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## Materialism And Spiritualism OR Materialism Or Spiritualism

Our world is "caught up" in a syndrome that might be termed both materialistic and spiritualistic or materialistic verses spiritualistic. By materialism I simply mean: "The tendency to be more concerned with material 'physical' than with spiritual values" (Web. New World Dict., 1967, p. 266), and by spiritualism I simple mean the tendency to be more concerned with those things that pertain to the spirit, "Of or consisting of a spirit; not corporeal 'physical'" (Webster's, Ibid., pp. 414, 99).

Some of the people who compose the church of our Lord are guilty of being too materialistic, thereby hampering the necessary spiritual growth. Spirituality, in my opinion, is at a low ebb among many in the ranks o Christ. Much, especially of late, has been said about honesty and total commitment to Christ, etc., but, "has been said" is about all that is ever said or done about it in some cases.

Many people have become discouraged, in Christ's church, because there seems to be a lack of emphasis on spiritual matters and a paramount interest on material matters and "things." A "thing" is "A tangible object; a happening, etc." (Webster's, Ibid., p. 445). Many young people have become disenchanted with their church progenitors because of this apparent lack of interest in spiritual matters and as a result, many young people, while in search of "the" Spirit, have become engulfed in shallow spiritual group therapy sessions, Jesus Movements, Jesus Freaks, ecstatic tongue speakings, etc.

You and I know full well that God's Spirit can only be found in God's family, the Church of Christ. (I Cor. 3:16, 17; 6:19, 20); And that no Spiritual blessing is found outside of Christ's family. (Eph. 1:3; I Tim. 3:15; Heb. 3:6).

You and I are living in the most affluent age, in the most affluent country the world has ever seen. That being the case, we are, to a degree, victims of circumstances. The world and its circumstances, however, should not interfere with our living the Christian life, and in fact, in no way can the world interfere because Jesus said that his kingdom is "not of this world" (Jh.

18:36) and that a Christian's "citizenship is in heaven" (Philp. 3:20). We are subject therefore to the God of heaven because we are his children. We became children of God by a spiritual birth (Jh. 3:5; Titus 3:5; Mk. 16:16) and we will stay children of God by a spiritual walk (Gal. 5:16; I Jh. 1:7).

It is necessary, I suppose, that in this spiritual walk we must, to a degree, become involved in certain materialistic things. These things are not necessarily wrong in and of themselves but they certainly can be made wrong. Some of the things I have in mind are our song-books, Sunday-school classes, church buildings, heating and cooling systems, communion cups, bread plates and money baskets. These things have been used to better facilitate the services of God's people, to my knowledge, a long time. The problem, I suggest, that we may encounter is not the failure to use these things, but rather the over-use of them, i.e., to the point that WE BECOME totally DEPENDENT UPON THINGS and NOT GOD. God is our father (Eph. 3:14, 15); He is a Spirit (Jh. 4:24); To please our Spiritual father, God, we must, at all times, pray "in the spirit" (Eph. 6:18; I Thess. 5:17). It can safely be said that every homage paid to God must be from the heart (Matt. 15:8) in order that it may be a "spiritual service" (Rom. 12:1). It is most displeasing to God when we make things the "end" of our worship and service; It is not displeasing to God when we use certain things to expedite our "spiritual service." We cannot develop, one iota of spirituality, if we had only one cup as opposed to many cups, or one class as opposed to many classes; but, we could destroy what spirituality we had attained by becoming totally inebriated with cup(s) and/or classes. (class).

Some brethren have seen the need to construct fellowship halls (which is an utter impossibility, and I am not an "anti" nor am I opposed to associational dinner meetings.) or, e.g., a recent construction called, a "Christian Activities Center," which has been "designed to accomplish several goals: (1)

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## Jesus, The Perfect Man

There is no other character in history like that of Jesus.

As a preacher, as a doer of things, and as a philosopher, no man has ever had the sweep and vision of Jesus.

A human analysis of the human actions of Jesus brings to view a rule of life that is amazing in its perfect detail.

The system of ethics Jesus taught during His earthly sojourn 2,000 years ago was true then, has been true in every century since and will be true forever.

Plato was a great thinker and learned in his age, but his teachings did not stand the test of time. In big things and in little things time and human experience have shown that he erred.

Marcus Aurelius touched the reflective mind of the world, but he was as cold and austere as brown marble.

The doctrine of Confucius gave a great nation moral and mental dry rot.

The teachings of Buddha resulted in mental and moral chaos that makes India derelict.

Mohammed offered a system of ethics which was adopted by millions of people. Now their children live in deserts where once there were cities, along dry rivers where once there was moisture, and in shadows of gray, barren hills where once there was greenness.

Thomas Aquinas was a profound philosopher, but parts of his system have been abandoned.

Francis of Assisi was Christlike in his saintliness, but in some respects he was childish.

Thomas A. Kempis' Imitation of Christ is a thing of rare beauty and sympathy but it is, as its name indicates, only an imitation.

Sir Thomas Moore's Utopia is yet a dream and cannot be realized.

Lord Bacon's writing on chemistry and medicine under the glasses of the man in the 20th century laboratory is puerile.

The world's most learned doctors until 150 years ago gave dragon's blood and the ground dried tails of lizards and shells of eggs for certain ailments. The great surgeons of a hundred years ago bled a man if he were wounded.

Napoleon had the world at his feet for four years, and when he died the world was going on its way as if he had never lived.

Jesus taught little as to property because He knew there were more

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## The Fulton County Gospel News

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EDITORS: Clovis Ragsdale  
and James E. Henley.

## When Everything Else Fails

By Ralph Wharton

You have invested heavily in a piece of machinery. It fails to function properly. You tighten here and loosen there. No better. You lubricate here and there; same deal. You change fuel, make some adjustments; no soap. You "cuss" the machine. You "cuss" the manufacturer and the dealer. You "cuss" your wife. The thing still does not function. You worry Tom, Dick, and Harry about it.

ISN'T IT ABOUT TIME YOU READ THE INSTRUCTIONS? Moral: Your soul is precious and costly. God loves you and gave the Bible — a book of instructions that you may function productively through this life. If you scorn or ignore the instructions, you are asking for trouble — serious trouble — trouble without remedy! Your soul has instructions. Better follow them!! Our Lord Jesus Christ knows the way through this wilderness of sin. He is the WAY, the TRUTH, the LIFE. We must follow.

## Members of The Church

Why does one member of the church attend all the services, and another not; one gives cheerfully, another not; one teaches his neighbor, the other does not; one lives according to God's commands, the other does not? You can call it anything you want to; but the TRUTH is one's WHOLE heart is CHANGED (HE IS CONVERTED), the other is HOLDING back a PART of the heart from God. He may as well hold it ALL from God, for God will not accept LESS than ALL OF THE HEART, Mark 12:30!

—Glynn Purdy

## Jesus, The Perfect Man (Cont.)

important things than property. He measured property and life, the body and soul, at their exact relative value. He taught much as to character, because character was more important than dollars.

Other men taught us to develop systems of government. Jesus taught us so as to perfect the minds of men. Jesus looked at the soul, while other men dwell on more material things.

After the experience of 2,000 years, no man can find a flaw in the governmental system outlined by Jesus.

Czar and kaiser, president and socialist, give to its complete merit their admiration.

No man today, no matter whether he follows the doctrine of Mills, Marx or George as to property, can find a false principle in Jesus' theory of property.

In the duty of man to his fellows, no sociologist has ever approximated the perfection of the doctrine laid down by Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount.

Not all the investigations of chemists, not all the discoveries of explorers, not all the experiences of rules, not all the historical facts that go to make up the sum of human knowledge on this day are in contradiction to one word uttered or one principle laid down by Jesus.

The human experience of 2,000 years shows that Jesus never made a mistake. Jesus never uttered a doctrine that was true at the time and then became obsolete.

Jesus spoke the truth; He lived the truth; and truth is eternal.

History has no record of any other man leading a perfect life or doing everything in logical order. Jesus is the only person whose every action and every utterance strike a true note in the heart of every man born of woman. He never said a foolish thing, never did a foolish act and never dissembled.

No poet, no dreamer, no philosopher loved Humanity with the Love that Jesus bore toward all men.

Who, then, was Jesus?

He could not have been merely a man, for there was never a man who had two consecutive thoughts absolute in truthful perfection.

Jesus must have been what Christendom proclaims Him to be — a divine being — or He could not have been what He was. No mind but an infinite mind could have left behind those things which Jesus gave to the world as a heritage.

He who has good health, good humor, and no debts is not really poor.

## I Like To Worship With A Small Congregation

"I like to worship with a small congregation." I wonder how many times I have heard that statement repeated? One is led to believe that there is something inherently better, holier, friendlier, more spiritual in a church of 100 members than in one of 1,000 or 10,000 members.

I have often felt that those who seem so dead set on having a small church are likely to feel more than a mite uncomfortable in Heaven. When the apostle John was given a glimpse of the glory which awaits he said, "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands" (Revelation 7:9). Did you notice? He said, "A great multitude, which no man could number." But have you ever heard anyone say, "I don't want to go to heaven because there will be so many people there I can't ever shake hands with them all, much less get to really know them"?

That great multitude will in no way interfere with the worship which will be conducted. Imagine such a throng all crying "with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb" (Revelation 7:10). Talk about the thrill of worship! And then to hear this vast multitude begin singing "a new song" will be glory indeed. Round about the throne will be many angels. John says, "And the number of them was ten thousands times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands," and they were, "Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." To this great number was added the voice of "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever" (Revelations 5:11-13).

Brother, there are going to be a lot of people in heaven, and the worship is going to be wonderful. I hope no one there says, "I like to worship with a small congregation."

Now don't get me wrong. I have nothing against small churches... I have worshipped with them and preached for them. But I will never understand why we want to keep a church small.

The way I have it figured, the closer we come to having 10,000 members the more it's going to be like heaven.

—John Gipson

## Disdain For Doctrine

Some among us have begun to develop an avowed distaste and an implied disdain for doctrinal matters. A preaching brother recently observed that he had not preached a doctrinal sermon in over two years! Another is quoted as having said that he never brings up doctrinal matters in assemblies which are composed primarily of non-Christians!

Has our thinking become so closely bound to that of denominationalists that we now desire to be thought of as "one of the crowd"? Do we want to preach the same sermons as denominational people delight in hearing, i.e., collections of polite platitudes that makes about as much of an impression on sinners as a drop of water on the ocean tides? Shall we abandon the distinctive sound of authoritative gospel preaching?

Perhaps many do not understand it, but there can be no preaching apart from doctrine. Doctrine is "something that is taught." Can any man profess faith in the One God or the Scriptures without making a doctrinal statement? Preach love, joy, peace and similar matters and you are still dealing with matters of doctrine (teaching). It is absurd to think that there can be any religious discussion or statement without doctrine being involved.

We nevertheless understand those who profess to have left off doctrinal preaching. They mean that they do not preach on such controversial subjects as baptism, the one body or instrumental music. But still the question remains: WHY?

Is there no objective truth to be sought in regard to these and similar subjects? Do people simply not need to know what the Bible says on these subjects? Or are some afraid to teach things with which the unsaved will take issue and disagree?

This question should be asked of those who disdain doctrinal sermons: Why do you preach at all? If you do not tell people of the distinctive nature of New Testament Christianity as opposed to denominationalism, you imply that their present status is acceptable before God and that you fellowship them in their error. Why not share "your" pulpit with some sectarian preacher in town. He does not preach "doctrinal" sermons either!

"But if we harp on doctrine we will drive those people away. They will stop listening. Then we will never reach them," one objects. If you are not preaching the clear commands of the Gospel, with what do you hope to reach him? Are you trying to save him or convince him that you are a nice fellow?

When questioned for their doctrinal presentations, Peter and John said,

## Some Facts Concerning The Church of Christ

### THE CHURCH OF CHRIST HAS NO GUIDE EXCEPT THE BIBLE

Jesus taught that any other guide would cause the worshipper to only worship in vain, Matt. 15:7-9. The word of God is called the "perfect law of liberty", James 1:25. The Bible came from inspired men, 2 Pet. 1:21. The Bible is inspired and complete for all the spiritual needs of man in all ages, 2 Tim. 3:16-17.

### THE CHURCH OF CHRIST HAS NO HEAD EXCEPT CHRIST

Christ proclaimed himself head of the church which is his body, Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23. He has all authority in heaven and on earth, so this leaves no man, nor group of men, any authority over the Lord's church.

### THE CHURCH OF CHRIST HAS ELDERS AS OVERSEERS OF THE LOCAL CONGREGATION

We first read of elders in the first congregation of the Lord's church in Jerusalem, Acts 11:30. After Paul had established congregations, he did ordained elders in every congregation, Acts 14:23. He likewise gave the charge to the elders (bishops) of the church at Ephesus to feed the church over which the Holy Spirit had made them overseers. The qualifications of elders are given in Titue 1, and 1 Tim. 3. Under the elders, are deacons whose qualifications are given in the same scriptures. There were more than one in each congregations. They were called elders, bishops and pastors, all meaning the same men.

### THE CHURCH OF CHRIST OBSERVES THE LORD'S SUPPER EACH FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK

Jesus instituted the Lord's supper during the passover, Matt. 26, and Paul taught that it should be observed in the Lord's church, 1 Cor. 11. By example, we learn that the church observed it on the first day of the week, Acts 20:7.

### THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS SUPPORTED BY FREE

### WILL OFFERINGS OF THE MEMBERS

Paul taught that collections should be taken on the first day of the week, 1 Cor. 16:2. That each was to be a cheerful giver and to plan in his own heart ahead of time concerning the contribution, 2 Cor. 9:7. This is the only authority for supporting the church found in God's word.

"Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard." Acts 4:19, 20. We cannot afford to compromise where the apostles stood firm.

—Rubel Shelly

### THE CHURCH OF CHRIST USES VOCAL MUSIC IN THE WORSHIP

Throughout the New Testament, by command and example, God's people are instructed to sing, Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16. There is no command, nor example for any other kind of music in the worship. For more than seven hundred years no other music was found in a church.

### MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

As instructed in the New Testament; Faith, Heb. 11:6; Repentance, Luke 13:5, Acts 17:30; Confession of faith in Christ as God's Son, Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 8:27; Baptism, Acts 2:38; and thus the Lord added the saved to the church, Acts 2:47. If a person does the same thing today that the apostles commanded, he will be a member of the same church they were, as God is no respecter of persons, Acts 10:34-35. Then one must do all that Christ commands, Matt. 28:19-20.

Glynn V. Purdy

## The Converted Heart

### THE WHOLE HEART

What the Bible calls the "heart" is divided into three separate divisions. 1-Intellect; 2-Emotions; 3-Will. In order to CONVERT the heart, ALL THREE MUST BE COMPLETELY AND PERMANENTLY CHANGED! Some religion is based SOLELY on Intellect; some solely on Emotions, yet the Will is NOT changed!

### THE INTELLECT

The Intellect is the part of the heart (mind) which "thinks", as a man THINKS "in his heart SO IS HE", Prov. 23:7. That is WHY we are taught to THINK ON things that are "pure, honest, just, lovely, of good report", where there is "virtue and praise", Phil. 4:8. No man can rise ABOVE his thinking! Thoughts become words and deeds!

The intellect is the part of the heart which "understands" what one hears, or reads, John 12:40, that is why we must NOT close our hearts to God. We must understand God's will!

The intellect is the part of the heart that believes what one understands, Romans 10:9-10. A man reads the Bible, then he THINKS about it, he UNDERSTANDS it and then he BELIEVES it; but up to this point it is ALL head religion, he must go further!

### THE EMOTIONS

After thinking, understanding, and believing, then the emotions must be CHANGED! One must DESIRE the

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# The Power Of Prayer

By Carroll P. Bennett

## Materialism And Spiritualism

(Cont.)

Promotion of congregation fellowship, (2) To increase Christian influence in the community through meaningful activities for all age groups supervised by dedicated Christian people, (3) Supply needed classrooms for an expanding Bible school and (4) Serve as a center for area-wide programs for youth, missions, etc."

I am not opposed to building programs per se, but I am opposed to any building program, of any kind, that is instigated in an attempt to save the young people. One cup, one class, many cups, many classes, frame buildings, brick buildings, old buildings, new buildings, do not have one thing to do with the ultimate salvation of souls. The spirits of youth, or adults, cannot be influenced by things. The only influence upon man's spirit is God's Spirit and His influence can be realized only by, in and through the Word of God in conviction and conversion (Jh. 6:63; 12:48; Mk. 16:15).

If we want to save the young people, and we do, let us allow God to direct our lives. God can furnish His people "completely unto every good work" (II Tim. 3:17). As Christians we have been "created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God . . . prepared that we should walk . . ." (Eph. 2:10). God "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20). "Let Him have His way with us." If we would totally surrender our lives to Jesus, things would not be important (they would be necessary in expediting our "spiritual service") and we would retain our young people.

Young people will stay "hitched" to a group of honest, truth-seeking, spirit-loving, soul-saving Christians; They will stay with a group of people who are excited about serving God in the assembly, at home, in the car, at the job, on the vacation, etc.; They will be a part of the group who is genuinely making an effort to reach the souls of men in the church, in the town, in the community, in the country, in the state, in the nation, in the continent, in the world, in the universe.

Many young people are able to see through the shame of tangibles of so many of their predecessors and consequently long for the intangibles of God. Let us, therefore, accommodate the genuine young people with a genuine Christian spirit in a genuine "spiritual service."

Mike Wilson  
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Our age is power-conscious, but many have yet to discover that next to the gospel, prayer is the most powerful power of all. Alexis Carrel, a famous physician stated that "prayer is . . . the most powerful form of energy that one can generate." We are told that a hydrogen bomb can devastate an area ten miles square. Stop and contemplate the power contained in a few ounces of material hydrogen bomb— "... The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man . . ." (James 5:16). The words, "effectual, fervent" come from the Greek, "energia" from which is derived our word, "energy." Our prayers get their energy from God, if they are according to his will.

One of man's great privileges, and through which comes many of his blessings, is that of speaking to his Creator. Man alone, of all the creation, is privileged to speak to God in intelligence. We are admonished to "Pray without ceasing." (I Thess. 5:17). Jesus taught, "... Men ought always to pray and not to faint." (Lk. 18:1). The true child of God believes that prayer can change things. This is why Christians pray.

For a prayer to be acceptable to God it must be properly directed, and in harmony with the divine will. The petitioner must be sincere, penitent, and in proper relationship with the heavenly Father. (Ps. 66:18; Prov. 28:13).

Power is available through prayer to meet every situation and circumstance of life. Paul expressed it in these words, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). The power of prayer is summed up in these words, "Now unto him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us. Unto him be glory in the church by Jesus Christ throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" (Eph. 3:20-21). The story is told of a little boy who was helping his father remove some stones from a ditch. "Dad, here is a big one," said the boy. "I have done my best, but I can't budge it." The father replied, "Son, you have never done your best until you have asked your father to help." Jesus said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Matt. 7:7-8).

We have not done our best until we have asked the Lord's help in every aspect of Christian living. May each one experience the uplifting power of the Lord as we daily live for Him who died for us.

things which he has now believed. He believes God's will, he must desire to OBEY it, to accept it, Rom. 10:1.

The Emotions LOVES, Matt. 22:37. Unless we love God, who first loved us, we will not OBEY Him, respect Him, or follow Him.

TRUST, is also a part of the emotions of man. Love and Trust, go hand in hand. If we love God we WILL trust Him to do ALL he has promised to do! Prov. 3:5.

ONE MUST THINK, UNDERSTAND, BELIEVE, DESIRE, LOVE AND TRUST IN ORDER TO BE SAVED, YET HE CAN DO ALL OF THIS AND STILL BE LOST, FOR HIS WILL MUST BE CHANGED! Up to this point it is HEAD and EMOTION religion, yet millions of people never get past this point and believe they are saved!

### THE WILL

After doing the SIX things mentioned, the WILL is yet UNCHANGED, so it too MUST be changed in order to be CONVERTED, and we MUST be CONVERTED, Acts. 3:19. The will purposes, 2 Cor. 9:7, or PLANS. So after trusting God, one purposes to OBEY him, but he still must DO this, or put his plan into ACTION!

The WILL must DETERMINE the course one is to take, then take it, 1 Cor. 7:37. A man can change his mind, his heart and his attitude, but he still has to GO, or OBEY God, Matt. 23:28:29. So a man can think, understand, believe, desire, love, trust, purpose and determine to do God's will, yet unless he DOES it, he will still be lost, Matt. 7:21; Heb. 5:8-9. The WHOLE heart, intellect, emotions AND WILL must be completely CHANGED, in order to be converted!

The LAST step in conversion is to "OBEY FROM THE HEART" the doctrine of God, Rom. 6:17. THIS MAKES CONVERSION COMPLETE!

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