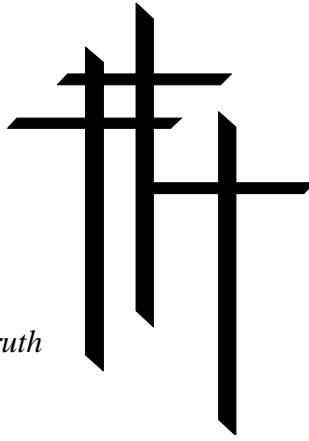


# Timely Messenger

*Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth  
Speaking the Truth in Love*



Volume 64 No. 9

September 2004

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## CONSECRATED COMMUNION

By Charles Wages

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Communion is, and should be, a vital part of every believer's life. However, just like every aspect of God's Word and every part of our worship, it needs serious and spiritual consideration. Surely every believer would concur with this and be energized to participate and practice.

Our only true and reliable source for an understanding of this most important truth is the Word of God. Let's consider what communion really means and how it affects our lives. The word "communion"

itself has a variety of meanings, yet all closely related.

First, it is interesting and very important that the same original word or root word for "communion" and "communicate" is the same in meaning (*koinonia*). *Vine's Expository Dictionary* defines it as "having in common, partnership, fellowship recognized and enjoyed. Thus, it is used of the common experience and interests of Christians." The word is used in Acts 2:42-45 where it reads,

*"And they continued*

*stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need."* (Acts 2:42-45)

It is interesting and informative to note in this particular passage that the apostles had fellowship together in the apostles' teaching, and breaking of bread, and prayers. Also, we are told that many wonders and signs were done by the apostles, and then later they "had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need." What sweet communion or fellowship! They enjoyed one another and had fellowship in the twelve apostles' teaching, at that time, the eating of the necessary food, prayers, and per-

formed many wonders and signs! “What a fellowship. What a joy divine.”

Isn't it wonderful that believers today can have sweet communion or fellowship around the Word of God, “rightly divided” as the apostle Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 2:15?

This brings us to communion that communicates. Consecrated or holy communion is fully realized and utilized as we share or have fellowship in telling or helping others see the “rightly divided” Word. It is almost inconceivable to think that something so wonderful, so divine, shouldn't be communicated to others, especially “others of the household of faith” (Gal. 6:10). The communicating of the Word to the unsaved is of utmost importance. Though sweet communion or fellowship cannot be had with unbelievers, yet we have the joyous privilege of sharing the gospel of God's grace with all! We are informed and admonished in Hebrews 13:16,

*“But to do good and to communicate forget not:*

*for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”*

It is noteworthy to recognize that communication (koinonia) is used in conjunction with (logos) which refers to the Word! It is of great benefit to read the words of Ephesians 4:29,

*“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”*

In conclusion, Consecrated or holy communion should be, and can be an ongoing day by day activity of every believer. The element that is absolutely necessary is the Word of God. We should not only partake of it ourselves, but communicate it, study it, and have sweet fellowship in the process! Remember Jeremiah of old said,

*“Thy words were found and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me joy and rejoicing of mine heart; for I am called by thy name, O*

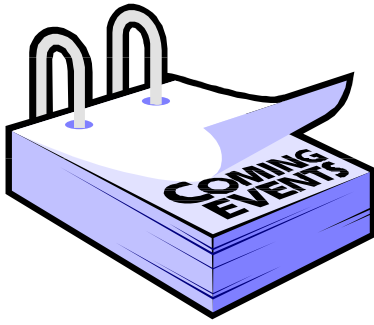
*Lord God of hosts.” (Jer. 15:16)*

Note: We have more to eat than Jeremiah or the Apostles!

Next month's issue will have a follow-up article entitled:

*The Satisfying Supper*

That the  
communication  
of thy faith  
may become  
effectual  
by the  
acknowledging  
of every good  
thing which is  
in you in  
Christ Jesus.  
—Philemon 6



## WINTER YOUTH RETREAT

**Dec. 30 — Jan. 1**

**WHO?** This retreat is for young people, ages 13 through college age.

**WHERE?** The retreat will be held at Three Mountain Retreat near Clifton, Texas. They have wonderful facilities, good home cooking, and horseback riding.

**WHY?** The focus of this retreat is Bible study and Christian fun and fellowship. The theme has not yet been selected. More information will be provided in the next issue.

**HOW?** A registration form will be included in the November and December issues.

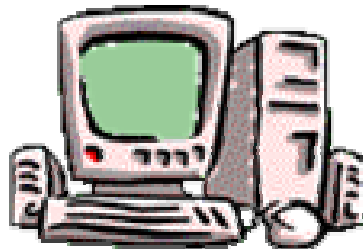
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*Gregg Bing — Editor*

Sent **free** to anyone upon request. If you live in the Fort Worth area, we invite you to worship with us.

#### Sunday Services:

10:00 AM Sunday School  
11:00 AM Morning Worship  
6:00 PM Evening Worship

#### Mid-Week Services:

Tues. 10:00 AM Ladies Class  
Wed. 7:00 PM Bible Study

### ADDRESS CHANGED?

If so, please notify Grace Bible Church. Be sure to include your name, your old address, and your new address. This will help us keep our mailing list current and reduce the cost of postage.

*Thanks for your help  
in this matter!*

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## BE ON YOUR GUARD

By R.B. Shiflet

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One of the strongest appeals that the Apostle Paul makes to believers is that found in Colossians 2:4-23, in which he warns us against letting Satan capture our minds. This section of the epistle is bounded on either side by the word “hid,” and its key message is the fulness of Christ as the only answer to the emptiness of human reasoning. Note how in verse 3 he refers to Christ, “in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,” and in chapter 3, verse 3, he says to us as believers, “ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” Between these passages that tell us that all true wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ and that our own lives are also hidden in Him, he calls attention to (1) The Purpose of our Enemy, (2) The Plan of our Enemy, and (3) The Protection Against our Enemy.

### THE PURPOSE of Our Enemy

The aim of our foe is stated in Colossians 2:8: “Beware lest any man spoil you.” The term “spoil” means to “rob,” or to “make a prey” of, or to take one captive. It is obvious that a loose hold on the truth of our fulness in Christ will make one an easy victim to this method of deception. Just as surely as the truth makes free, error genders to bondage. One who fails to see the truth of our completeness in Christ and His fulness does not have a balanced view of truth and can be easily led astray.

It is interesting to note the bait that Satan uses to reason aside the weak brother that he takes into captivity. For the carnal believer, such as those at Corinth, he uses the coarse appeals of the flesh with all of its lusts. But for the

“spiritual” Christian who still has an unbalanced view of truth, he may use a “spiritual” bait—as is suggested in Colossians 2:18. This may come in the form of “visions,” superior claims to holy living, or any effort to attain spiritual progress through fleshly efforts or wisdom.

### THE PLAN of Our Enemy

The enemy usually lures us aside through an emphasis on an empty, deceitful kind of wisdom. He bases this, according to our chapter in Colossians, on three things:

First, he uses man-made teachings, or the traditions of men. Bible teachers tell us that the word “tradition” as used here is found thirteen times in the New Testament, and it is usually used in a bad sense. Note, for example, where the Pharisees were charged with making the Word of God of none effect through their traditions (Mark 7:2-7). How much of the church programs of today are nothing more than traditions of men, with

no Scriptural basis!

Second, Satan would lead us astray by keeping us in the elements, or rudiments of the world. The term "rudiments" means "first steps." The Hebrews were told that these rudiments or elements belonged to childhood, and the mature believer was charged to leave them and go on (Hebrews 5:12-6:3). The Galatians were told that these rudiments would only gender bondage (Galatians 4:3). In Colossians 2:20, the believer is told that he is dead with Christ to these rudiments, and that he therefore should not be subject to carnal ordinances. By way of contrast, he is told to set his affections on things above, not on things on the earth. Believers who live in the shadow days of external ordinances miss the joy of the reality, who is Christ; those who feel that they can worship only with these worldly elements fail to see that we are citizens of heaven and in the sight of God are "seated with Christ" in heavenly places even now.

Third, if Satan cannot

lure us through traditions of men and rudimentary ordinances, he will make the intellectual appeal. He will reason us aside through wisdom of words, making the cross of Christ ineffective (1 Cor. 1:17); he will try to get us so involved in the wisdom of this world that we will fail to see that it is only foolishness to God (1 Cor. 3:19); he will lead us into fleshly wisdom, frustrating the grace of God (2 Cor. 1:12); and he will make the wisdom from beneath so attractive that we neglect the wisdom which is from above (James 3:15-17).

#### **THE PROTECTION Against Our Enemy**

The entire Colossian epistle is written to give us the protection we need against these tactics of our enemy. It may be summarized in one or two verses: "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are COMPLETE IN HIM, which is the head of all principality and power" (Colossians 2:9-10). This completeness in Christ is the exact oppo-

site of the empty, vain life that Satan has to offer. Are we really aware of what we have? YE ARE COMPLETE IN HIM! If I am complete in Christ, then nothing a preacher or a church can do for me in the way of ritual or religion is needed. As a matter of fact, we can add nothing to completeness. We are Complete in HIM. If we believe this, may we act upon it and make Christ the center and circumference of our lives. May we rejoice in Him, glory in Him, do all that we say or do in HIS name, giving no occasion to the flesh, but doing all for His honor and glory. Only then will the purpose and plan of our enemy be foiled and our protection against him be sure.

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**An Informal Survey of  
the New Testament**  
*A Dispensational Study*  
by R.B. Shiflet

will be continued in future issues of the *Timely Messenger*.

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## DEATH AND RESURRECTION

By Ike T. Sidebottom

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Genesis, the book of beginnings, introduces us to God's revealed truth concerning this timely subject. The book opens with the divine record of the living man, Adam, in "the garden of Eden," and it closes with a dead man, Joseph, in "a coffin in Egypt."

Adam was placed in "the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:15-17).

"He did eat" (Genesis 3:6). But death did not claim fallen Adam immediately. He "lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth: and the

days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters: and all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died" (Genesis 5:3-5).

This same short clause, "and he died," can be written after the names of all the sons of Adam who have made their departure from this life, except two. Enoch, "the seventh from Adam" (Jude 14), "walked with God: and he was not; for God took him" (Genesis 5:24). And "Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven" (2 Kings 2:11).

Across the ages, death has claimed its toll from all peoples. Regardless of race, color, or nationality, whether they are men of high estate or of low estate; learned or unlearned, rich or poor, all are subject to the call of death at any moment. The reason for this

is, that by one man, Adam, "sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12). This explains why the book of beginnings closes with a man in a coffin. However, we must remember that Joseph, the man in the coffin did not go down into death without hope of living again in his resurrection body.

When death overtook Joseph in the land of Egypt, his thoughts and his hopes were set upon another land. It was the land which God had sworn to his fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is why his parting words unto his brethren are so significant. He said unto them: "I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you and ye shall carry up my bones from hence" (Genesis 50:24-25). He did not say ye shall carry up me, that is, the

person that I am, from hence. Joseph, himself, had been gathered with his people at death, the same as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had been gathered unto their people (Genesis 25:8; 35:29; and 49:33). Therefore his request pertained only to his “bones,” the remains of the earthly house in which he had lived, and which was to be resurrected and live again in “the land which He sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.” We also have positive truth that all of God’s children who have preceded us in death shall be raised to life again.

It was the psalmist who said, “I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness” (Psalms 17:15).

The prophet said, “Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise” (Isaiah 26:19).

Daniel was used of the Holy Spirit to enlighten us concerning the time, as well as the fact, of the resurrection of the righteous. He said: “And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy peo-

ple: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever” (Daniel 12:1-3).

Jesus, in His conversation with Mary concerning the death of her brother Lazarus, said, “Thy brother shall rise again ... he that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live” (John 11:23, 25).

The apostle Paul stood before the Roman authorities and testified concerning his belief in resurrection life. He said, “But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in

the prophets: and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men” (Acts 24:14-16).

Later the apostle was moved upon to write again, as an able minister of the New Testament, saying, “Now if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection Of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ: Whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope

in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.” (1 Corinthians 15:12-19).

Even these few scriptures, quoted above, are sufficient to prove the reality of death; and that we are, indeed, in the land of the dying. These references also confirm our hope in the resurrection of dead bodies of the saints of all ages.



WHEN CHRIST, WHO  
IS OUR LIFE, SHALL  
APPEAR, THEN  
SHALL YE ALSO  
APPEAR WITH HIM  
IN GLORY.  
(COLOSSIANS 3:4)

## REMEMBER

Whenever you know a desolate hour  
And are steeped in misery,  
Remember that Christ was lonely too,  
In bleak Gethsemane.

Whenever you feel that all of the world  
Has turned its back on you,  
Remember that Christ knew what it was  
To feel abandoned too.

Whenever you feel that your burden  
Is greater than you can bear,  
Remember that He too heartbreakingly knew  
A moment of dark despair.

And remembering these things  
Just bear in mind,  
His victory was finally won  
When He bowed His head and humbly said,  
“Not My will, but Thine, be done!”

—Author Unknown

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