

# "Jesus Christ the same, yesterday, today, and for ever."

(Heb. 13: 8)

## CIRCULAR

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Special greetings in the matchless name of our LORD Jesus Christ with the following scripture:

*"Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness..."* (Tit. 1: 1)

The life of a Bible believing person happens within the limits of God's Word and within the Church. Also those who are scattered belong as members to the whole Body of Christ. The personal manifestation of God in Christ is our central meeting point with Him. In Him alone God met with humanity bringing salvation; in Him alone we have our encounter with God and also fellowship with each other. Only in Christ God met humanity reconciling us with Himself, only in Christ humanity can meet God. He is the Head unto whom all members of His Body submit. The written Word alone is a light to our feet on our way to follow the LORD. Through the establishing of the covenant with Israel they were in obligation towards God. The revealed and proclaimed Word had no binding effect to the other nations; to them God had not spoken. He did not reveal Himself unto them. Therefore, they could walk in their own ways. But His covenant people Israel is duty bound to His covenant Word. Israel cannot and must not walk in their own ways.

In the Old Testament the Word was written on tablets of stone, as also the hearts were hard as stone. In the New Testament the Word became flesh, and our stony hearts were made hearts of flesh by the redemptive work. Thus was the promise which was also fulfilled (Ez. 11: 19-20; Ez. 36:26-27; Heb. 8: 10; a. o.). All who are truly born again have received God's Life and take God's written Word which is being made alive to them by the Holy Spirit. The believers of the New Covenant make up the Church which is obligated to His Word. All other churches may walk in their own ways, but His purchased people cannot and must not walk in their own ways.

Because the Church consists of individuals God must have His way with each of His own. Brother Branham left us many sermons with different subjects among which is also found the one with the title <<The Church and its condition>>. An inventory of the people of the New Covenant is a must at this moment. May our dear LORD speak and bring about His pleasure according to His counsel.

When looking at the signs of the time, the peace process in Israel with the **PLO**, the neighbouring Arab countries, and also the demand the papacy should recognise Israel politically, we realise that it is high time for the honest preparation. According to the time table God set forth in the respective prophetic Word, the end of the time of grace for the nations is the beginning of the time of grace for Israel (Acts 15: 13-18; Rom. 11: 11-27; a. o.). The establishing of the covenant between the State of Israel and the Vatican State (Dan. 9: 27) happens about the time the Bride Church from the nations will be taken up.

In a very short time much has changed in all of Europe. Within a few years a historical change came about. In the same way the second phase is now in progress in the Middle East with Israel and its neighbours. The cold war came to an end-disarmament is imbedded in the peace process and brought the reconciliation with all the neighbouring countries of East and Western Europe.

Now the peace process happens in the "focal point of world history", so that might be fulfilled as it is written, *"For when they shall say, Peace and safety..."* (1 Th. 5: 3). Whatever happens elsewhere on earth in the presently about fifty places of unrest, together has not the significance the Middle East has. We are now concerned with the Biblical "endtime prophecy" which comes to fulfillment on the political level in connection with Israel and also in Europe with the coming up of the old Roman Empire in which all of Europe will be integrated and Israel as well.

### A timely exhortation

In this last church age the complete message of God's revealed Word went forth right to the cry, *"Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him."* (Mt. 25). But to be ready our lamps must be cleansed, filled with oil and burning. Also our vessels must be filled with the oil of the Spirit. In reference to the symbol of the vessels, we are told that the golden vessel with the manna was placed into the Holiest of Holies (Heb. 9: 4). The concern is not only oil but rather includes the food which comes from heaven - the manna, the Word fresh revealed from the throne by which we live. The vessels of the wise virgins of Matthew 25 contain both, Word and Spirit. Some speak lightly only about the oil. The Spirit is not just wind blowing somewhere, the Spirit reveals the divine substance of the Word and in that manner our vessels are Spirit-filled. Thus saith the LORD, *"It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."* (Jn. 6: 63). *'And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.'* And do listen to what the Spirit says unto the churches.

By God's grace we were very deeply led into all profound Bible teachings and also into the prophetic part pertaining to the Plan of Salvation. Now it seems a great necessity according to the divine commission to stress the personal teaching and our personal life to be ready on that glorious day of Jesus Christ. In that day all the true believers will make up the entire Church which will appear before the LORD without spot or wrinkle, without any blemish (Eph. 5: 27). At the return of the LORD we will not be asked about the perfect teaching, the perfect knowledge, or the perfect revelation of the Divine Message, at that moment only one thing counts, namely that which God could bring about in those who were redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb by His Word and Spirit. At that moment will be fulfilled as it is written, "... *and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage; and the door was shut.*" (Mt. 25). Our preparation is now the most important thing.

At this moment the Church is not yet one heart and one soul. The Body of Christ is torn as never before. Brother Branham in one sermon made a statement like this. "The sickest body I know is the Body of Christ." He referred to the passage of Jer. 8: 22: "*Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? Why, then, is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?*" What would he say today? Those who refer to him are in a worse state than the rest. Never in the church history was there such a chaos after a God-sent revival. The blame for this humanly speaking hopeless situation must go to those who appointed themselves as ministers, who constantly refer to the pet utterances of their choice of the words of a prophet, but they themselves having no divine call for the proclamation of God's Word, therefore, failing to connect them with the written Word. They are the ones who have sown the seed of discrepancy and are responsible for all the divisions.

Now we are concerned with the distribution of the stored-up spiritual food and the proclamation of the whole counsel of God. The table of the LORD Must be prepared in a pleasant and correct way. As stated in the inaugural passage, we are concerned with the true belief of the elect and with the right knowledge of the truth which is expressed in a godly walk with the LORD. By the grace of God, the elect are practically living out the written Word in their lives.

Only if we look into the mirror of God's Word, we can see ourselves and recognise the state we are actually in. The LORD had to say admonishing words before establishing His New Testament covenant. He presented the natural man as the old being, "*And when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Harken unto me, every one of you, and understand: There is nothing from outside of a man that, entering into him, can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable. And he saith unto them. Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatever thing from outside entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; because It entereth not into his heart, but into the stomach, and goeth out into the draught, purging all foods? And he said, that which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and defile the man*" (Mk. 7: 14-23).

In various epistles Paul refers to those things which defile, for example in Rom. 1: 29-32, "... *being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, insolent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents; without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful; who, knowing the judgment of God, that they who commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same but have pleasure in them that do them.*"

In Gal. 5, from verse 19, the apostle describes both realms a believing person can dwell in. Firstly, the walk in the Spirit, secondly, the walk in the flesh. One realm is against the other and is not able to submit. Therefore, he speaks of the battle within a **person and then puts before our** very eyes the nature and the attributes of the old and the new man.

"*Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, strife, jealousy, wrath, factions, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and the like; of which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*" (vs. 19-21).

After this he refers to the fruit of the Spirit: "*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control, against such there is no law.*" (Gal. 5: 22-23). Again everyone can look into the mirror of this Word and with a clear mind recognise his position. It is not necessary to be especially spiritual to understand into which category the biblical description places us. If the first description does not apply, the second certainly will. We lean towards putting the works of the flesh into different levels of light and severe, but God places everything which is devilish human and also again which is of the divine-human nature into one catalogue.

At the top of this list are found things on which some believers would shake their heads: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery.

The rest found on the "blacklist" in the eyes of God is just as bad: hatred, strife, jealousy, wrath, factions, seditious, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings. "*But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one, no, not to eat.*" (1 Cor. 5: 11).

Who ever is not guilty of the things we would classify as heavy but starts enmities, and quarrels, and permits envy and jealousy to break through, is also dominated by demon powers. The talebearers and deceivers are classified with idolaters and with the rest found in the long list. Selfishness and partitions connected with jealousy and strife have been the cause of many factions in the Body of Christ. Often people loose control of themselves, if they are under such negative and destructive influences. Because all those things are used by Satan to destroy the Body of Christ, they are placed in the same level, and who ever is guilty of submitting to the enemy in such a way, will not see the Kingdom of God. Misunderstandings., suspicions, partiality, ill talk, etc., every kind of bad manner one can think of is being found among the believers who claim to belong to the Bride Church. It does not only look like it, admittedly to say, it is so. Satan has his play of deception with the believers as betrayer, as talebearer, as accuser, he is busy directly as the old diabolos, bringing about total confusion. Adding to this all the false teachings which have all come about by wrong inspiration. On all levels the enemy has penetrated into the Church and is destroying God's people.

The persecution from the outside has always brought believers closer together. The inner strive has always brought about splits. Those living in times of persecution came together for prayer not just for a tea or coffee party. The Church is divided into different groups who fight each other and claim that only they and those belonging to them will partake in the rapture. Many live in an unreconciled state being high-minded but not realising it.

In reference to the many problems within a church, Brother Branham made a statement to the end that **ninety-nine percent of those** who bring forth complaints are the ones having caused the same. Only those to whom God can still speak will be the ones who will take correction. The rest will reject God's admonition and think for themselves to be right without noticing how well the LORD meant with them. *"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 man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, that is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him (Col. 3: 8-10).*

Does the Scripture in this case make idle words? No and again no. Not unbelievers are called upon for self-examination but rather the believers. In any case, from the long list one or more of the things described as the fruit of the flesh by which the enemy has his way among the believers are found. The apostle, therefore, calls upon us to withstand the enemy in all his subtle ways.

*"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the LORD, and in the power of his might. Put On the whole armor of God, that, ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Eph. 6:10-12).* Satan does not come against us with horns, in that case we would recognise him immediately. We have to watch the unseen forces of darkness which try to influence our thinking and try to inspire our acts.

How often do believers allow thoughts to come up which are directed against others! The evil forces have the capability of making plausible to them that their thoughts are reality. Faith always starts in the heart and is embedded in thoughts of love and peace; the destroying thoughts against one another start also in the heart and occupy the thinking inspired by the enemy. We should reject every thought which has the goal of personal and church destruction. The enemy always comes to scatter and to destroy.

Everyone can read the text of Eph. 6 to the end and take the words to heart. Never before an honest self-examination was the command of the hour as right now. Only those who are deeply sincere will present themselves before the LORD and be **convinced by the Spirit** of the things not right. They will take off the old man and take on **the new man**, "... which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour; for we are members one of another." (Eph. 4:22-25). One member should not lie or deceive the other. We should not even be angry with one another, and if something comes up, we should not let the sun go down upon our wrath. If this is not practised, Satan, the accuser, will have his way as slanderer.

The life of Jesus Christ with all its virtues (2 Pet. 1) can only be in those who are begotten and born by the Spirit of God and thereby have the mind of Christ (Phil. 2: 5). In the fruit of the Spirit, the actual virtues of Jesus Christ are being manifested, *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law. (Gal. 5: 22-23).*

Only those who permit the fruit of the Spirit to grow within themselves will see the Kingdom of God. How can people in that day enter the Kingdom of God, if they are now outside and in fact participate in the destructive work against the Kingdom of God? How can one belong to the Church of God then, if the same rejects and is not within the Church now? The spirit of this time has not stopped at the doors to the churches. Many wish to have their independence. They like to decide for themselves not recognising God's order. The confession with their mouth is, "I belong wholly to the LORD", but the life testifies of the contrary. With many it is obvious that they are not within the church, they decide for themselves about their time, tithes, and everything else. God seems to have nothing to say to them for their practical life. They are independent now and will be independent then standing disappointed outside.

It is therefore necessary that all have the true experience of renewing and not only putting a new patch unto an old dress, and remain the same in their innermost being. Everyone must recognise in what way the enemy is misusing him or her for the destruction of God's people. The adversary has much experience, and therefore avails himself of every method as long as damage can be done in the most efficient way.

Most certainly some have given consideration to the thought why one's spiritual life is so fruitless and also about the personal condition. We must ask ourselves what the reasons are for such a general state of emergency and how we can come out of it and be a blessing to others. All the many fruits of the flesh are mentioned together with jealousy

and sorcery and idolatry. How can we escape those things? By permitting God to create in us a new life having the fruit of the Spirit by the virtues of the Redeemer, fully expressed by the redeemed! From that moment the enemy will not be able to misuse the believers.

Envy and jealousy led to the first murder. Cain saw that God was pleased with the sacrifice of Abel. and that is where it happened. Jealousy came into his heart, hatred and murder followed automatically. If God testifies, if He blesses somebody, that is not in the hands of a man. Every child of God has only whatever the LORD gave. It is not because of the merits of anyone - God distributes the gifts and callings according to His own pleasure. If somebody has more in earthly goods than others, it **should not bother** us. There were always the **rich and the poor, but there were also those** who were satisfied with whatever they had. The LORD said, *"But seek ye first kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."* (Mt. 6: 33). It is also written, *"And having food and raiment let us be therewith content."* - (1 Tim. 6: 8). There is absolutely no reason to let anything come up in our hearts whereby jealousy would prevail. It also makes no difference if it happens in the earthly or the spiritual realm.

In the natural special talents are admired and highly esteemed. Those who have good voices to sing in operas, the talents in different sports, those in arts and inventors, etc. are admired. Why has Satan so much room among the believers? As Brother Branham so well said having a football game in view, "If one of the team has the ball, the others should protect him and not try to take the ball away from him."

*"For our comely parts have no need; but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it."*

(1 Cor. 12: 24-26).

All believers are profoundly asked to withstand the destructive forces of the enemy and resist *"unto blood, striving against sin"* (Heb. 12: 4), that is, between life and death. This we can only do, if we recognise in what way the enemy has attacked, so that one was against the other. Only if we totally submit under the mighty hand of God, the devil will have to flee.

*"Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves, therefore, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the LORD, and he shall lift you up. Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law"* (Jas. 4: 6b-11).

The apostle Peter **wrote admonishing**, *"Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, like a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world"* (1 Pet. 5: 8-9).

Whosoever cannot give his consent towards every Word of God from all his heart will further on be misled by the enemy. How often did one judge the other from his own standpoint? How often did gossip have the effect of a vicious cancer which destroys? How quickly does one come to conclusions about others by what they heard! It cannot continue like this! Nowadays everybody says about a brother or a sister what they like. Nobody seems to remember that we must give an account for every idle word. Who is interested to verify whatever is being said with the person concerned?

One spreads about the other whatever they think, and everyone adds a little to it. No one demands that the person spoken about should be present. A wife can say about her husband, a **husband about his** wife, and everybody about everyone whatever they want to. Nobody feels any condemnation about it, no one seems to be judged by the Spirit of God. Everyone thinks to be right. No one seems to comprehend the destruction that is connected with it. How long are we going to remain in this desolate state within the church? Everyone should say about others only what they would be saying in their presence and also in the presence of the LORD. It would be advisable not to speak about others at all, but rather make use of the time praying for others and testifying about the LORD.

To make the slandering gossip believable the remark is being added, "I know him ... I know her ... Nobody needs to tell me anything..." That may be true, but such people do not know themselves. There are those who do not realise their destructive deeds and ways. As the Holy Scripture points out, such people have no peace with God and wherever they go they create trouble with their tongue which is kindled by the fire of hell (Jas. 3: 6). Whenever they speak, their tongue is as poisonous as a serpent's bite. Often there is no remedy, and spiritual death follows. Such people can speak with old and also with new tongues, and most of the time they do speak with a double tongue. It depends in which way the enemy can use them the most to make the greatest damage to individuals and the Church. Once they bless, then they curse, it depends if the person concerned is declared to be a friend or an enemy. **How long can this continue? What solution does the Holy Scripture offer?**

### A personal encouragement

Because of the imminent return of Christ the question arises: When will the Bride Church submit fully to the Word of God and be in the service of the LORD for the up-building of the whole Body of Christ? We do believe that the true Church should be at the end as she was in the beginning: one heart and one soul. Only when this is achieved by the grace of God we shall see the great works of the Almighty. Before this State pleasing unto God can be reached, every

individual has to experience a repentance wrought by the Holy Spirit in the innermost of our hearts. A repentance that is not demanded of others but experienced by every one personally. After this has taken place, the Scriptural blessings will become a reality with us.

In order to serve one another we must have the humble submitting character of a servant. Who ever needs to admonish or reproof others must place himself into their situation before doing so. Before we can pull out the mote from the eye of someone, we must first pull out the beam from our own eye.

The statement of our LORD found in the Sermon on the Mount, known as "The golden rule" should be our guide line, **"Therefore, all things whatever would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them for this is the law and the prophets."** (Mt. 7: 12).

In that notable sermon on the Mount the Lord pronounces the blessings upon those who follow Him in obedience to His Word, even to the statement, *"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God."* (Mt. 5:8). Whoever is informed about the special God-given ministry through Brother Branham will know that his "back to the original Word" Message must precede the second coming of Christ. John the Baptist was sent to **prepare** the way of the LORD at the first coming of Christ. This apostolic prophetic ministry is sent to **restore** (Mt. 17: 11). If we do recognise how essential this God-sent message is to the Bride Church, we must wake up immediately, come to our senses and be sober in all things. We also should have a good spiritual judgment of our own state and of that of the Church. It would be a shame to continue in the practised manner where everyone believes with his segregated party to be ready for the Rapture. It is astonishing that all groups who are contrary to one another assuming the same, even if their countenance fell as that of Cain (Gen. 4: 5).

Believers of this day are of the opinion that they can love God and at the same time hate their brother or sister. They believe they can talk to God, but would not speak to a brother or a sister. They believe that one can remain irreconcilable and still be ready for the Return of Christ. They assume of being in fellowship with God and reject the fellowship with a brother. True fellowship with God is connected with true fellowship of the believers and His servants.

*"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly **our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ.**"* (1 Jn. 1: 3).

As God's children we should comprehend that in all realms we must be subordinated to God's Word. For the Church only God's order applies to which we must submit on each level. Everybody, man, woman, father and mother, every boy and girl, all who had their personal experience of salvation and are part of the Church must submit to God's order. Whenever eating and drinking or the keeping of days is concerned, everyone should do things according to his own conviction, but leave the other person in peace and respect their conviction (Rom. 14: 1-10). It is different, if things are concerned which are demanded in God's Word. Only on grounds of the written Word it is permissive to complain and again to judge only by the written Word.

In Israel the elders were acting as judges, dealing with the problems of the people (Dt. 16: 18-20). The whole congregation sought their advice. In the Church are placed the elders who take care of all such things. When the LORD God appeared to Moses, He said unto him, *"Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them ..."* (Ex. 3: 16). They were men who had the confidence of the tribes and the people. When Moses climbed up the mountain to meet with the LORD God, he took the seventy elders with him who were also called the nobles of Israel. *"And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand; also they saw God, and did eat and drink."* (Ex. 24: 11). As on one hand, the priests took care in the spiritual part of the temple service, and also the Levites had their place in the divine service. The elders looked after the well-being of the whole congregation, judging a reprobate son (Dt. 21: 18-21) and also a marriage dispute (Dt. 22: 13-21).

In the New Testament churches, elders were being appointed (Acts 14:23, 1 Tim 3:1-7; Tit. 1; a. o.). When Paul and Barnabas with a small delegation came to Jerusalem to settle a certain question, they were met by the apostles and elders (Acts 15). *"The apostles and elders and brethren send greetings unto the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia..."* (vs. 23b). The apostle Paul did not call the brethren who had the fivefold ministry, when he was concerned with a local **church, but rather** the elders. *"And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church ... Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with -his own blood."* (Acts 20: 17+28).

The elders were also called overseers. In the Book of Revelation the twenty-four elders are spoken of, representing both, the Old and the New Covenant. Elders are being called to anoint the sick with oil and to pray for them (Jas. 5: 14). They do have a responsibility for the well-being of the Church. *"The elders who are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight of it..."* (1 Pet. 5: 1-2). Who ever has the true fear of God in his heart, will respect the brethren in their God-ordained ministries. Who ever has no respect for God's decision, the same cannot have the fear of God. The fear of God must return into the Church (Acts 5: 1-11). because the fear of God is the beginning of all divine wisdom (Ps. 111: 10. Prov. 1: 7; Jas. 3: 17).

The responsible brethren in a church are to take care of the problems of those belonging to the assembly. Paul writes, *"For what have I to do to judge them also that are outside? Do not ye judge them that are within?"* (1 Cor. 5:12). Who ever disconnects himself from church life, because the Word did not seem to be on his side, disconnects himself from God, testifying thereby that he does not submit under the Word but rather places himself above it. The question then is, if such a person can still remain as a member in the Body of Christ for whom the whole Word is binding. There are such people who always believe for themselves to be right. The right of a believer does only exist within the set limits of God's Word. Whosoever goes further, leaves the Bible grounds, and withdraws himself from the convincing by the Holy Spirit. In such a way people not only walk according to their human-fleshly understanding, but they actually come under the influence of evil spirits and go wrong.

*"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye who are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."* (Gal. 6: t).

If the concern is marriage, family or any other problem among believers, in every case only God's Word alone is applicable. No believer has the right to seek his right against a brother or a sister in Christ through a lawyer and a court decision. The apostle Paul was reproving the believers who sought their right before unbelieving judges instead of the saints (1 Cor. 6). All those who seek their right before unbelieving judges have despised God and God's Word, and throw the Church of the Living God into shame before unbelievers. They throw the pearls before the swines. In such a case, people have turned their back on God and His Word.

No one who purposely oversteps God's Word will remain unpunished. Who ever decides to take an earthly judge has rejected the heavenly judge and has annulled the Word of God for himself and is stepping on the way of unbelievers. For example, how can a judge give a right judgment in a marriage dispute, if he does not know God's Word at all? He simply does not know what is written in Mt. 5: 32, in Mt. 19: 9. in I Cor. 7: 10-11+15. and in many other places in the New Testament. He also does not know what the Word says in the Old Testament from Ex. 20 **until Mal. 2: 16.**

Whatever concerns believers is not a private or a family case, but rather is the concern of the whole assembly, as it is known publicly. Therefore the divine jurisdiction must be according to the Word within the assembly, not taking sides with any party. In a case of dispute always a mediator is needed to administer justice. The mediator can never take sides, should not be related to one of the parties, as he must mediate and reconcile. Our Redeemer is the best example. He became the Mediator of the New Covenant. In Him the divided and separated humanity was reconciled with God. Who ever rejects the jurisdiction of the Word within the assembly withdraws from God and is about to walk in his own ways. It must be achieved what Paul taught. that experienced men in the faith should judge a case and give clarification.

If two people have a quarrel, it does not need to say, that both had bad intentions. It is possible that each party is making use of another Scripture to support their own cause without taking into consideration the one of the other party. As old as humanity is the fact that one blames the other. That is the way it started in the garden of Eden when the LORD God talked to Adam. He said, *"The woman whom thou gavest me..."* When the LORD God then spoke to the woman, she put it on the serpent saying, *"The serpent beguiled me..."* The Lord God did not curse Adam and Eve but only the serpent.

No problem is solved in accusing someone else. By this the case is being made worse. To blame somebody else comes about by the fact that forgiveness and reconciliation is being rejected. This should never happen between believers. As a warning we are told in the LORD'S prayer, ***"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. ... For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."*** (Mt. 6: 12-15).

If someone thinks such important statement does not apply, he deceives himself. If someone does not forgive "one thing", to him God will not forgive "all" the things. Thus we can read in Mark 11, ***"And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have anything against any, that your Father also, who is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father, who is in heaven, forgive your trespasses."*** (vv: 25-26). If one compares himself and his deeds with such Scriptures, it is easy to judge ourselves in the light of God's Word. If somebody really forgave, he will stretch forth the hand of reconciliation to others. Who ever is not reconciled with a brother, cannot be reconciled with God.

It would be good for each and every one to read Mt. 5, from verse 21 to 26, in order to comprehend the seriousness of our talk and even the vocabulary we are using, if we speak to each other. If we take things lightly, we might say that it is not to be taken seriously. But God Who knows the thoughts and intents of the heart also knows why we use the language we do. He proves the heart and knows all about us. From Mt. 5 " we learn that anybody having become guilty of using strong language against his brother. to leave the sacrifice on the altar of the LORD and make things right before offering the sacrifice. Only if God's justice and order is established in each individual it will be established in the Church of the Living God.

## The divine answer within the assembly

*"Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a tax collector." (Mt. 18: 15-17).* This scripture Paul must have had in mind when he addressed the responsible brethren in 1 Cor 5, when he pronounced together with them the judgment upon the man according to Lev. 18: 8.

The man was guilty in a way even unknown to the heathen.

Apparently the elders were not being considered to give counsel, because the apostle rebuked those in the church of Corinth, "If, then, ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, do ye set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church? I speak **to your shame**. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? No, not **one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?**" (1 Cor. 6: 4-5).

In 2 Cor. 2 we are told what happened to a believer who did not listen to one or two witnesses, whose case was being presented to the church. "So that on the contrary ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore, I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him. For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things. To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also; for if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ, lest Satan should get an advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices." (vv 7-11).

We realise, therefore, it is not the question of pronouncing one another guilty, as we are dealing with forgiveness. Only when God's order is established, a well-pleasing atmosphere is reached in His presence. The law pronounces all of us guilty, the grace declares that we are free. The LORD took all our guilt upon Himself and bore the same **unto the cross**. There divine forgiveness and reconciliation through the all-sufficient sacrifice of God's divine love took place in Jesus Christ, our LORD. HE brought peace to all who receive and accept Him. **If somebody brings up the question of guilt towards another, annuls his own forgiveness. The finished redemption work including the total forgiveness looses its validity because a person does not forgive.** In that way enmity and separation walls are being put up. If we hold guilt against somebody else, God holds our guilt against us, because we declare by our deeds the work done for us on Calvary as invalid. In such cases our own self has its way and our thoughts and actions rule over us. For ever is valid what God did in Christ, including the pronouncing of the blessings according to Rom. 4:7-8, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the LORD will not impute sin."

In Eph. 5, from verse 21, everybody is spoken to. Firstly in general, "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God," after this the women are shown their place and also the men theirs until the climax in the comparison of Christ and the Church for which He offered Himself, "... that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (vv. 26-27).

Perfection in the Bride cannot be reached in a doctrinal realm, but only in the divine love which is the bond of perfection. This divine unity must be achieved, before we can be taken up to meet our Lord. During his lifetime Brother Branham was taken in the spirit into paradise. He saw the white dressed multitude who shouted, "Our precious Brother." Then he heard a tremendous voice saying, "Only perfect love enters here. All you ever loved and all who ever loved you, God has given you." "Love worketh no ill to its neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom. 13: 10).

Paul made reference to some of his special experiences and also about his visit to paradise (2 Cor. 12). He already testified in 1 Cor. 2: 9, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

The apostle John writes much about this divine love. "... Everyone that loveth him that begot loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments." (1 Jn. 5: 1b-2). Only those into whose hearts this redemptive, forgiving divine love which was manifested on Calvary through reconciliation and forgiveness is poured out by the Holy Spirit can truly practise divine love.

The epistles of the apostle John touch the kernel of God's life in the believers. He was the one who admonished us not to love in the manner of Cain who was from the wicked one and had slain his brother. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth. ... Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God. and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. ... No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love. and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him ... If a man says, I love God, **and hateth his brother**, he is a liar, for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" (1 Jn. 3: 18; 4: 7-20)

## Final conclusion

In 1 Cor. 13 the apostle Paul describes the attributes of the divine love. The Word *agape* is certainly wrongly translated as "charity". Charity can be practised by anyone, but *agape* - divine love is the essence of God Himself. If we were preaching, singing, and talking about this love and our lives testify of the contrary, whom should we believe? We need to find the cause of hatred and enmity which penetrates into marriage, into families, among different parties, and into the church fellowships. We must find the cause which separates believers from one another, before we can find the cure and unite and live a God-pleasing life which coincides with the Holy Scriptures. A life not living in self-pleasing righteousness, but a life indeed well-pleasing unto God. Enoch had the testimony that he pleased God, before he was taken up (Heb. 11: 5). No self-testimony embedded in self-righteousness is of any value or use. We need God to testify from the heavens, "This is My beloved son, My beloved daughter, in whom I am well pleased." Whenever heaven opens over us, the Spirit of God comes down and our whole being including our tongue will be placed into the service of God. We shall then proclaim His great works, as was done on and since the Day of Pentecost.

Those who will partake in the rapture will unite in the divine love which is the bond of perfection leading into our completion. Love, reconciliation, and forgiveness go together. Only then the peace of God which passes all human understanding will rule and reign in our hearts and dictate our deeds. In this way we reach a lovely atmosphere in which God and His people do feel well.

The utterance of our LORD in the Sermon on the Mount should be once more mentioned, **"Therefore, all things whatever, ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.**" Without hesitation can be said, **"Whatever we do not want others would do to us, we should never do to them."** Would we appreciate if somebody would think, speak, and judge, as we do with them? Would it be all right, if some would hate and despise and reject us, as we do with them? Would somebody really wish to be disfellowshipped, despised, and treated, as one with leprosy and so on? Surely not.

Who ever is concerned with being ready at the return of Christ, will be spoken to by the Word and take the correction by the Spirit. May the following Bible quotations not miss their effects in all of us.

*"Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous, not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but on the contrary, blessing, knowing that Ye are called to this, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile; let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and pursue it. For the eyes of the LORD are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers; but the face of the LORD is against them that do evil." (1 Pet. 3: 8-12)*

*"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the LORD. Behold, the farmer waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient, establish your hearts; for the coming of the LORD draweth near. Murmur not one against another, brethren, lest ye be judged; behold, the judge standeth before the door. Take, my brethren, the prophets who have spoken in the name of the LORD, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience." (Jas. 5: 7-10)*

*"Only let your conduct be as it becometh the gospel of Christ, that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel" (Phil. 1: 27)*

*"If there be, therefore, any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tender mercies and compassions, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves." (Phil. 2: 1-3)*

*"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue; by which are given unto us exceedingly great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self control, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.*

*For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our LORD Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make, your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall. For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 1: 3-11)*

**"Put on, therefore, as the elect of God holy and beloved, tender mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against**



any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. " (Col. 3: 12-15)

"But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. " (Heb. 3: 13)

"But the end of all things is at hand; be ye, therefore, sober-minded, and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent love among yourselves; for love shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. " (1 Pet. 4: 7-10)

**"Now unto him who 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 Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end Amen.**

(Eph. 3: 20-21)

**"And now, little children, abide in him, that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming."** (1 Jn. 2: 28).

### **Mission Report**

With deep gratitude we may look back to the year 1993. It was blessed in an incomparable way. The faithfulness of our LORD was manifested by His grace, as He has done more than we ever could ask or hope for.

In East and Western Europe, in West, Central and East Africa, in the different parts of Asia I could personally witness during my missionary trips how hundreds and sometimes thousands attended the meetings.

The climax during the October-trip, which took me through six countries, was in Manila in the Philippines. There the whole meeting was transmitted for two hours to the whole nation. Millions were acquainted with God's Word watching the service on TV. The second meeting was transmitted for one hour. In many cities new connections were established and new doors opened. I also met brethren who for a certain time did walk beside the beaten path and were following unscriptural teachings, but now returned with all their hearts confessing and committing themselves to the ministry only preaching those things which can be preached from God's Word.

For the world-wide English speaking people we need to reprint some of the brochures which were published in our Mission Centre, especially the book "Traditional Christianity ... " which needs reprinting in thousands of copies. This book is also being translated into the languages spoken in various other countries. Thanks be to God for the fact that we do not have a single teaching to defend. We do not belong to a Trinitarian or any Oneness church-organisation, we belong to the blood-redeemed, first-born Church of the living God (Heb. 12: 23), which is right to the end the pillar and foundation of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15). In all points we agree with the Bible teachings and say only what the Scripture says. Actually God Himself does teach us by His holy Word and Spirit. In the past forty years of my ministry, by God's grace I never had to take back what I preached. I always only preached God's Word in truth which remains forever.

Just to clarify this point, it should be mentioned that I do not believe in a successor of Brother Branham. There was no successor of Peter and Paul, no successor of Luther or Zwingli, no successor of any man of God in church history. With God only exist original divine callings in connection with His plan of salvation. All servants of God did whatever they were commissioned to do by the LORD. The same applies to me and my ministry to which the LORD has called me on April, the 2nd, 1962, with His mighty, all-penetrating voice when He gave the commission. The evidence speaks overwhelmingly for itself, as I was privileged to be in the full-time, world-wide ministry during the last twenty-seven years. I personally visited one-hundred and seven countries, many of them frequently. But we are serving more or less all the world, even countries which I did not yet visit.

If there are brethren who are silly enough to present themselves as successors of Brother Branham, then one can only weep or laugh and shake the head, it depends in what mood one is. In the right hand of the resurrected LORD were only seven stars - the seven church angels (Rev. 1: 20). If there are "eight ones" in existence, they are certainly not in the hand of the LORD and consequently having no divine commission. As previously mentioned, the LORD had His servants and messengers at various times for specific purposes, but there are main things He does Himself: He redeemed His church, He calls the elect, He prepares the chosen ones for the day of His glorious return. Within a short time He will complete His own work. He will also personally come to take His beloved Bride into Glory and we shall meet Him in the air (1 Thess. 4: 13-17).

### **Miscellaneous**

As generally known, we are printing in the Krefeld "Mission Centre" the sermons of Brother Branham and brochures in many languages. We also send out between ten and twelve thousand cassettes per annum in the German language only to those who live in scattered places upon request.

With all my heart I would like to ask all of you to remember me in my responsible ministry before God. It is now more important than ever before that the LORD should have His way with His people. Through the support of the

faithful believers, especially of the three German-speaking nations in Europe, it is possible to serve God's people world-wide. May the blessings of the LORD rest upon all of you richly.

At this occasion I would like to thank our beloved Brother Alexis Barilier for his unceasing work for the French speaking countries. During my missionary trips, I was told many times what a blessing our Brother has become by serving the French speaking brothers and sisters in Africa and Europe.

It should be also mentioned what a blessing flows through the ministry of our beloved Brother Etienne Genton for the Italian speaking believers. We stand behind our brethren with our prayers and do thank the LORD for all who support their ministries. Without any selfishness these brethren are serving the LORD and His people,

Also Brother Markku Vuori in Finland needs to be mentioned. He does his best to serve the hungry souls in his country. May the Lord's richest blessings rest upon all brothers and sisters in the cool North and shed into their hearts the burning love of Christ for each other.

We also remember with gratitude in our hearts all the brothers and sisters who voluntary are busy in translating the sermons of Brother Branham and the brochures into the many languages. One is greatly impressed while seeing the work being done harmoniously to serve God's people everywhere. Having the world-wide mission work in view, many more could be mentioned by name.

For the year 1994, from all my heart I wish all of you the personal fulfilment of all the promises God made and the visible personally experienced blessings of the Almighty. In any case we have moved closer to the return of our LORD. We do realise that the time for the Bride church here on earth is short and the coming of the LORD could be at any moment. I would appreciate hearing from all ministering brethren **the world over.**

Please remember me and this ministry connected to the plan of salvation in your prayers. May in all things the will of God be done. Amen.

By His commission

Our European convention at the first week-end in October 1993 was very well attended. We had delegations from fifteen different countries, and the house of God was packed to capacity with approximately 600 people.

God willing and time still lasting, we shall have our next convention during the Easter time - the first week-end in April 1994. Maybe it would be especially good for some of the North American brethren to witness what God is doing in Central Europe.

### **Special notice**

Please note that our area **postal code has changed** after the unification of our country effective from July 1st, 1993, and also the specification "West Germany" exists no more. All who write are kindly requested to make use of the proper area code whether addressing me personally, Bro. E. Frank, or the Mission Centre.

The address is now as follows:

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