

## THE WORLD

The item directly below is the first part of a symposium— **“FOES OF THE NEW CREATION IN THE LAST DAYS”—“THE WORLD”** Robert Alexander #343 followed by Smith on the Flesh #344 and Hugelman on the Adversary #345. Convention of Associated Bible Students of Metropolitan Detroit, Saturday, April 5, 1975.)

Brethren, it is our joy to be here among you and to consider with you the admonitions of the Spirit that will help us be better and more ably serve our Heavenly Father after we leave the convention tomorrow evening.

The WORLD as a foe of the New Creation is a formidable enemy as are all three, but as our experience has proved, the scriptures to be correct—the world is a monstrous enemy. We read—1 John 2:15, 16, “Love not the world [*cosmos*], neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world.” In Rom. 12:2 the Apostle Paul tells us that we are not to be conformed to this world (*aion*) “but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” The Apostle Paul continues in 1 Cor. 1:20, 21 to show us that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. 1 Cor. 3:18, “Because God has made the wisdom of this world foolishness.”

The Lord makes several things clear to us in terms of the world. First of all, we are to have nothing to do with it in terms of our affections, our standards, neither the things that are in the world. Not only is the spirit of the world wrong, but much of what that spirit has produced is equally wrong. We are to separate ourselves from them. The quality of the world’s wisdom and spirit is deficient, as compared to God’s wisdom and spirit. And then, it is important to recognize that God’s wisdom and spirit are so much ahead and so much above the world and its spirit that we can concentrate on it. It is not as though the world produces a vacuum—it is as though we are so imbued with the Holy Spirit, so involved and committed to the Heavenly Father, that we don’t have time, attention or interest in the world.

But then, what is the world? In our warnings, you will note that we read two scriptures that use the word “world” but from two different Greek words. “*Cosmos*” means the order and arrangement of things; and “*Aion*” means the age, dispensation or period of time, as in Rom. 12:2. This latter usage occurs in Matt. 13:22 where it talks about the cares of the world; the sons of the world as in Luke 16:8 and 20:34; and the rulers of the world as in 1 Cor. 2:6-8; the wisdom of this world as in 1 Cor. 1: 20; the fashions of this world as in Rom. 12:2; the character of this world as in Gal. 1:4 and the god of this world as in 2 Cor. 4:4. (We will hear more about this later.)

The arrangement or order of things and the nature of the times in which we live then are our enemies. So it is not only the time in which we live, not only the order and society in

which we live—it is the combination of both of them, that is our enemy and that leads us way out on a limb. ONLY the Lord can keep us and protect us. When we are talking about the world as an enemy of the New Creation, and try to consider it in terms of the context of the other two enemies—the flesh and the devil—it seems that we are unable to keep one enemy totally separate from the others. They seem very, very much involved with each other because certainly the devil and the flesh use the world as an enemy to the advantages of their evil purposes. But one of the things that we discover when we consider the world, is that it is a passive enemy. The devil has an intellect. So do we in our own minds and in our fleshly interests. But the world as an influence on us—it does not have a mind of its own in terms of attacking us. The devil can use it, and he does use it against us; and our flesh can compromise with it; but the spirit of the world has not an intellect of its own to get at us directly.

Now we ask, Doesn't that contradict the scripture that talks about the "wisdom of this world" being foolishness with God? The wisdom of this world has not set out to destroy the New Creation. The wisdom of this world has set out to promote its own ambitions and its own desires—if that were to succeed, it would destroy the New Creation. Our flesh has every intent to destroy the New Creation—only by its destruction of the New Creation, can the flesh preserve itself. And so with the devil—only by the intellectual desire to destroy the New Creation can the devil survive. And so the enemy of the world, is, in a sense, a passive enemy but also a monstrous one.

We are born into this world—society is all around us, and therefore, in a sense, we are a part of it. In John 8:23 the Lord himself said that we are "of this world." We have inherited from it. Jesus said he was "not of this world"—He did not inherit from it. And therefore we are to leave it, just as Jesus was separate from it. We separate ourselves from it. And he emphasized the surrounding nature of the world in the parable of Matt. 13:38 where he talks about the mingling of the wheat and the tares. We are sown in the world.

The spirit of the world has developed because of the curse on man. It is a spirit of competition—to get all we can for ourselves. Then we call it "need." We have to have our needs satisfied, but our needs unfortunately keep growing as the minimal needs are satisfied. Then all of a sudden I need to take an up-step and we need more and more and more—the spirit of the world, the spirit of competition. The whole concept of advertising and the profit motive are related to the spirit of the world. It promotes greed and selfishness. It promotes comparisons. It promotes ambitions for power, for comfort and luxury. We are to lay this aside as the Apostle Peter tells us in Heb. 12:1—lay aside "every weight and the besetting sin that doth so easily beset us." The Apostle Paul encourages us to count all things as loss and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. In Eccl. 6:11, 12, the prophet tells us that we see many things in life—"Seeing that there be many things that increase vanity, what is man the better?" As things become more and more attractive to us, but how are we bettered by them? Good for man—who

knoweth what is good for man? Who can tell what shall be after a man under the sun? It helps us to see that all things that the world and the flesh and the devil would encourage us to achieve that would separate us from the knowledge and love of Christ, are going to be dried up and blown away. Therefore they are tests to the New Creation—to keep ourselves separate. They are tests of our values to see whether our objectives, our intents, the precious things that we have in life, are of the world or of the spirit. In Psalm 73:2 and Matt. 6:25-34 the Lord gives us very practical lessons in the applications of our values.

We wanted to spend some time this afternoon in talking about what the spirit of the world does to us. We know the scriptures instruct us that it is wrong—we are to make ourselves separate from it. But how does it affect us in our lives? How can we recognize the fact that it is having an encroachment on us—that it is making inroads or progress into the New Creation? We'll have to hurry because by study I discovered the monstrosity of our enemy, the world, and it would require an afternoon or a whole convention to discuss all the ways in which the world can encroach upon the New Creation and distract us from the intent of our consecration and sacrifice. We will consider a few of the ways.

First of all, the spirit of the world distracts us from the primary goal of the church—to love righteousness. It does this by distracting or confusing things—making things appear as right when they are not right at all, things the world accepts as right. And the things of the world are degrading more rapidly than they have ever before; except in Noah's time and the time of Sodom and Gomorrah. But they are certainly degrading very fast. Therefore what was wrong yesterday, may be right today, and will be right tomorrow—according to the world. Well that sort of changing and confusion distracts us. We have to uphold the standards of purity; and with all this weight trying to pull us down, everyday it gets heavier and heavier. And therefore, the intent to keep to the standards of righteousness has to be exercised all the more diligently to be successful. In Phil. 3:13-19 the Apostle reminds us that “this one thing I do.” If we could just keep that standard of purity and righteousness ever before us, then we would be ashamed to be engrossed in earthly things.

Another way that it distracts us—the spirit of the world, our enemy—is that it tends to encourage us to measure spiritual achievement in terms of earthly advantage, temporal qualities. In James 2:1-4 the Apostle reminds us that we are not to have respect of persons. A man with a gold ring or fine apparel, or a position of elegance or a position of note indicate that the world may accept the brethren in various kinds of positions. None of this should be the basis on which we evaluate our brethren. Unfortunately it has a tendency to. And brethren, let us be warned that we are using earthly values, values that other people in the world have encouraged us to see and admire, as values for judgment in the New Creation. Our talent, or show, possessions, polish, nationalism, education, a good job, oratory—all of these are worldly achievements. And they can be used for the advancement of the New Creation; but they should never be a basis of judgment of

spiritual development. In 2 Cor. 5:14 to 17—“the love of Christ constrains us, therefore we are to know no man after the flesh;” and in order to help us get the idea, the Apostle says we knew Jesus after the flesh at one time, but now we don’t know him after the flesh any more. We are certainly not to know anybody of less quality than He after the flesh. The comparisons among the brethren, unfortunately are side effects of this, using the standards of the world as our quality judgments. In Matt. 18:1-4 we have a record of which the early disciples were guilty of comparisons; and Jesus told them that they did not know what spirit was controlling them—it was the spirit of the world. They wouldn’t know, of course, until they had the begetting of the Holy Spirit.

Another way that we might use the spirit of the world to our detriment as new creatures is a misuse of our spiritual blessings in the advancement of the interests of the flesh, rather than to the advancement of our spiritual interests. As an example: frequently we learn how to think more clearly after we come into the truth. Many of us could not think clearly before we understood the truth. In time we learned how to think clearly from one point to another logical point: it’s how we apply the ransom; it’s how we understand the sin offering; it’s how we understand the establishment of the kingdom and the process of sanctification. All of these points require clear thinking which all the wisdom of the seminaries has not brought to light. It is the wisdom of God that has given us this understanding. Now this pattern that God has given us has an obvious influence on our other thinking habits. When we get into a job situation, or whatever, we become better thinkers; we can think more clearly and we are better people as a result. What do we use the advantage that we get from a better job position for? Do we use it for greater luxury? Do we use it for greater comfort? Or do we take the advantages the Lord has given to us, as a side benefit of our consecration, and use it directly in His service?

Another way that the enemy attacks us is to push us to strive for our necessities and to constantly redefine our necessities. Our apparent needs frequently are compared to what our neighbors have—as opposed to what we absolutely need to be effective students of the scriptures in order to be effective watchmen in Zion. And what are our future needs: What will our worries be in preparing for the future? In 1 Cor. 7:29, 30 and Col. 3:1-3 the Lord is telling us that spirituality produces indifference to worldly goods. And is that really what has happened to us? If we still have a love for the things of the world (not that we can’t appreciate good things), but if we have a love for them, then that spirituality has not prospered us effectively.

In 2 Tim. 1:7, 8—“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but be thou a partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel according to the power of God.” Does the spirit of a sound mind help us to sacrifice more? I have heard that scripture used many many times and misused by suggesting that we use wisdom, that we have to protect ourselves, and unfortunately the protection was of the flesh rather than the advancement of the spirit. But is that what the scripture says in verse 8? “Be not

thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord.” Be not thou therefore, because you have the spirit of a sound mind and you are promoting the spirit rather than the flesh. Therefore it keeps us from dealing unwisely with worldly commitments in the light of our knowledge of future events. If we work as though tomorrow were the last day, as we should be working, the Lord will take care of it. If we are wise and careful we can prudently prepare for the future by considering what we absolutely need as a bare minimum and working only to that. Then everything else is directly in the Lord’s service.

The spirit of the world encourages us to be ashamed of witnessing. The spirit of the world makes us feel embarrassed when people take advantage of us or laugh at us. We have all had that; but what about our reputation? What is happening to it? In John 12:43, because we love the praises of men more than of God, God was very unhappy with us. And in John 15:19—“We should not be loved by the world, because we are not part of the world.” If this is not an integral part of our lives, not a real part of our attitude, then the spirit of the world, as our enemy, is winning. We must desire God’s approval only.

The spirit of the world also promotes confusion in the Christian mind, making it difficult to concentrate or to think clearly on spiritual matters, or to maintain spiritual integrity. The problem of assimilation is an old problem among the Lord’s people. It started back in Abraham’s time. The Lord said “Get up out of the land in which you live, and go to a land that I will show you.” Abraham really had to leave it; and—all his posterity, both spiritual and natural, have had the same problem. The problem of natural Israel was that they allowed the spirit of their neighbors to come in on them and they fraternized with their neighbors. The same problem is true of Spiritual Israel. Look what has happened to nominal spiritual Israel as a result of the assimilation problem. In 2 Cor. 6:14-18 the Lord emphasizes the dangers of these assimilations and compromises.

Because of the confusion in our minds, the spirit of the world makes us too tired, too busy, too interested, too committed to other things to devote enough time for as much growth as we are capable. It is commonly known in professional circles, that if one will devote only half an hour every day to his profession, in three months he will become an expert. Why? Because the rest of his profession is lazy. And that’s true with us. If we will devote one-half hour of good hard study every day (we should be devoting much more than that), but if we would devote at least half an hour every day, religiously, prayerfully to deep study we would become experts. Luke 14:17-25 shows how fleshly pursuits can sway us away from immediate sacrifices for the Lord. Our world, as an enemy, distracts worship with our brethren from spiritual to worldly interests. We can look back on the fellowship of this last meal time, and see what we talked about, what engaged our own minds. How much of that was necessary relative to the flesh, and how much of it could be put to the side so that the time and conversation could be used more effectively in dealing with spiritual matters? It is interesting to note that the Lord so frequently uses the interests of his people on spiritual matters as a point to which he

draws near to them. Bro. Seklemian mentioned earlier this morning about the disciples on the way to Emmaus—what were they discussing? They were discussing spiritual matters. And it was then that the Lord drew near to them. In Luke 22:32 we read: “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” The Lord wasn’t interested in Peter promoting the flesh among the brethren. He was interested in Peter being converted, and then helping the brethren in spiritual matters. And in Rom. 14:1 we are told to receive the weak in faith but not to doubtful disputations. Don’t just get argumentative because you have a point of difference. And I think it is the spirit of the world that emphasizes our differences among us as opposed to our similarities in belief. That would encroach and make us enemies, make us malicious and encourage evil attitudes and evil spirits among us.

Gossip is another way that the spirit of the world is encouraged in us. In Lev. 19:16 we are told that we are not to be talebearers; and in Prov. 20:19 we are to stay away from gossip because it leads to evil speaking. The spirit of the world would also have us adopt the standards of the world in our conduct. I have two pet peeves. Perhaps some of you know us well enough to know that we have as much struggle with it as anyone else, and therefore can’t point the finger at anyone. But number one is our physical appearance—do we dress modestly. I would encourage all of us when we go shopping for clothes or when we go shopping for a house or a car, to keep the modesty and lack of conspicuousness as a central guideline. And I would particularly encourage the sisters to wear dresses that are below the knees (I know I am not going to make any friends by saying this), but I encourage it because it’s distracting, particularly when a sister is sitting in a meeting and the dress does not cover her knees. The second point of the worldly standards that we have difficulty with among the church is that our children are sometimes distracting. When we come to conventions; when we come to meetings, we have to imbue in them a joy in faith. We have to encourage them in rejoicing in the truth. Unfortunately, we very often neglect our children in this way. We don’t help them appreciate that conventions are Holy Convocations of God’s people. Children running in and out of meetings are a distraction and that is very inappropriate. And on the other side of the coin, brethren, I feel that those who do not have children should not sit in the back rows; because those brethren who come into the meeting with children (because they need to), frequently have to come up in front where they are in a distracting position because there are no seats left in the back rows. And it is the parents with children that are trying to get into the meetings that are usually the last into the meetings. So we can help each other in this way.

Another point in which we fail, is in giving our children the joys of the truth to help them and instruct them in the truth. And then we sometimes say that the children have to make their own decisions as to what religion they are to follow or whether they are going to consecrate to the Lord. They can’t make a wise decision, brethren, if you have not properly instructed them by the time they are 18, and that starts when they are little and I

mean in the first years of their lives—not to wait until they are 13 or 15 to start instructing them.

Again we neglect opportunities to serve each other as Mary poured out the ointment on our Lord. We should be doing it especially now to the feet members, as she did it to His head and his feet. And then a lack of diligence in our study. The spirit of the world would keep us away from diligent study particularly the leaders in Zion, the elders are responsible for this. Knowledge is God-given. We hear the argument frequently, “Well, I’m not a student, I cannot grasp these deep concepts of the truth.” That is quite beside the point. None of us are so wise that we can get the truth by ourselves. Every one of us got the truth because we studied hard, and we prayed for it, and the Lord gave it to us. He overcame all the shortcomings that even the best of us have and gave us the truth in spite of ourselves. So He can make the worst of us look good and he can make the best of us look good, because he has seen in us a diligent desire to have the truth at great cost to ourselves. None of us have the talent to have the truth, without the Lord giving it to us. So we cannot use that as an excuse—that is a worldly excuse. In 2 Tim. 2: 15 and Rom. 12:11 the Lord encourages us to be diligent and not slothful in business or the proper translation is—“not idle in study.”

In summary, the net effect of the spirit of the world is to dilute or to distract us from total self-sacrifice and full attention to the work of our consecration. The urgency of our separateness from the world is emphasized by our Lord in his prayer in John 17. There are 14 references in that single chapter in Jesus’ prayer to keep separate from the world. It was the burden of Jesus’ last prayer in behalf of his disciples.

May our Heavenly Father find full cooperation in our hearts as He tries to answer Jesus’ prayer to keep us separate from the world. Let us recognize any influence that the spirit of the world may have on us—rejecting it, hating it because it is evil not just separating ourselves intellectually from it. Let us get on with the full attention and the energy to the advancement of the New Creation and the business of our consecration. May the Lord so help us to do, because we cannot do it alone.

## THE FLESH

The item directly below is the 2nd part of a symposium:—“**FOES OF THE NEW CREATION IN THE LAST DAYS**”—“**THE FLESH**” by T. A. Smith at the convention of the Associated Bible Students of Metropolitan Detroit, April 5, 1975.)

I am thankful that I have been assigned this part of the symposium—The Flesh as a Foe of the New Creation, as it affords me an opportunity to concentrate afresh on the dangers from this quarter.

In order that we may be balanced in our reasoning on this subject, I wish first to draw attention to the fact that the word flesh should not be automatically associated with that which is evil. The primary meaning is human nature, and human nature may be good or it may be fallen, all depending upon the circumstances. For instance in Matt. 19:5 and 6 we read of the marriage relationship that a man and woman become one flesh. Then in Luke 3:6 we read a prophecy concerning the future, that “all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” Then John 1:14 is perhaps the most striking of all—“The Word was made flesh.” And in John 6:51 we read the statement of Jesus that the bread which he would give for the world would be his flesh.

Our present study is going to be concerned mainly with flesh, human nature which is fallen. We know the cause—our first father disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden and we, his children, have inherited flesh which is beset with weaknesses, fallen tendencies and general selfishness. By the grace of God we have been rescued from the sentence of death and we have entered into covenant relationship with God and now we are new creatures in a very important sense of the word. We are not only new creatures as far as turning our backs upon sinful tendencies and accepting the laws of God as pertaining to righteousness, but far beyond this, we are new creatures in the sense that we have made a covenant by sacrifice, and are no longer regarding this life as our aim for living, but we are in the Lord’s service and are informed that if we walk in the footsteps of the Redeemer—if we suffer with him we shall reign with him in his throne. This is contrary to everything that is human—we are pilgrims and strangers in the earth looking forward to the Kingdom of God when we shall reign with Christ as the Seed of Abraham for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

So literally we are going contrary to the flesh, in both of its aspects—the legitimate desires (if they interfere with our New Creature ambitions), and the illegitimate desires that are contrary to the laws of God—every kind of weakness and selfish tendency.

I notice that the subject includes the phrase “in the last days” and the meaning could be that we are confronted with a more powerful flesh than ever before. We sometimes speak of the weaknesses of the flesh, and rightly so, but I think it is quite correct to speak of the flesh as being strong—we are confronted with strong tendencies even in legitimate things, and we are confronted with strong tendencies that are selfishly inclined.

First we want to touch upon some of the legitimate desires of the flesh, and then proceed to the weaknesses and selfish tendencies. Because we are in the “time of the end”, we are surrounded with great mental activity—the “increase of knowledge” and constant and incessant “running to and fro.” Human activities are increased many fold, over centuries ago and there are so many appeals to the natural mind. Inventions have increased by leaps and bounds.

What has this to do with our subject? Just this—that there are appeals to the legitimate cravings of the flesh and these legitimate cravings must be intelligently resisted and overcome. For instance there are the appeals to the intellectually minded. One could go on to great heights in the field of mathematics. There are many professions that glitter and beckon to certain minds. Making money and becoming rich is a possibility to some minds. In the scientific field there are many opportunities for achievement and advancement to high positions to those who might give their minds and talents to such ambitions.

What has the Lord provided for us to enable us as new creatures to rise above these powerful attractions? Our Pastor touched upon this one time and he said the Lord has provided us with an intelligent and glorious view of his plan that would enable us to resist the pull of the earth—the legitimate desires of the flesh.

As to becoming rich, we are reminded of a story that a brother told us not so long ago. He was an orderly in a hospital and there was a man on a hospital bed, and he called to the brother and said: “young man, I am an old man. I have spent all my life to accumulate money and now I am dying and I cannot take anything with me. Don’t make the mistake I made, for such a life is not worth the effort.”

And now let us consider some of the weaknesses and problems and the selfish tendencies of our earthen vessel. We don’t want to dwell on theory but approach our problems from a practical standpoint, so we can go away from this convention feeling that we have added to our understanding on how to control and conquer the flesh. We couldn’t hope to cover the whole subject, but just a few of our problems.

In Eph. 4:31 we are exhorted “to put away anger and wrath.” We will consider these two words together. In Strong’s concordance we learn that these two words are closely related. Anger is defined as “excitement of the mind, violent passion”; and wrath apparently is somewhat stronger—“passion (as if breathing hard)” and is translated fierceness, indignation. We as new creatures are taught to be just, merciful, kind, loving and self-controlled. This being the case, would not “excitement of the mind, violent passion, fierceness and indignation” be entirely foreign to the Christian spirit?

Let us consider some practical life situations and see how we are to handle ourselves. For instance you phone for a service man to do some work on your washing machine, let

us say. You get a bill for the job and find some simple parts listed and then you look at the labor charge—it just about bowls you over. You not only get a charge on paper which you can see with your eyes, but you also get a charge of something inside of you that you can feel. Your first reaction is “excitement of mind,” “indignation.” How does one control this? How does one keep from “fierceness”? Again it is the Truth that comes to our rescue and it quiets us down. We know we are in the end of the age, in the time of trouble, and we are in the Hour of Temptation when selfishness is in the saddle. We also know that we are on the way to the blessed times of the Kingdom of God when things will be perfect and righteousness will be the rule instead of selfishness. Then the quieting words of James come to mind (James 4:7) “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.” How wonderful is the precious truth to quiet us down and give us peace and self-control!

Another situation: perhaps we have mailed out some truth literature and then an unsigned letter comes to us—no name only some words on a large sheet of paper: “don’t send me any more of this tripe. How did you get my name anyway? Take my name off your mailing list immediately!” Well we all have the faculty of approbateness and we crave the approval of everyone, and a letter like this gives us momentarily quite a jolt. Do we have power from the Lord to control our feelings and not get excited in mind? Yes, one truth is that man is terribly under the fall, and is thoroughly deceived by Satan and people don’t even know what an awful condition they are in; and so we are supposed to be sympathetic and merciful toward those who use such rude and cutting language. And we can consider the Apostle’s words that we will be evilly spoken of in this life, but in the day of visitation mankind will experience a great change of heart and bless us with words of appreciation and thankfulness.

Well, let us change to another facet for a moment or so. I think we all remember the Apostle James’ remarks about the tongue. In chapter 3, Vs. 8 to 10 we read, “But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.” And let us read Matt. 12:34, “... for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” Now we do not have any instrument for scanning the contents of the mind, but we do have ears and if we just listen carefully to the tongue we will be able to catalogue what is in the heart. I think many of us have been surprised when we listen to what the tongue is saying, and we are astonished—we didn’t know our hearts contained such things. We might even say, “I didn’t know I was that kind of a person.”

What does the tongue reveal or what might it reveal if we listen closely? Well, words of sarcasm might burst out; or cutting words of criticism; or words that are in the framework of a joke, but containing little hints of criticism or unkindness. I think husbands and wives, particularly husbands, need to be careful along this line. The world is fond of making fun of wives by jokes from the lips of husbands; and I suppose the same is true of

wives joking about their husbands' weaknesses and their idiosyncrasies. All this is the worldly spirit and as new creatures we should rise above this irreverence toward our mates. Our mates deserve kind and respectful treatment. Good wives and good husbands are precious jewels.

Well, let us return to Eph. 4:3. What else are we to put away? Bitterness is another quality that must be recognized and put away. And we notice in the same verse that clamour, evil speaking, "with all malice" are also mentioned. As there seems to be a close connection in all these qualities, we shall consider them together. Now as to bitterness, the thought seems to be a feeling of resentment, a positive dislike, holding of a grudge. This is really a serious problem for us as new creatures, for we may have experienced some injury, some injustice of some kind; and this might include a continued situation that we cannot escape easily, or maybe not at all.

If there is resentment, if there is bitterness, a holding of a grudge, then this will automatically lead to evil speaking and malice, a desire to get even—return evil for evil. How are we to substitute the Lord's spirit for this unhappy state of mind and heart? This takes some doing, but if we judge ourselves, the spirit of the Lord is quite sufficient for this difficult task. Again the truth concerning the fall of man plays its part—man is fallen and we must expect to have him act unjustly, unfairly. Man is not in the same school as we are and cannot be expected to follow the high principles that are law for the new creation.

Another line of truth helps a great deal—Rom. 12:19, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." We know it is not good for us as new creatures to harbor resentment in the heart (and we know also it is not good for us physically either—it is hard on the nerves and the blood pressure). We can and should rest our case in the hands of God to administer justice with wisdom in his own good time—if not in this life, then in the next life.

Another thought is extremely helpful and that is to remember that Christian love toward enemies does not mean intimate tenderness the same as we have for our brethren in Christ; but it means that we will have no desire to get even—we will be willing to be merciful and pitiful and do good to our enemy if he or she is in trouble. And sometimes enemies can be very close at home.

Another power from the Lord is Rom. 8:28, "... all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Paul is stating a positive fact here that applies to many situations and results. Character is developed in many different ways by the things that are permitted of the Lord. For instance we may have to be firm for what is right and this develops strength in the Christian graces. There may be times when it is not wise to submit to impositions and we must remove ourselves

from such situations—this takes character. Then again there are times when we have to exercise a great deal of patience with some people and in such cases we develop strong self-control, when it would be so easy to do just the opposite—to be very impatient and give others some rough treatment.

Up to this point we have not considered clamour that we are to put away. According to Strong's concordance the literal meaning seems to be "outcry." This word is used several times in the New Testament. As recorded in Acts, 23rd chapter, Paul is before the council and he cried out that he was called in question regarding the hope of the resurrection of the dead. The Pharisees responded with "a great cry" saying, "We find no evil in this man." Then in Heb. 5:7 we read, "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears..." The Pharisees "cried out" in Paul's behalf; and Jesus "cried out" in his prayer to God. But what would be meant for us to put away "clamour"—crying out?

We can think of one illustration if we are enduring some ill treatment, we should not make a great disturbance, a public display to draw unfavorable attention toward those who might be ill treating us. If we did make a great outcry, this might indicate a desire on our part to get even. I can think of one scripture that would be an important guide to our conduct in whatever course we might pursue—2 Cor. 6:3, "Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed."

Well let us consider another facet of our subject. The flesh is full of tricks in trying to get its way. It rationalizes to try to win over the new creature, or to get the new creature to give its permission, or at least not stand in its way. This is an interesting field for study, and in some cases would be amusing if the results were not so serious.

Let us consider an example. A brother might have an opportunity to better himself in a change of jobs, but he would be disadvantaged in many ways spiritually. He would make lots more money, but he would have added responsibilities and very little opportunity to attend meetings and less time for study. The flesh would argue—"you know you would love this new job. It would increase your business standing and you would have the advantage of a generous pension when you retired; and best of all you would have more money to use in the Lord's service." Everything about this is appealing to the flesh, but dangerous to new creature interests. One needs to be abrupt as was our Lord with Peter—"Get thee behind me Satan."

There is another problem concerning the flesh that comes to my mind. In 1 Cor. 7:20 we read, "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called." And 1 Tim. 6:6, "But godliness with contentment is great gain." And the words of Paul in Phil. 4:11, "... for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." There are times when we chafe at our condition. In fact we may do this without really knowing what is going on inside our heart. We find ourselves feeling impatient and annoyed and wanting

to speak snappy. It is only when we stop to analyze our feelings that we discover that the flesh is champing at the bit because it is dissatisfied. It is wanting to have the tight cords loosed a bit. It is the job of the new creature to assert itself and take a firm hand and exercise its authority. If the new creature relaxes even the slightest, the flesh is right there, alert and willing at any time to rebel at the stringent conditions of the narrow way. If the new creature stops and reviews its position, then the power of the spirit of Truth will command again, and the new creature will overcome the rebellious feelings of the flesh, and be content to carry on with thankfulness and zeal.

There is another problem we have with the flesh. We know it is a fact that there are all kinds of personality types. Some find themselves the reserved type, and others find themselves the “bubbling-over” type. Some are disturbed by the fact that they are reserved and they are afraid the brethren will regard them as cold and unfriendly. Reserved personalities can overcome this by not trying to be the “bubbling-over” type and just be themselves. They know they do feel friendly and loving toward the Lord’s people, but they are more serious in their manner of approach and speech and there is nothing wrong with this at all. Just forget self and let your love for the Lord’s people show in your own serious way.

We have all kinds of beautiful flowers—the little for-get-me-nots, the rose, the peony, the daffodil, the dahlia. I like them all. And so it is with the Lord’s people. I like the “bubbling-over” type, and I like the very opposite—the brother or sister who has a very serious manner of approach and speech. I feel refreshed and blessed by both types.

A very kind sister in Christ wrote a poem for my benefit one time. She entitled the poem “PUT UP THE BLIND.” So I say to all the brothers and sisters who know they are naturally reserved—don’t be dismayed, don’t be unhappy about yourself. Just “PUT UP THE BLIND” and let the brethren see the bright and warm Christian heart that you have inside—but do this in your own serious way.

We have said nothing so far about pride. Let us consider Matt. 5:23, 24, “Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” So if we come to the Lord in prayer and there remember that someone has aught against us, we are to go and make amends before the Lord will accept our prayer. This is a very severe test because the flesh does not like to admit that something wrong has been done and we need to humble ourselves—go to the one wronged and confess our fault and ask for forgiveness. The new creature has to take over with resolute will and not allow the flesh to get away with conduct that is wrong. The flesh has caused the trouble, and it must be taught that such conduct is wrong and will not be tolerated by the new creature. The only way to discipline the flesh so it will be afraid to act up again in the future is to force it to go to the one wronged—either by a

personal talk or by correspondence and admit the wrong and ask for forgiveness, and then ask for forgiveness from the Lord as well.

The new creature must rule in such cases and hold the flesh to strict account. If the flesh gets the proper drubbing, it will think twice next time before trying to act up again in the same manner. “He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city” are the wise man’s words that apply. And we remember the words—“God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.” Also “humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.” If we are to judge mankind, we must learn to judge ourselves and keep the body under control.

Let us consider another slice of life along the line of pride. Perhaps there is a discussion in class concerning some plan of action. We might suggest a plan or idea of some kind, and then discover that our idea is given scant attention and the ecclesia votes in favor of something entirely different. If we feel stung and sense that we are heating up and are on the edge of getting indignant, we must take a warning and realize that we are putting too much importance on our way of thinking; and also remember that our ecclesia affairs are supposed to be conducted along democratic lines, and we are only one member and the others have a right to be heard, and have their proposals accepted instead of our own if the class so decides.

Now we would like to mention something that many of us have experienced. This is not related to overcoming the flesh as an enemy, but is related to our doing something for our spiritual advantage and then finding out that the flesh gains too. We might call this a “fringe benefit.” We have heard brethren say, “I was so tired when evening came and even had a headache and I just felt I would rather stay home than make the effort to go to meeting. But I didn’t give in to the tired flesh and went to meeting anyway; and I was so glad I did because I don’t feel tired now, and my headache is gone.” The explanation for this could be that there is a change to the flesh—to get away from home or the job and the new creature is nourished and made happy by the study or the testimonies, the singing of hymns and fellowship and prayer, and as the new creature is made happy, the flesh is relieved and refreshed. I think this is quite a common experience of the Lord’s people and something worth remembering when we feel tired and headachey.

There is another tendency of the flesh and that is to imagine all kinds of things. I suppose story tellers have good imaginations and they can make good money by writing interesting stories. But we must curb our bump of imagination and bring every thought into obedience to Christ.

## THE ADVERSARY

The item directly below is the third part of a symposium by Rod Hugelma—“**FOES OF THE NEW CREATION IN THE LAST DAYS**”—“**THE ADVERSARY**” given at the convention of the Associated Bible Students of Metropolitan Detroit, Saturday, April 5, 1975.)

Our subject is “Your Adversary, the Devil” and this is based on 1 Peter 5:8: “... Your adversary the devil... walketh about... as a roaring lion... seeking whom he may devour.”

We might ask ourselves why has this powerful being singled us out for special attack? There are a number of Scriptures we could turn to examine this. One would be Rev. 20:7-10: “And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”

That remembrance will persist forever. Then, also, we have Heb. 2:13, 14, and here we read: “And again, I will put my trust in him, and again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. For inasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he, also, himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that, has the power of death, that is, the devil.”

That is really the point isn't it? We are in a life and death struggle. A duel to the death and the bitter enemy is Satan, himself: We have to remember that we are not dealing with just some ordinary individual. As Bro. Alexander brought out, we are talking about someone who is exceedingly intelligent and bears the careful experience of perhaps millions of years. We don't know how long Satan had been in existence. Not only is he by nature more powerful than we but by long experience more clever than we in every way. As these Scriptures in Hebrews and Revelation point out—the Church, head and body, at its conclusion will be the instrument for Satan's eternal destruction. So you are his avowed enemy! His death is your ultimate goal. He is aware of that and he will fight you to the death.

Then we have Eph. 6:11, 12. WE MUST, “Put on the whole armour 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.”

And then we have Rom. 8:38, 39, “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Paul was well aware of this great adversary and his great power, and he vowed to allow nothing to separate him from the love of Christ, his brethren and the opportunity that had been made available to him—the opportunity for the prize of the High Calling and the power associated with it which would be greater than any power which Satan might muster and carrying the ability to bring all mankind back up that highway of holiness. A battle to the death and Satan is your enemy! The adversary is the devil and he is determined that it shall be your life and not his.

Now as we examine Strong’s Concordance, we find that “devil” is translated from #1228 and #1225 in the Greek, “*deabalos*,” which means “a traducer.” Webster tells us that this word means “to expose to contempt or shame by slander, a lie.” The demons on the other hand are translated from another word, #1139, #1140, and you generally find it translated plural—devils. If you should look up “Satan,” you will find it in both Hebrew and Greek virtually the same word, and it is translated approximately “the accuser” and which we see is in harmony with the first Scripture—“the traducer.” Yes, he is an adversary and his very name and its meaning tells us the nature of how he will attack us.

So now knowing who our enemy is, let us examine some of the ways in which he acts so that we can be better prepared. Being forearmed, we can be prepared against him. First, he is the great accuser and he works through slander; that is, he accuses and slanderously, falsely, and this may take very, very subtle forms. In connection with this, he may break down the respect of others by falsely accusing, by injecting doubt. Now let us turn to Matthew 4, and I think Bro. Seklemian mentioned this earlier this morning in this connection. Remember when Jesus went into the wilderness following his immersion? He was tempted of Satan. Notice Satan’s words: “if thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.”

Just a little doubt injected. Are you the Son of God? If you are, command these stones to be made bread. Notice the doubt—what should I do? If I do, perhaps then I do prove that I am the Son of God. If I don’t, perhaps I am backing out—doubt, doubt, that is Satan’s stock in trade. “To interject doubt by slanderous accusation.” But what was Jesus’ answer? 4. “... It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

But the devil wasn't satisfied. 5. "Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple." 6. "And said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down:..." Again if—being charged you see—doubt. "Here is your chance to prove it. People will look at you and be persuaded." Jesus answered this way: 7. "... It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

Then, of course, Satan showed him the kingdoms of this world, which were his to give, and this time he says: 9. "... All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Didn't say "if you are the son of God" anymore. Jesus' own actions had proven who he was. 10. "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." 11. "Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him."

So there is a reward for being positive in our treatment of the adversary. Another thing we have to keep in mind in connection with false accusations is that when we first hear the lie we cannot really separate it from the truth. We may not have the experience to tell whether it is a lie or not.

Now let's consider Eve's temptation very carefully in Genesis 3 and again we shall see how this works—how Satan can take advantage of an individual. Gen. 3:1, "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made (Oh he is careful, subtle—don't ever expect the obvious from Satan!) and he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" 2. "And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:" 3. "But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." 4. "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: [slandorous accusation]." 5. "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

Now she saw that the tree was good for food and how was she to know that this statement wasn't correct? It had never been tested before and might not there be something to it? Just perhaps God was trying to keep something from them. Doubt began to settle in. Slandorous accusation—not yet tested. Truly false, but not yet known and doubt enters. How serious can that be, such a simple accusation? We are well testified to that, aren't we? The whole world has been plunged into death because of that lie. And what about the other lie which Satan introduces? The result was an attempt to perpetuate that lie—immortality of the soul—then Hell fire and brimstone, and so on.

Now who actually comes out on top? This is the kind of poster you may see now from various churches. The picture of Satan is as a very ugly being. This particular program is a special promotion of the Baptist Church in Rockford. "20,000 degrees Fahrenheit and

not a drop of water. The Burning Hell, Tortured lost souls burning forever, see hundreds of Biblical Wonders” and so on. Look at the ugly picture! Who is really condemned? Is it Satan? The purpose of this is to drive people to where? To his, Satan’s, institution! He is perfectly willing to let them think what they will in their fantasies of Satan in order that they may support his institutions. Oh he is very clever! Very, very clever! “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.” (2 Cor. 11:13-15)

And don’t ever expect an even break from Satan. He will never give you one. Only experience will ultimately verify the truth and only that can then expose the lie. Hence, the necessity of 6,000 years of terrible experience prior to the chain of truth coming down from heaven as mentioned in Rev. 20:1, “And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.” Lies and deceptions are Satan’s stock in trade. Therefore, the truth is the chain that will bind him and control him. This is a struggle to the death. Satan will give you no quarter nor expect any. He will never give you an even break, and he will attack your most grievous weakness—ignorance. For we are all ignorant about something. There are always things we don’t know and that is the very thing that he will attack. Only there can he inject doubt; after all, if you know, you cannot be fooled. So it is that area that he will attack. What you don’t know about others, what you don’t know about yourself is a prime target for doubt. Alright, what is your defense? It is very clear, isn’t it?—the Truth! Know the truth, it will make you free. Know the truth in every particular—arm yourself thoroughly!

Another one of Satan’s methods is Discouragement. How can he discourage us—by accusing your motives and your heart intentions and impugning them. “Oh, you say you are doing that for the Lord’s people? Well, you are not! It is a selfish thing so they will appreciate you more, pat you on the back!” Ever had that thought? Just remember, it may well be Satan that is trying to stop you from doing it again—because that is the next thought—“Maybe I ought not to do that.” Well, you just keep right on doing it. If it is the right thing for the Lord’s people, just keep right on doing it.

Your faults are often brought to mind, aren’t they? And they are legion, make no mistake about that—we all have plenty of faults. After all, we can’t fall from a pinnacle next to the angels for 6,000 years and not just be rife and shot through with many faults. Bro. Smith brought that to our attention clearly. And Satan will be continuously reminding you of that fact, and he will focus on every distortion of character you may possess. And what is that intended to do? To drag you right down to your knees in submission. But let it rather be in prayer that he shall have failed and God succeeded.

Let's turn back to Romans 8 again, verses 31, 32 and 33: "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that Justifieth."

Yes, through Jesus, the lens of Jesus, we can be examined and seen without distortion as though perfect—but that takes faith, doesn't it! Faith to examine ourselves and to believe that all these things are behind us, and then to stand before the bar of God's justice and run with patience this race that has been set before us. It takes faith to believe that, and Satan will do everything to tell you that it isn't enough. V. 34, "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

We aren't here by ourselves, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. He is there to make intercession for us. (35) "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (36) As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter, (37) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." Yes, through him that loved us. Satan will try and push us down and let it be that we are pushed down to our knees in prayer and supplication to our Heavenly Father who is able to raise us up again.

A third point in connection with discouragement. If we fail in deeds, and we must for we are very weak, yet we can succeed in heart and mind and will through Christ. Satan will focus on the actual results which will never be what we would like. Don't be stumbled by that! Remember that is his device. Look rather on the intent, which is God's yardstick. What was it you were trying to do? What was it you wanted to do? If the heart be right and the heart and mind in total harmony with the Lord, it is as good as if it had been accomplished in fact, is it not? Another point—Satan will attack us by flattery—making use of flattery. In fact, remember that Isaiah 14 tells us that Lucifer became Satan because of this very thing. Do you recall it?

V. 12, "How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning! [You know he must have been quite a being at one time. Lucifer means light, clear as crystal.] How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!" Why? How did this happen? (13) "For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit upon the mount of congregation, in the sides of the north;" (14) "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High." Big "I," little "U." That is Satan's method. That is the method of all those that have that same attitude. What is the result? Disaster. We must never exalt self; but must always be in submission to the Lord.

Remember it was Jesus who later would accomplish and receive all things which Satan sought through his own self-aggrandizement. Yet Jesus achieved it through humility and so now we have the example of success. We know exactly how to achieve those things: through humility and care and caution in following in the footsteps of the Master. Note the subtle lie and temptation to Eve through flattery which exalts pride. “You see—you’ll be just like God, then you will be able to know both good and evil.” Pride! A little bit of flattery soon produces it: “Well I would surely like to be like that,” and right away it begins to grow. And this may take very cunningly devised forms as we saw in Satan’s actions towards our Lord in the wilderness. The attempt was not to just interject doubt, but if Jesus took the bait of flattery, there would be pride—“Look what I can do.” But the Lord would not accept that. He could have been a great man in the eyes of all Israel. But he would not do that. He would rather be a humble servant even unto death because that was what the Lord would have.

Did you know that Satan will even help you in passing out the truth? Oh yes. He will be very anxious to help you. But there is a condition—you have to be willing to accept all the credit for what you did. Satan knows that once this pride is developed, it will be his victory and before long the victim will take his own fearful toil of even those he may have led into the truth. Think about that and the course of things which have taken place in the last few years of the harvest program. Let’s examine 1 Tim. 3:6. We see that this can be a very, very grave temptation. Now this Scripture speaking of those who desire the office of Elder. He should be “Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.” In short, he must have experience enough to know that he really doesn’t know as much as he thought he did. And that is a very difficult thing to learn. I remember a professor telling me when I started the Engineering Program at Oregon State University that the reason that there was so much information and knowledge at the University was that all the intelligent high school students left it there on the way through. Every student starts out thinking he knows all the answers, but by the time he gets through scratching his head for four years he is almost ashamed to take a job because he’s not sure he can handle it. They begin to see reality, see their own weaknesses.

Then we have 2 Cor. 11, verses 10 to 15: “As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia. Wherefore? Because I love you not? God knoweth. But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion, that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we. For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. (They were going to usurp Paul’s authority and those of the apostles.) And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.”

As we examine Satan's institutions, what is characteristic of them? They all are apparently trying to do good, aren't they? As long as it is within the framework of the organization, and as long as those institutions can keep one deceived. Satan really doesn't care how much light you have as long as it isn't enough to persuade you to make your consecration and afterward to make your calling and election sure. That he simply cannot tolerate. Therefore, let us resist steadfastly the natural human tendencies to exaggerate the frailties of others to our own self-aggrandizement. Very easy, isn't it? You can always look around and find someone who does not know as much as you do about something, and pride never causes us to stop and think that he may know something that we don't. Never exaggerate the frailties of others. Pride is a terrible thing. It is the visible coffin of a dying heart.

How does Satan exercise these powers? In several ways. He will make use of his institutions, the flesh and the world. He may act directly on the mind. He may actually take over the mind of others. He may act through these individuals, as both willing and unwilling agents. Remember Peter was even used of Satan unwillingly. On the other hand, Judas was used willingly. There is a great deal of difference. Let us take great care not to become one of Satan's secret agents. Let us be very careful of our treatment of one another and to see this great enemy for the enemy that he is—with a total avowed purpose of your destruction.

May the Lord add his blessing!