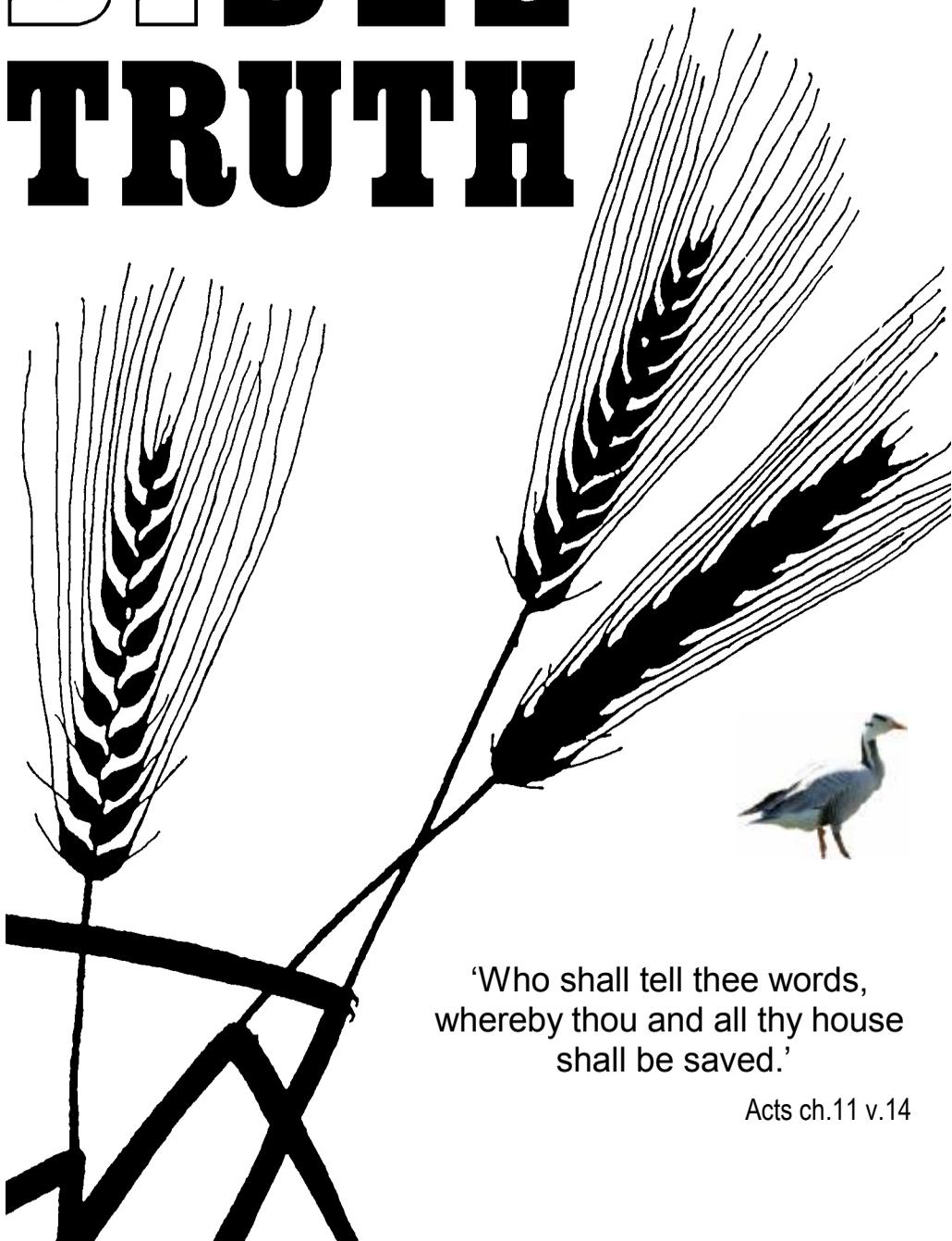


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'Who shall tell thee words,
whereby thou and all thy house
shall be saved.'

Acts ch.11 v.14

Crucified with Christ - by R. Johnson

[Please note that square brackets in quoted matter enclose author's notes]

The wayside pulpit said:

Beware of half truths.

You may have the wrong half!

How can anyone know what is truth unless they have the Holy Spirit to guide them (John ch.16 v.13). It was well said in the 20th century of present day Christian teaching that being so diluted if it were poison it would never kill anyone, or if it were medicine it would never cure anyone!

The apostles were not proclaiming sinless perfection, for they make it clear our sinful old nature remains with us unto death, but rather it can be overcome and held under (Romans ch. 8 vv.1-4 & 1 Corinthians ch.9 v.27). For most folk it is the same old problem that has troubled Israel throughout. Israel were brought out of Egypt in three days, but it took forty years to get Egypt out of Israel and how few that came out of Egypt entered the Promised Land? The Lord God is still working among the few. He did not say, 'if any nation will'

or 'if any great assembly will', what He said was, 'If any man will' (see Matthew ch.16 v.24). He is concerned about having a body of people, who will be capable enough to rule with Him in the Age to come; those who are men after His own heart, tried and tested through this valley of sorrow and suffering, all individually taught by God.

The Lord Jesus, in the days of His flesh, spent a good deal of His time teaching His disciples to see more than just the spoken or written word, in order that they might see the hidden meaning in 'beware of the leaven of the Pharisees' (see Matthew ch.16 v.6), and understand the parables. When the Lord Jesus said 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up' (John ch.2 v.19), who could possibly know to what He was referring? Only Spirit anointed disciples had any chance of knowing and so it remained hidden until after His resurrection, but a lesson had been taught. Thus behind the face value of the Scriptures there is an understanding so that in this age, many things are revealed only to the faithful few who are willing to search out the Lord God's plan and purpose in their lives.

Crucified with Christ were two thieves, one on the right hand and one on the left. These no doubt typify the natural man and the carnal mind, both of which represent the two powers in man that can prevent him from attaining unto aeonian life (Galatians ch.6 v.8). '... the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: ...' (1 Corinthians ch.2 v.14). '... the carnal mind ... is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be ...' (Romans ch.8 v.7). '... they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts' (Galatians ch.5 v.24). Recorded in the book of Colossians are two lists of deeds performed by the flesh and mind of man.

'Mortify [deadens, deprive of power] therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry [the deifying of self and other created things instead of God]: For which things' [sins] sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience [those who are obstinately opposed to the divine will]: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them [such practices]. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old [unregenerate] man with his deeds; And have put on the new [spirit led] man, which is renewed in [fuller and more perfect] knowledge after the image [likeness] of him that created him.'

Colossians ch.3 vv.5-10

Those who have progressed this far on the pathway of life can say that they are 'crucified with Christ', but this is only the outward element; the human nature, equivalent to the two thieves. Therefore, being born again, there remains the new man, the new nature, who has to learn obedience in the same way as the only begotten Son, the man Christ Jesus, learnt obedience by the things that he suffered (Hebrews ch.5 v.8). A similar situation to when Abraham took Isaac, his only son, the son of promise and offered him (in type) to God (Genesis ch.22 v.12).

'... Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. ... By the which will we are sanctified ...'
Hebrews ch.10 vv.7 & 10

We have to be identified with Christ by taking up the cross. Not the literal cross on which He expired, but the equivalent to the cross He bore daily throughout His lifetime on earth.

'... If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.'
Matthew ch.16 v.24

This is the subduing of the 'new man' to the will and purpose of God. Not just a life delivered from the powers of the flesh, but a life set apart, not under the control of any church or denomination to do their bidding, but set apart to seek and do that which the Heavenly Father requires to be done. Only a life void of all self aspirations or desires and having no ulterior motive can answer this calling, the priority, the Will of God, which requires the cessation of the self life.

'... Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.'
John ch.12 v.24

By their fruits ye shall know them, for the fruits are a uniting power, creating the unity and oneness of all who have died to self. The Lord Jesus prayed, 'That they all may be one; ...' (John ch.17 vv.21, 11 & 22-23). This uniting or oneness can only come into being among those believers who have ceased to operate in the selfish, individual way of life. Those, whose hearts are set to do the Father's will whatever that requires them to do regardless of the consequences; influenced by no other power than that of the Holy Spirit.

What a great contrast this is to the divisions that pervade many churches, sects, and schisms that make up '... Mystery, Babylon the Great, ...' and her daughters today (Revelation ch.17 v.5). Many have set up their tenets of belief, which others have to assent to if

they wish to have fellowship with them; these are often no more than '... broken cisterns, that can hold no water' (Jeremiah ch.2 v.13). For they not only show the limits of their belief, but also the errors and too often the unscriptural traditions of their fathers 'Making the word of God of non effect ...' (Mark ch.7 v.13). All this type of conduct is exhibited among those who are carnal, '... as unto babes in Christ' (1 Corinthians ch.3 vv.1-3). Chapter and verse are needed to confirm every tenet that is held, '... in the mouth of two or three witnesses ...' (Matthew ch.18 v.16), thus it is essential in most cases to have more than just one scripture to confirm a belief. But the Word of God is limitless, knows no bounds and cannot be encompassed in the restricted abilities of finite human imagination and understanding.

The one true Church is not divided, doctrines and teachings are a uniting force, binding not only every member together but each member into a stronger bond with their Lord and Saviour. In the Lord Jesus Christ, divinity and humanity became fused together. In the Ecclesia with Christ as the head the body of believers become as one. The Lord Jesus said, '... by their fruits ye shall know them' (Matthew ch.7 v.20).

'... the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: ...'
Galatians ch.5 vv.22-23

It is good to converse with those who manifest these precious things which are a slight foretaste of the Kingdom of Heaven. How blessed by far it is to be seeking God's will and desire, doing it knowing the position that has been appointed for you is God ordained, the perfect place and desire of God for you. All the ways and devices of this world will have ceased, just perfect peace and contentment reigning supremely over all. The choice is being made now, but only one form of conduct will operate in the Kingdom of Heaven, we need to be clothed aright to be at the wedding feast (Matthew ch.22 vv.11-13).

'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.'

Matthew ch.7 v.21

What a contrast to the world's way of trying to do this or that, or of being something great in this age.

John the Baptist was in the wilderness till the day of his showing when the Word of God came to him (Luke ch.3 v.2). Elijah said,

‘... let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.’

1 Kings ch.18 v.36

Note the contrast between the two anointed kings of Israel. King Saul did all things from the power of his own strength and will. If he saw any valiant or strong man, he chose him for his army (see 1 Samuel ch.14 v.52). On the other hand King David continually sought the will and the instructions of the Lord (see 1 Samuel ch.23 vv.1-12).

The will of God is to have souls in this day who will closely represent Christ, void of the natural traits that spoil the character which the Lord God wants to bring into being. In the new man, all things have become new, nothing of the old will do. What a great refining needs to be accomplished in every repentant and submissive soul.

The Lord Jesus has forgiven, redeemed and bought us, paying the full price required for the covering of all our sins, loved us, drawn and brought us under the covering of His precious blood, a blessed place, where no adversary nor accuser can hurt or harm us in any way. We are under His protection and security, having been given a totally clean sheet of conduct, for all our sins and transgressions have been forgiven. ‘... Salvation is of the Lord’ (Jonah ch.2 v.9). When we come to the Lord in the first place we are brought under the panoply of mercy and grace and all is accomplished for us by the Lord. But some step out from under this protection by saying, I will do this, or I will be careful to do that, when we are warned to ‘... have no confidence in the flesh’ (Philippians ch.3 v.3), for of ourselves we can do nothing (see John ch.15 v.5). What is of the flesh is flesh and ‘... the flesh profiteth nothing:...’ (John ch.6 v.63). When people say, ‘we will do, or we will not do’, they come out from the protection of unconditional safety and peace, back into a conditional position of having to fulfil their promises. Even when singing hymns watch the words you sing, do not make yourself vulnerable to the adversary, for when the storm breaks the only things that are secure are the promises of God (see Hebrews ch.12 vv.26-28).

The Lord said,

‘... having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled’.

2 Corinthians ch.10 v.6

'By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.'

Hebrews ch.11 v.7.

'Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.'

Genesis ch.6 v.22

Without faith it is impossible to please God (see Hebrews ch.11 v.6), all we have to do now is prepare our lives by prayer and study to do the will of God. That we may work the works of faith and obtain and maintain the righteousness which is of faith '... for whatsoever is not of faith is sin' (Romans ch.14 v.23).

This word is to the few who enter the strait gate and walk the narrow way (see Matthew ch.7 vv.13-14). The little flock who are given the Kingdom, and will reign in the Age with the King of kings, the Lord Jesus (Luke ch.12 v.32). There is a difference then between a sinner saved by grace and an overcomer given to reign with the King of kings. This standard has been set so that His disciples may be true witnesses for Him, displaying to the world the life of Christ in man; those who are the cross bearing, footstep followers of Jesus their Lord.

Of course this is just referring to those believers who will attain unto the marriage supper of the Lamb and reign with Him for that thousand years. During which time the Israel nations, the Anglo-Saxon/Celtic, people of the world, will be drawn into the Kingdom of God. This means that when the Lord Jesus Christ returns and sits on the throne of His glory, He will as rightful heir take over the throne of Israel also, which is at the present time under the sovereignty of the descendants of king David (Jeremiah ch.33 v.17). The nations of Israel will then be ruled over by the twelve apostles (Matthew ch.19 v.28), until they enter the Kingdom of God in the only way possible for anyone to enter it (John ch.3 v.5). When that is accomplished the Lord God will tabernacle once more among His people (Revelation ch.21 v.3), and the whole of creation will be brought under His control. The scripture must be fulfilled which says, 'For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive' (1 Corinthians ch.15 v.22). But this is another wonderful part of that glorious treasure store found in the precious Holy Scriptures (Psalm 138 v.2).