

Chapel Flock



# ~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

"come just as you are"

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing

[www.chapel-flock.com](http://www.chapel-flock.com)



Vol. 41 Issue 790

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## Worship Music

[Mary Did You Know-Katinas](#)

[There You Are-Katinas](#)

[When It Rains-Katinas](#)

## Prayer

Lord, I am so thankful for Your love that never fails me and never deserts me. I am filled with gratitude that nothing in this world has the power to disconnect me from Your awesome, powerful, life-changing love. In moments when I feel overwhelmed by circumstances or problems, I ask that You give me a special awareness of Your unfailing love in my life. Lead me and guide me with God's will for me and plans. I ask it in Jesus' name. Amen....

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

## Video's / New Information/ Prayer Requests

Matthew 24:36 (AMP)

36 But of that [exact] day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

["The Cross"](#)

Billy Graham

[" The Cure "](#)

Pastor Chuck Smith

## Radio Stations

[KWVE ...Calvary Chapel](#)

[KLOVE](#)

## Bible Study Sites

[Chuck Smith Through The Bible](#)

[Bob Coy/Teachings](#)

[Mike MacIntosh](#)

[Jon Courson](#)

[Biblos.com](#)

[Billy Graham](#)

[Charles Stanley](#)

[David Wilkerson](#)

[Greg Laurie](#)

[Virtue for Women-Cathe Laurie](#)

Chapel Flock.....text a prayer..... request telephone number.....

(316) 247-3623

Or----

If you have a prayer request...please e-mail it to us so we can pray for you...or a person.....

[chapel-flock@sbcglobal.net](mailto:chapel-flock@sbcglobal.net)

1 REJOICE IN the Lord, O you [uncompromisingly] righteous [you upright in right standing with God]; for praise is becoming and appropriate for those who are upright [in heart]. 2 Give thanks to the Lord with the lyre; sing praises to Him with the harp of ten strings. 3 Sing to Him a new song; play skillfully [on the strings] with a loud and joyful sound. 4 For the word of the Lord is right; and all His work is done in faithfulness. 5 He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the loving-kindness of the Lord. 6 By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all their host by the breath of His mouth. 7 He gathers the waters of the sea as in a bottle; He puts the deeps in storage places. 8 Let all the earth fear the Lord [revere and worship Him]; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. 9 For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. 10 The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nought; He makes the thoughts and plans of the peoples of no effect. 11 The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the thoughts of His heart through all generations. 12 Blessed (happy, fortunate, to be envied) is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people He has chosen as His heritage. 13 The Lord looks from heaven, He beholds all the sons of men; 14 From His dwelling place He looks [intently] upon all the inhabitants of the earth— 15 He Who fashions the hearts of them all, Who considers all their doings. 16 No king is saved by the great size and power of his army; a mighty man is not delivered by [his] much strength. 17 A horse is devoid of value for victory; neither does he deliver any by his great power. 18 Behold, the Lord's eye is upon those who fear Him [who revere and worship Him with awe], who wait for Him and hope in His mercy and loving-kindness, 19 To deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine. 20 Our inner selves wait [earnestly] for the Lord; He is our Help and our Shield. 21 For in Him does our heart rejoice, because we have trusted (relied on and been confident) in His holy name. 22 Let Your mercy and loving-kindness, O Lord, be upon us, in proportion to our waiting and hoping for You.

### Psalm 33

Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely [or beautiful] for the upright (Psa 33:1).

Now, this is something that you might not be able to do as you read it.

Praise the LORD with a harp: sing unto him with a psaltery (Psa 33:2)

Another instrument in those days.

and an instrument of ten strings (Psa 33:2).

Actually, David was quite a musician. These were all written to be sung. And he invented many instruments. David was actually an inventor of instruments. And so he had some instruments that he had made with strings, and he was a skillful player on the harp himself, and he was called the beautiful psalmist of Israel.

Sing unto him a new song; and play skillfully with a loud noise (Psa 33:3).

And that is the motto of our Maranatha groups.

For the word of the LORD is right; and all of his works are done in truth. He loves righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD (Psa 33:4-5).

If you will look around you can find the goodness of God that has been extended to us in so many ways.

Now he speaks of the power of God's word.

By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all of the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathered the waters of the sea together as a heap: he laid up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth reverence the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast (Psa 33:6-9).

I was up at the conference center last weekend with a lot of the fellows, and we had just a beautiful night up there. And after the service I took a walk out through the woods, just the Lord and I. I could see the Pleiades, because it was getting close to midnight and the winter constellations are starting now. If you wait until after midnight you can see the Pleiades, and Taurus and Orion, and of course, right above head was Corona. And I was looking up, and of course, you can still see up there the Milky Way. And looking up into the skies I thought of this verse, "For the word of the Lord is right. His works are done in truth, and by the word of the Lord were the heavens made." Created by His word. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God said, "Let there be light holders, the stars, the sun," and it was so. And I got to thinking of the power of God's word. "He spake and it was done." And then he said, "Let the earth stand in awe of Him." And I will tell you, when you look at those skies up there, you stand in awe of God. Oh, how great is the power of His word.

The LORD brings the counsel of the heathen to nothing: he makes the devices of the people of none effect. For the counsel of the LORD stands for ever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is Jehovah; and the people whom he hath chosen as his own inheritance (Psa 33:10-12).

Oh, how blessed is that nation who will honor God and who will serve God, and who will put God at the heart of their national life. Blessed, happy is the nation whose God is Jehovah. Not whose God is materialism, but whose God is Jehovah. And you look at the nations that have honored God, and put God at the heart of the nations, and you'll see nations that have been blessed. I think of our forefathers and the founding of our nation, and I would recommend to you the book, "The Light and the Glory," which brings out some

interesting facets of the history of the United States that you don't find in your usual textbooks. Gives you a little insight on the spiritual foundations of our nation. Putting on the coinage, "In God We Trust." Placing within the Pledge of Allegiance, "One nation, under God." Oh blessed, happy is the nation whose God is Jehovah.

"And those people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance," that is you. You are God's inheritance. Oh, that you might know what is the hope of His calling and the riches of His inheritance in the saints.

The LORD looks from heaven; and behold all the sons of men (Psa 33:13).

Now, God is watching you. That can be very comforting; it also can be very terrifying. It all depends on what you are doing. "The Lord looks from heaven; He beholds the sons of men."

From the place of his habitation he looks upon all of the inhabitants of earth. He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considers all their work. There is no king that is saved by the multitude of a host: a mighty man is not delivered by his great strength. A horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength. Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon those that reverence him, upon those that hope in his mercy; To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. Our soul waits for the LORD: he is our help and our shield. For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name. Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee (Psa 33:14-22). (Through The Bible c 2000 Series; Chuck Smith; Bible commentaries,1979-1986)

"A Candlestick All of Gold"; by T. Austin-Sparks

First published in "A Witness and A Testimony" magazines, 1949-1950

Chapter 1 - Its Function; Chapter 2 - Its Character and Form; Chapter 3 - Its Testimony; Chapter 4 - The Church as the Vessel of the Testimony; Chapter 5 - The Cross in Relation to the Testimony

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Its Testimony; Reading: Exo 25:31-40; Zec 4:1-7.

Let us here say a word quite briefly as to the two places in which this candlestick is presented. In Exodus we have the beginning of things; the Lord is setting up His testimony originally, bringing it in for the first time. In Zechariah, as in all prophetic ministry, it is a matter of recovery, the testimony having been more or less lost. The candlestick of gold is God's original and full thought, to be recovered when that fulness of His mind has suffered loss in the midst of His people and in the midst of the nations. I just mention that, because the Lord is always reacting to what is original and basic, always seeking to recover, never content to move on with anything less than that original revealed mind of His. It is in connection with that thought of recovery that we have felt through the years that the Lord laid His hand upon us and brought us into being as a ministry and as a part of a vessel - to seek to show again in a practical way what His mind is as to testimony in the earth; and right back there, at the very beginning, it was this "candlestick all of gold" which the Lord made basic to this ministry.

The Testimony - The Fullness of Christ; In our previous meditation, we were speaking about the form of this candlestick, and there are some other things which have to be said about that. Those who have been with us through the years, will recognise these things as having been brought at different stages particularly to our view. I think there are three phases represented by three lines of consideration of this candlestick. So far as spiritual history is concerned, what was third for us has come to be seen as first with the Lord. The Lord did not begin with us at His own beginning, but He led us to His beginning. We came eventually along two distinct lines, by two distinct phases, to that beginning. I will not mention the other two just now, but speak briefly concerning the primary and all-governing aspect of the testimony of our Lord Jesus - the fulness of Christ.

What Christ Is; (a) All of God; In an earlier meditation we said that the fact that the candlestick was all of gold means that it represents something that is all of God; and in contemplating this candlestick as Christ, the very first thing that we have to be impressed with is how utterly of God He was and is; all of God - fulness, the fulness of God. There are two primary numbers in this candlestick, and they are three and seven, the numbers of Divine fulness and of spiritual fulness respectively. There are three branches on either side of the stem and with the stem they make seven. There is the fulness of God and the fulness of what is spiritual. That is a key to the life of our Lord Jesus. He was here in the days of His flesh amongst men as the candlestick of God, revealing as by a living flame what it means to be all of God. You know that in the description of the candlestick it was to be in its own light, that the light was to shine upon itself - "to give light over against it" (Exo 25:37); upon other things, yes, but upon itself. It was to stand in its own light and its light was to pour down upon itself; and the Lord Jesus was found from time to time saying things which corresponded to that. The testimony could be seen as in Himself, the testimony bore witness of Him. He could consistently walk in the light of God; where He was concerned there was nothing whatever to cover from the Divine light. The testimony was true in Him, because in Him all was of God, as could be seen in countless details. You have to study very closely His inward and His outward life to see how it was all of God, how He was constantly putting back everything else that might be of Himself or for Himself, everything that might come from any other source, that might minister to any other object. It was all of God, through and through.

What is the testimony of Jesus? Oh, again let us rid ourselves of all false ideas that it is some particular system of teaching. No, the testimony of Jesus which is to be here, which God would have in His house, in the midst of His people, in the midst of the nations by reason of His people - in the very first place it is that here is something which is delivered entirely and utterly from everything of consideration and interest and object and ambition but God Himself. No one must ever rightly and truly be able to account for anything on the ground of man, or any ground whatsoever, save God. It has to be said, 'This is of God; this is all of God; this is the Lord.' As we were saying earlier, the fire produces this gold. Oh, what a work that fire accomplishes to get rid of the alloy, the mixture, the dross, so that at last it can be said, 'This is all of God, there is nothing of man in this, nothing can account for this but the Lord'. I am quite sure that in the light of a statement like that you can see the meaning of the ways of God. What is He doing? He is seeking to produce a testimony in which the strength, the wisdom, the very endurance, the very ability to go on at all, is of God and not of man. All of God - yes, the fulness of Christ is that. Oh, our ideas about the fulness of Christ! 'Oh, for the fulness of Christ!' we cry. It cannot possibly be until there is an utter emptiness. If He is to fill all things, everything else has to go out. It will not be "all things", and it will not be "all and in all" if there is something else. The fulness of Christ demands a full place. But the point is this - the fulness of Christ is something which is to be entered into, to be experienced. What fulness! 'I have seen the face of Jesus, tell me not of aught beside' - do you mean that? Sentiments, hymns, poems! Are you quite sure they are true? Ah, we are put to the test over that - what we want beside Him. We do not know our own hearts. However, the true testimony is all of God. It was so in the case of the Lord Jesus, and it is the Lord Jesus Who is being contemplated.

(b) Universal: The Satisfaction of Heaven and Earth; The next thing is the fulness of Christ in the matter of universality. This is only saying the same thing in another way. You have this candlestick represented as in two places. In Exodus it is in the sanctuary, in the holy place. What does the holy place of the tabernacle represent? It is the place between heaven and earth. Outside the holy place you come to the world, the outwardness of the testimony. It is the world that brings you to the holy place. Beyond the holy place is the Most Holy Place, that is heaven itself; "into heaven itself" (Heb 9:24) as the apostle said. The holy place is the link between heaven and earth, the boundaries of earth and heaven meeting there. The person of the Lord Jesus unites them. He stands as the Son of man between heaven and earth, and unites them and comprehends them in their entirety. Fulness, heavenly and earthly, is found in Him in a place not all of either, but uniting both, satisfying both. He is not wholly of this earth, of this world; He is apart; and yet, so to speak, He has His hand upon it. He is representatively related to it, it meets in Him - He is at the point where all the nations find their fulness. The world finds in the Lord Jesus the answer to everything. There is not a nation, not a tribe, not a people, not a language, not a constitution, national or temperamental, in this whole creation in any age, which cannot find the answer to its need, its true need, in Him. He is outside of time, He is above time, He is as good for the twentieth century as for the first and every century between - just as apt, just as suitable. All the conditions of all the ages of this world met on earth in Him. On the other hand, heaven is satisfied with Him, all heaven's fulness is found in Him. Heaven had a need at a point; heaven waited breathlessly while something was carried out upon which, in a sense, its very existence seemed to depend. Heaven was tremendously and solemnly interested in that drama of the Cross; nay, more, in the whole drama of His earthly life. Heaven is always watching, concerned; angels are intent. Heaven met in Him, and now all heaven is satisfied because of Him. God finds His satisfaction in Him. So the Lord Jesus is just there between heaven and earth, meeting all needs. How universal is the testimony of Jesus to answer need!

We find the candlestick mentioned again in Scripture - in the book of the Revelation; and we find there confirmation of what I have just said. If you wanted to present two pictures of the candlestick, as in Exodus and Revelation respectively, you would put the former in the holy place of the tabernacle. Where would you put the other? You would need to have a map of the whole area then known as Asia, as representative of the creation, the world, the nations, and there you would put a candlestick in Ephesus and another in Smyrna, another in Thyatira, in Pergamos, and so on; and yet you would see one Man covering the whole of that area - the candlesticks, so to speak, being brought into that one Man. It is Christ in testimony in all the nations. It is not now only centred in one place, in the holy place; it is now in the nations. The first is in the holy place - everything is in Him. But when He is seen as the seven candlesticks in the nations, it is He in everything - a picture of God's ultimate intention that the fulness that is in Him shall be found everywhere, in the nations, in the whole creation. Paul says, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" waiting for its redemption (Rom 8:19-22). The creation groans. What is it groaning about? Why do we groan? Because, in some form, we want something we have not got. If we are in pain, we groan because we want to be free from pain. We groan if things go wrong - we want them to go right. The creation is groaning because it has not got something which is necessary to it. What does it need? - Christ, that is all. He answers to the creation's need. Christ in all the nations - that is the ultimate vision. The universality of Christ - that is the testimony. All heaven's need, all earth's need, all man's need, all the creation's need, met in fulness in the Lord Jesus. That is a comprehensive statement, but it is also a challenge to us. Is that the testimony we are talking about?

A Vital Impact of Christ, Not a Teaching; What do we mean by the testimony? Is it Christ in fulness known in that way by us? You say, 'Well, what is there particularly different about that so far as this vessel is concerned? Is not all Christianity supposed to be that? Is it not all centred in Christ? Is not its witness that Christ is all, to be all, and that Christ meets all need?' Yes, it is quite true as to language, quite true as to terms of Christianity; but there is a good deal extra to Christ in Christianity - how much we do not know. Many of us would strongly affirm that, so far as we are concerned, Christ is all, but we do not know our own hearts. The Lord has only to put His finger upon something very precious to us and a big battle flares up; it is not so easy then to say, 'Christ is more than that to me.' The issue becomes very practical and personal. But you can spread that out over a wide area - all the extras to Christ that there are in Christianity from centre to circumference; and only the fires of God can discover what are the extras that we Christians and Christianity must have. Oh, look on Christianity today as we know it in this world! Do we not have to say that there is a lot that is called Christianity that is not Christ? There is a lot added in. There is not this fiery work of separating between the pure gold and the dross. It is a pure gold testimony wrought in the fire that God is after, and only His eyes know what has to be dealt with in the fire. There is a difference between the general, ostensible Christian testimony about the Lord Jesus and the actual spiritual one - a great deal of difference. I do not know that in this life we shall ever get to the point where it is so utterly Christ that there is nothing else at all, but God is working

toward that. All of God; all is spiritual, nothing carnal; all is heavenly, nothing earthly. What is in view is not a movement, a mission, a work, a sect, a 'fellowship' as an institution, something here on this earth. It is something which is behind the very people who constitute the physical body of it all, something intangible but very real. There is something about this candlestick which is more than itself. It is its spiritual and heavenly nature. In a word, you do not meet a thing at all, you meet the Lord. You are not impressed with the thing, the organization, the company of people, or the place, or anything like that; you just meet the Lord. 'The Lord is here' - that is the testimony of Jesus. Do you not covet that for yourself personally? Surely if people were able to say of our passing this way - a way which we shall pass only once - that we brought the presence of the Lord with us, that there was something of the fragrance of Christ about us, something that suggested the Lord, would not that be the greatest thing that could possibly be said? Would not that be the answer to our heart's deepest desire? If, by our being together as companies of the Lord's people, everyone coming into touch with us could say, 'It is not the people, nor the phraseology, nor the peculiar teaching, but somehow or other it is the Lord you meet there' - well, there is no end greater than that. For the Lord to do that necessitates deep, fiery work. That is the candlestick all of gold. It is the Lord Jesus. The Lord give us grace to seek that it shall be so, that our presence here is His presence.

**The Church as the Vessel of the Testimony;** In our previous meditation, we were occupied with the ultimate meaning and nature of that testimony which in God's thought is primary, and fundamental, but, so far as the Church is concerned, is that toward which the Lord is working - namely, the fulness of Christ.

Now we take the next thing in relation to that matter which, of course, has been in view all the time and has been referred to; but we desired first of all to have Christ Himself in contemplation as overshadowing all. Now, having that established and recognised, we are brought to the vessel which God has chosen, in which the testimony of the Lord Jesus is to be deposited and embodied - the Church as the Lord's vessel of testimony here in this dispensation. Of course, this follows the same lines as the fulness of Christ. You remember that in speaking of the fulness of Christ we saw how He was and is all of God. The Divine fulness and spiritual fulness is gathered into Him as all of God. Then as to His place (like the place of the candlestick in the holy place, between heaven and earth) there was that about Him which did meet on the one hand every kind of need of every race, of every station and level of life, from the poorest to the most distinguished amongst men; all nations, all degrees, every aspect of this world's life as represented by mankind, found in Him the full answer to its need. On the other hand, heaven found its satisfaction in Him; God found His full-hearted satisfaction in the Lord Jesus. The universality of His fulness for heaven and for earth was the matter in view. Now the Church follows the same line as the Lord Jesus. The vessel of the testimony proceeds along the same course as He did. He said to His disciples, the nucleus of His Church, "Follow me." But they came to realise that that meant something more than walking about where He went on the earth. It was something very deep. "Follow me." Oh, what a content! And the Church's spiritual history as the vessel of His testimony is, in that deeper and fuller sense, a following of Christ. It follows Him in the spiritual significance of every step and stage of His life when He was here.

**Born of the Holy Ghost;** First of all, He was born, and He was born of the Holy Ghost, and any vessel for the testimony of Jesus in the sense in which we are speaking of it, in the sense in which God has embodied it in this symbolism - a candlestick of gold - any such vessel or instrument has got to be born, and born of God the Holy Ghost. It is not something you can make and put together, it is not something that can be organised and arranged, it is not something people can decide to have - 'We will form something, we will set up something, for the Lord's service' - it is not like that at all. It has to be born, and born as He was born - of the Holy Ghost. It has to come right out from God. If you make the birth of the Lord Jesus common with all other births and take out of it the absolutely supernatural and miraculous element, then you destroy the whole concept of God as to a heavenly testimony. If you make something yourself after the likeness of this, there is no guarantee that there will be the heavenly flame in it. This has got to be born. You cannot repeat it. That, of course, carries a lot with it. Let us take that as containing much more than we are able to say and explain at this time. For all work of God let it be remembered that you cannot duplicate and multiply the original. The original is of God, not of man, and everything that is of God has to be born like that; not of man, not of the will of the flesh, but of God. It is only the first step, but it is a very radical one. Do not go away and say, 'We are going to have something like this where we are.' Do not get the idea that you can repeat anywhere anything that you think is good. If God does not do it, it will break your heart if you try to do it.

**Testing Unto Perfecting;** Then, having been born, it must be placed upon a plane of testing, just as He was - a testing unto perfecting. That does not allow any place for sin in the case of the Lord Jesus. The fact that the Scripture distinctly says that He was made perfect through sufferings (Heb 2:10) and that "though he was a Son, yet learned (he) obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb 5:8) - that does not admit of any sin in His nature. It only signifies that He was placed upon the level of humanity, and in a representative way went through what we have to go through. He was without sin, we with sin within. The principle is the thing that governs. It is the testing as to the direction of the will. "Thy will, not mine." By every means conceivable - and conceivable by the most diabolical ingenuity of hell, all the art and cunning of the serpent deeper than man's wisdom - He was assailed in the realm of the will, as to whether He would or could be diverted one hairsbreadth from the will of His Father. By attraction, by allurements, by bribery, by prizes offered, by sore trouble, by terrible assaults, by treachery - oh, everything was used to tempt Him! But His will remained steadfast to the Father. On that ground He was tested, and we are tested in exactly the same way. The Church has to follow that course of testing unto perfecting. The perfecting in His case was simply that He brought that steadfastness to completion, that faithfulness to a final end without deviation or loss. Now, by the grace of God, by the strength of the Spirit of God within, God is calling upon us to recognise that there is no contradiction with Him, no contradiction in this realm. He has deposited with mankind the most sacred trust, freedom of will - freedom to make choice, to make decision. That is a sacred gift of God upon which He counts very much, and for the exercise of which He always calls; and destiny depends upon the exercise of that trust in decision, choice. God focuses upon that which is His most sacred trust, making man a morally responsible person. The contradiction would be if, now that we belong to the Lord, we sat down and waited for the Lord to make our decisions for us, to do something which would decide the whole matter where we are concerned without our

having anything to say about it. That would be a contradiction; God would be contradicting Himself - counting upon our will, and yet acting independently of it. I am not saying that there are not times and issues where God just steps in and acts, but that is not the normal. The normal is that God is seeking to have our will cooperating with His. On that basis, by every test imaginable, the Lord Jesus was perfected. On that line, you and I are following the Lord Jesus; on that line the Church has to go, willing one will with God. Sometimes that means a great deal of repudiation of our own will, sometimes a tremendous act of decision which usually is focused in a crisis as to what we call the will of God. That is not passive, it is active.

We are placed, then, on a basis of testing. The vessel has to be perfected in that way. Oh, there is no royal road to this true service of God, no easy way of just handing it all up to the Lord for Him to do it all, so that you need not worry or have anything to say or do in the matter. That would be very easy, but it is not the Lord's way. Beware of that snare.

#### The Attesting of God

Through the testing, there comes the attesting. I believe that the baptism of the Lord Jesus represented the utterness of His abandonment to God. It was a foreshadowing of the burial and resurrection - immediately followed by the allestiation of God "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." It foreshadowed, it summed up, the whole of His life from the moment of His consecration to the moment of His death, and therefore the attesting of God from heaven was on the ground that He had proved Himself unto death abandoned to the will of God and entirely dead as to His own will, that is, as to another will, an independent will, apart from God. The point is that God drew attention to what was wholly of Himself. God never draws attention to man as such, nor to our works as such, even though they be for Him. God draws attention to what is wholly of Himself, and He could draw attention to His Son all the way along, and say, 'Look, behold, see!' And such an instrument as will have the testimony of Jesus in it, whether it be individual or corporate, will be like that - that God is seeking all the time so to work in that vessel that He can say, 'That is where I am, that is what I am after. Look here, look there, and you will find Me.' It is not glorifying the thing, the people, or anything on that level, but it is drawing attention to what is of Himself. If the Lord is going to add to the Church, you may be quite sure He is not going to build up something that is not of Himself, in which He is not very fully present. It was when the Church was full of the Holy Ghost and Christ was regnant in the midst that the Lord added to the Church. It is the secret of growth, it is the secret of revival, that God has something that has within it His Son in such measure that He can say, 'I can go on with that, I can attest that, I can add to that, I can build that up.' Attested through testing; approved. And the Lord Jesus is said to have been "perfected the third day" (Luk 13:32), perfected through suffering, and, being perfected, He was received up into glory. Nothing, that is not perfected has ever been received up into glory. Do not think of glory as being only a place. It may be a place, but it is a state also; a state of glory. It is being glorified. Jesus, having been tested and attested, was glorified; and the Church, the vessel of His testimony, along the same line, following Him, can be glorified because perfected, and perfection means simply that everything that is not of the Lord has gone out and everything that is present is of the Lord. It is the Lord Who is glorified in His saints. It is His glory, not ours.

#### A Contradiction to the World

That is very simple, but you see that is the nature of things. This vessel, this instrument, this candlestick, has got to stand as a full-orbed contradiction to all that exists which is not of God, that is contrary to God; that means a full-orbed contradiction to the world. What do we mean by the world? I think we can sum up the world as it is referred to in the Scriptures in two words - gain and self-glory: that is, glory which is not the glory of God. Is it not true that the spirit of this world is gain? How can you explain or interpret things in this world otherwise than that - gain? To have - whether it is territory, riches, knowledge, or whatever it may be - in every connection the goal is to have, to possess, to gain advantage, and thus by gaining to come to glory of its own. It is very subtle, it works in us all. We may think of the world, but it is here in our hearts - to have some gratification by coming to a position, to be self-satisfied by attaining to some eminence, some influence, some place of power, some possession. That is the spirit of this world, and that now is utterly contrary to God. Christ was a contradiction to all that spirit, and His Church, this candlestick vessel of testimony, is to be the embodiment of that contradiction - contrary to the world spirit and principle; not to get but to give; not to be glorified in itself but for Him to be glorified in all. The Lord Jesus sought not His own glory but the glory of Him that sent Him. He said "I seek not mine own glory" (Joh 8:50), and, by the context, it was a reflection upon those around Him - even the religious leaders - who sought glory by possession, position and so on. No, this is an instrument which contradicts that whole thing in spirit and in principle.

#### A Contradiction to the Works of Satan

It contradicts all the works of Satan. Can we sum up the works of Satan in one word? I think we can. It is selfhood. You trace the history of Satan in the Scriptures. You go right back and you find that he became the adversary of God by seeking selfhood. He made Adam the tragedy that he became by imbuing him with the same spirit of selfhood. "Ye shall be..." (Gen 3:5). Selfhood, self-centredness; it is born in us. You can see it in the youngest child - how a child likes to be the centre of all attention. This spirit is there and it is in us all. There can be no true testimony of Jesus where things are centred in any man or body of men, or in any thing as such. Oh, how Satan has spoiled what would otherwise have been a thing very precious to God, by putting some individual as the focal centre of everything and causing everything to circle round that individual; or by making much of the thing, the instrument itself (whatever it might be), drawing attention to it in order to divert attention subtly and cleverly from the Lord. People so easily become taken up with the thing, the work, an instrument. Selfhood has many subtle ways of expressing itself in the work of God; and surely the tragedy of much work for God has been that the people have sported themselves in the work, have gained or sought for themselves reputation, name, place, recognition and title. All that has come in imperceptibly, the Lord Jesus being hidden behind men and things. No, this vessel must be all of God, and this testimony must be, in its very essence, a contradiction to all that work of Satan. Again in the matter of divisions. Is it not one of the great works of Satan to produce divisions, schism, conflicts, parties, factions? Oh, what a long and terrible history of Satan's work there has been dividing the people of God, stopping at nothing until he

has made them individual fragments; not even allowing two to remain together in spiritual fellowship if he can help it! The battle for spiritual oneness is a real battle against Satan and all his spiritual forces. But this candlestick is a whole. It is not a composite thing. It was not made of pieces stuck together, mortised in to the main stem. It was to be one piece, all beaten out of one piece. There are no joins here, no places of which you can say - 'that is where one begins and another ends; if you are going to divide it, that is where you must start the work.' You cannot find a crevice, crack or join in this. It is all one piece wrought by fire, wrought by the hammer. It is a contradiction to all the work of Satan in division. Let us recognise that - that division is the work of Satan. The testimony of Jesus contradicts division. It is the oneness of the great Divine love. Is it not there that all independence is such a pernicious and dangerous and damaging thing - our independent decisions and courses and life? It may be that it is in that very connection that we have light thrown upon the Lord Jesus in His choice of friends. "I have called you friends" (Joh 15:15). "I chose you" (Joh 15:16). "He appointed twelve, that they might be with him" (Mar 3:14). "...having loved his own that were in the world, he loved them unto the end" (Joh 13:1). It would have been, in many respects, a very much easier thing if He had been without them and gone on alone. Knowing all that was involved in choosing those men, why did He deliberately do it? He spent a night in prayer before doing it, evidently not only for guidance, but I should say for grace. Why? Because He had to undo the works of the devil in all that disintegrating power in human life. He could have thrown over one or the other of His disciples any day; He might have washed His hands of them; but he loved them unto the end. When at last, as a result of all His patience, forbearance and love, you have those men intact - with the exception of the one who was never really an integral part of the whole from the beginning - and He is able to say, "I kept them in thy name... and not one of them perished, but the son of perdition" (Joh 17:12), the devil's work has been undone. There is something deeper in that than that the Lord has managed to maintain a kind of fraternity to the end. Something very deep has been done. That is the testimony of Jesus. It is a contradiction to the divisive work of Satan, and God is wanting an instrument, a vessel, like that - a candlestick to maintain that testimony; and that is very searching.

### The Testimony Before the Work

Is it not true - sad though it be - that very often the work of the Lord is hindered or spoiled by the workers themselves? It is a terrible thing to say, but it is true. The problems often relate not so much to the work but to the workers. They cannot get on together, they cannot live with one another, they must be moved from one part of the field to the other because of incompatibility. Why is it? You say, of course, that it is because the work of the Cross has not been done in them. Quite true; but may it not be equally true that it is because the work has been put before testimony, or in the place of the testimony - that they have gone out for the work, not for the testimony? Suppose they were to stop - and confer and pray together, and say, 'Look here, this is no testimony, this is a contradiction of the testimony of Jesus. What are we here for? Have we come all this way and made all this sacrifice merely to do some work, and yet to have no testimony to the Lord? By our being here doing all this (or trying to do all this) we are a direct contradiction to the Lord Himself.' I think they would either pack up and come home, or they would resolve the whole thing and say, 'The testimony comes before the work, for the work must come out of the testimony: it must not be something apart. We must find a ground for going on together in a way that glorifies God.' What are we as Christians on the earth for? Are we here to do a work, or for a testimony? Yes, so many people are concerned about the Lord's work, and (in their phraseology) concerned about the Lord's testimony, but they are most difficult people to get on with. You are constantly coming up against such cases, and you have to say, 'Well, they are very concerned about the work of God, but I don't know about the testimony where they are concerned.'

Now let us face that quite frankly. We are tremendously concerned about the Lord's testimony. The testimony of Jesus is utter selflessness, the contradiction of self-centredness, of every form of selfishness, of selfhood. That is the testimony of Jesus - not work done and doctrine taught, but Christ here expressed in that way. But are we quarrelsome at home? Is it difficult for others in the home, in the family, to get on with us? Are we always making difficulty and strain and conflict? That is the devil's work, and that is no testimony. Christians are here on this earth for a testimony, and that testimony must be shown in our ability to get on with others. The only people who could not get on with the Lord Jesus were the people who were self-centred - religious or otherwise. Everybody else found Him wonderfully easy to get on with. Oh, do not let us make of this word 'testimony' anything other than this - the Lord Himself found in us; not things of truth that we want other people to have, but the Lord Himself primarily.

The Lord should therefore know when He has what He wants and is able to put His hand upon it and place it where He wants it to be. Christianity has become another system of things. You get an idea that you are called to the Lord's work, and then you say, 'Now I must be prepared for the Lord's work,' and you go for a course of training to an institute. Then when you have finished, you say, 'Now, I am prepared.' What do you mean by being prepared? Do you mean intellectually, theologically? Well, I do not know how far that is going to carry you. The Lord only knows when you are prepared. It might be a very good thing if after that you went back to business and waited for the Lord to confirm your call by saying to you, 'Yes, I have got what I want where you are concerned, and now I will show you where I want you.' You can trust the Lord. If He has called you to His service, you can be quite sure that sooner or later He will confirm that call, even if you have to go back to business for a time. These disciples were called, and then they went back to their fishing, and the Lord came and confirmed their call. Saul of Tarsus was called on the Damascus road, and he went and waited in Antioch until the Lord came and confirmed his call and said, 'Now you are ready, now I have what I want, now the time has come.' Are you afraid of that? Do you trust the Lord about that? After all, it is the testimony the Lord wants, and it may be that that testimony is going to be produced in those realms and spheres which you would not choose. You think that it will be very much more straightforward and easy for you to bear the testimony if you are out in full-time spiritual work. You are deceived if you think that. Listen to one who is not a novice and not a juvenile now. I can tell you that with all the demands of spiritual work, with all the opportunities and demands for spiritual ministry with which one cannot cope, the most difficult thing in all the world is to keep the testimony abreast of the demand; and we have to confess that there so often we fail. What we are calling the testimony is not our ministry, our teaching, our work, the articles we write, the addresses we give; that is not the testimony. That goes for nothing if there is not something behind it that is approved of God. God would take infinite pains to keep us abreast of our ministry in testimony. He would cut right across the path of Moses, even after He had called him, and seek to slay him. The Lord had commissioned him, and yet it says "it came to pass on the way... that the Lord met him, and sought to kill him" (Exo 4:24). Something was lacking in the background. You know what it was; it had to be attended to. It is what

is behind that is the testimony, and the Lord knows when He has got that, and He can be trusted to use us when and where we are ready to be used. We have got to be the thing that the Lord needs to have reproduced in other places, and it is the work of the Holy Spirit to know where the need is and where the provision is, and to bring the two together. There was evidently a need to be met at Antioch when Barnabas went there (Act 11:20-26) and he, being full of the Holy Ghost, said, 'I know the man through whom this need can be met,' and he went off to Tarsus to fetch Saul to Antioch.

The Lord knows if you are there in that home with all its monotony and drudgery and lack of incentive and interest; in that business with its round of duties which are not inspiring; in that setting of deep trial. You are there to be approved under testing, and when the Lord sees you are approved, He will say, 'Come, you are the one I want; there is something else for you; come up higher.' Let it be like that with your service.

That all focuses upon this, that the Lord is more for a testimony than for a work. If we put the work in place of the testimony, we shall have confusion. We are on this earth for a testimony, and that is why, even with the greatest and most useful of His servants, the Lord never allows the work to set aside fresh discipline, fresh suffering. It looks like a contradiction. The work appears to need the man; the man is not able to do it because he is going through such trial and suffering. What a contradiction! But the Lord is more concerned to have spiritual measure in the vessel than He is to have a lot of work done.

The Lord help us by this, and give us grace to accept it. I know it is not easy; but do see that the Lord is after a candlestick all of gold, to bear a testimony; not to be an ornament, a show piece, something which attracts attention to itself, but a testimony to the Lord Himself.

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#### **Spiritual Warfare and Sin: Dispositional Sins**

Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.—Ephesians 4:31

Dispositional sins are fully as injurious to the Christian cause as the more overt acts of wickedness. These sins are as many as the various facets of human nature. Just so there may be no misunderstanding let us list a few of them: Sensitiveness, irritability, churlishness, faultfinding, peevishness, temper, resentfulness, cruelty, uncharitable attitudes; and of course there are many more. These kill the spirit of the church and slow down any progress which the gospel may be making in the community. Many persons who had been secretly longing to find Christ have been turned away and embittered by manifestations of ugly dispositional flaws in the lives of the very persons who were trying to win them....

Unsaintly saints are the tragedy of Christianity. People of the world usually pass through the circle of disciples to reach Christ, and if they find those disciples severe and sharp-tongued they can hardly be blamed if they sigh and turn away from Him.... The low state of religion in our day is largely due to the lack of public confidence in religious people. Of God and Men, 84-85.

"Oh Lord, may I never be an 'unsaintly saint!' Give me a pleasant disposition today, not that people would be attracted to me, but that through me they may be irresistibly drawn to Christ. Amen."

Tozer....

( Amplified Bible; Joyce Meyers; 2006; Faith Words; Scripture; Commentaries; pages 838-839)

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