

The Gospel Herald

“As the truth is in Jesus” (Ephesians 4:21)

For The LORD’S PILGRIMS, STRANGERS & SOJOURNERS

by

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“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another”

John 13:35

*I have pondered of late how the natural man is without question absent of the ability to love others as himself. Man, in his depraved alien state as a once born creature has no desire to honestly love another as himself. He is bent to love himself foremost and his best interest in all things. **LOVE** is a word that has been wickedly misused by the mindset of the worldling. It is used to describe a sensual and romantic feeling among a man and a woman (as well as between two of the same sex sadly to report). Only when a man or woman becomes **twice born** can the creature truly know what divine love really is.*

*For **only** a born-again heir of grace can have the genuine fruit(s) of the Spirit. **Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance (Gala. 5:22)**. These characteristics accompany, and evidence God wrought salvation in the new born believer in Christ Jesus.*

*I am persuaded that **all** God’s elect children will manifest these attributes in the pilgrim walk in this time world. Not merely a few of the fruit, but **ALL** of the fruit of the Spirit shall be worked in us by the operation of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Not that all the fullness of each attribute shall be manifest, but that from the work of Christ progressively **conforming** us into his own image, we shall experientially be **growing** in the grace and knowledge of our beloved Saviour, and the believer shall (not try to) bear fruits of righteousness which are **by** Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:11).*

*Let me interject this comment; what I have previously stated is the work of grace in the believer apart from that which has been **imputed** unto us through Christ’s righteous, sanctifying and redemptive work as set forth in I Corin. 1:30. I want to clarify that the fruit of the Spirit is the **evidence** of the heir of grace and not a work nor duty performed by the creature to merit God’s favor or blessing.*

What wearies me is among those that give a profession of faith and a belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, will in many cases turn away from a brother for some petty excuse, rather

that attempting to clarify an issue of misunderstanding or whatever the issue, they express a short tempered, intolerant, hardheaded, and uncompassionate attitude.

This behavior among God's children ought not be. For what man has been given ALL illumination and understanding of the Holy Writ that he can take such a hard stand on certain issues? and cause division and harm to one of God's children. I must confess, there are certain situations of immorality, works of the flesh and unsound doctrine that shall be handled by the Church in a scriptural fashion after our Lord's example, but **only** to gain the brother or sister into sweet harmony and fellowship as discipline would be used to turn the erring one.

One must ask themselves if a thought was to come into mind, "Do I **love** this brother? and if you consider one as a brother **you must be loving, kind, and gentle** with meekness. Do you dear brethren have a choice? For to react toward a brother in any other fashion would appear to not be of Christ. Is the handshake and embrace of another a mere tradition? Or does it truly mean something to you in the common bond of the Spirit?

I would hope that when a brother greets me with a handshake and an embrace that it is because of the bond we have been blessed to have in Jesus Christ and not because it has always been just a tradition.

Christ has set the standard: "This is my commandment, that ye LOVE one another, as I have LOVED you" (John 15:12).

Our LOVE is to be sincere: "Let LOVE be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Rom. 12:9).

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:9).

Our LOVE is to be abounding and increasing: "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in LOVE one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you" (I Thess. 3:12).

Our LOVE is to be fervent: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned LOVE of the brethren, see that ye LOVE one another with a pure heart fervently" (I Peter 1:22).

I am persuaded, dear brethren, this LOVE is that which accompanies salvation to EVERYONE that believeth. May it be observed in us as we walk along the pilgrim way down here below in this world of sin and woe.

Humbly submitted, March 2, 2007