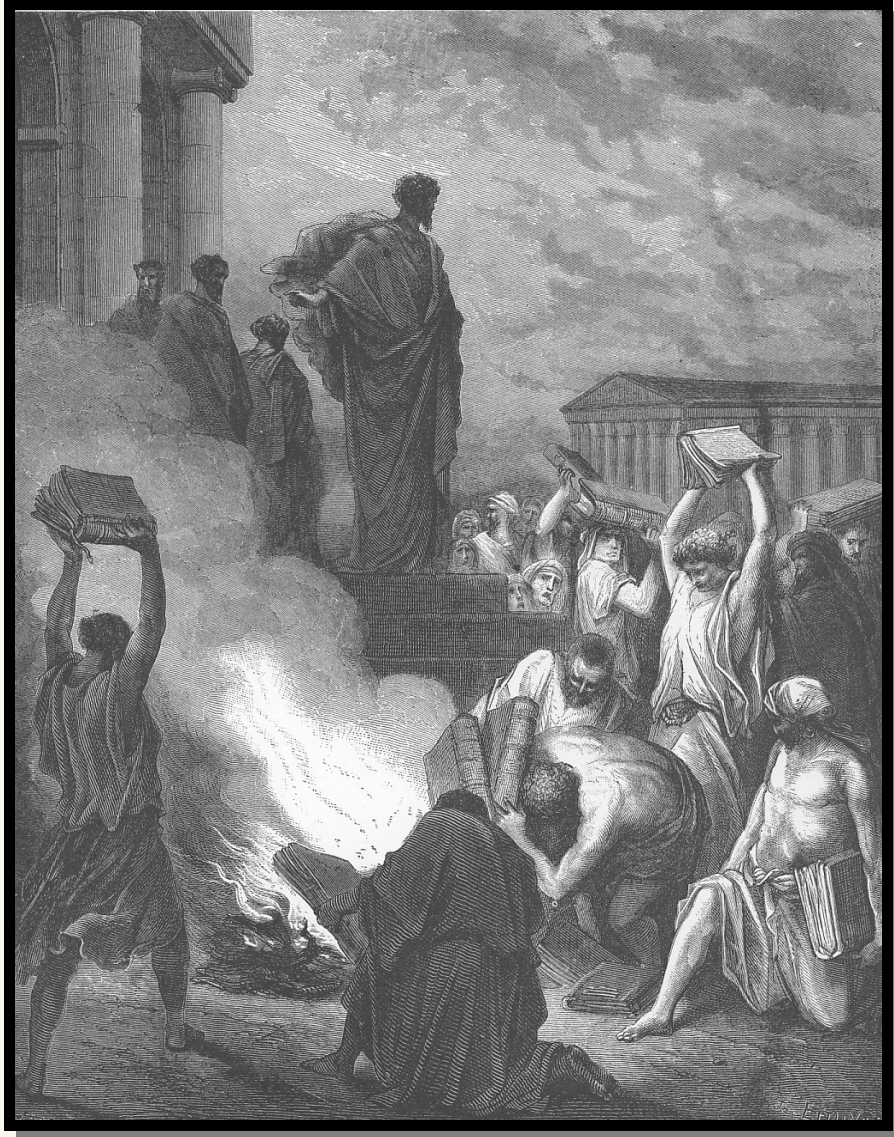
In these last days of sore distress
Grant us, dear Lord, true steadfastness,
That pure we keep, till life is spent,
Thy holy Word and Sacrament.

Lord Jesus, help, Thy Church uphold,
For we are sluggish, thoughtless, cold;
Indue Thy Word with power and grace
And spread its truth in every place.

With pastors Thou do us endow,
Who show aright Thy Word's pure light;
Who faithfully would lead to Thee
Whom Thou hast giv'n Thy love from heav'n.
Thy Spirit's power, at every hour,
From error's sin may keep them clean!

"Let thy work appear unto Thy servants and Thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord, our God, be upon us; and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands, establish Thou it."¹² Amen.

12 Ps. 90, 16. 17. - Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants, and Thy glory unto their children and let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it.



Paul at Ephesus
by Gustave Doré
(from *The Doré Bible Gallery* ~ 1896)

