

# THE WORD OF TRUTH

OTIS Q. SELLERS, Editor    DECEMBER, 1939

## VOL. III, NO. 9

\*\*\*\*\*

### Table of Contents

- \* Proclaim The Word
- \* The Unfolding of The Secret
- \* Concordance to DIOKO
- \* The Meaning of EPITELEO
- \* The Gospel Fellowship
- \* The Editor to His Friends

\*\*\*\*\*

## *PROCLAIM THE WORD*

At the very beginning of my service for the Lord, **2 Tim. 4:2** was, by certain circumstances, brought upon my mind with great force. This impact has never been forgotten and for twenty years I have accepted this passage as my commission. It has been taken apart many times, each word has been studied in the original, and today I feel that the mind of God is more clearly expressed in the following translation.

**"Proclaim the word, stand by it, at the opportune time, at the inopportune time, expose, rebuke, encourage, with all patience and teaching."**

Some years ago I became convinced that preaching sermons was not fulfilling the command to proclaim the Word. I wanted to abandon sermons altogether, but the people expected sermons and there was not sufficient love for the Word among them just to be satisfied with the Word alone. When I began my ministry in Grand Rapids, I determined that it was my duty to produce a band of people who loved the Word in such a manner that they would desire nothing else. With this end in view I began to expound the Word at every service and the results were so gratifying that this is now the only ministry that is acceptable.

But it is not enough to proclaim the Word, we must "stand by it." This could also be rendered "take your position." It will be good if we do both.

The average sermon of today usually contains a number of stories. This delights the people for they have turned away from the truth unto stories. This has led me to eliminate

from my messages all stories, unless that story makes a positive illustration of some truth that is being expounded. The Word says that the people will turn their ears from the truth and be turned unto stories, but when the people do this they do not need to think that I am going to furnish the stories. They will have to find someone else to scratch their itching ears.

\*\*\*\*\*

## ***THE UNFOLDING OF THE SECRET***

**(Continued from Vol. III, No. 8)**

It was not the work that God had begun in the Philippian saints that He discontinued. The dispensational change at Acts 28:28 had no bearing on their salvation. Their salvation as individuals was definitely related to a larger purpose. This purpose saw its beginning on the day of Pentecost. The believers of those days were so sure that God's purpose to establish His kingdom would soon be realized that they sold their possessions and distributed to every man as he had need. The purpose upon which God was working during the Acts period was the subject of Old Testament revelation. It was restated in the gospels. This purpose was to consummate in the return of Christ and the full establishment of His kingdom. In relation to this purpose God was taking out of Israel a remnant and taking out of the Gentiles a people for His name. This work had reached Philippi and there God had saved Jews and Gentiles. But the good work that God began among them was wholly discontinued until a set time for it to begin again - the day of Jesus Christ.

Having declared this to the Philippians, and having labored to bring about within them the proper state of mind for the reception of the truth, Paul is now ready to set forth the truth. And, as is so often the case, he will use the background of his own experiences, his state at that time, and his purposes in order to bring them his message. There is so much in the third chapter of Philippians that demands detailed examination that it may seem at times that we have strayed from our subject. But this will not be the case.

**3:1.** His final exhortation to them begins with the instruction to rejoice in the Lord. It may have been that many who found it easy to rejoice in great wonders and miracles, or position and attainments, would find it hard to rejoice in the Lord alone. Paul would emphasize that even though they are stripped of all they can still find sufficient cause for rejoicing.

**3:2.** From the chronological standpoint this is the first statement in the Word of God against circumcision. All of Paul's statements in Galatians were directed against circumcision for the Gentiles. At Acts 28:28 circumcision became nothing more than a mutilation of the flesh.

**3:3.** The word *flesh* in this passage stands for all that a Jew was by birth, training and position. It is used in this same sense in Romans 1:3. Christ was the seed of David according to His birth. The Jews were the children of Abraham by birth, that is, by the flesh. See Rom. 4:1. By birth the Israelite had the most favored place among men. Some

Israelites like Paul, labored in such manner that their attainments gave them the highest place in their own race. The truth of the dispensation of the grace of God called upon all such to abandon all confidence in these things. This was not easy to do.

The flesh held a very prominent part in Israel's religion. The Cross made some change, but Acts 28:28 brought about a complete abolishment of everything related to the flesh.

**3:4.** Paul's appeal to others to abandon all confidence in the flesh may be considered by some to be the cry of one who had nothing to lose by adopting such a course. To dispel any such thought he affirms that he has reasons whereby he might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else claims the right to have confidence in the flesh, he claims a greater right. His attainments had given him under God the highest place in his own race.

**3:5-6.** In this passage Paul lists seven things in which he could have confidence. Others might equal him in some of these things but no one could equal him in all of them. These seven things are his circumcision with all it implied, his place as an Israelite, his tribal membership in Benjamin, a Hebrew in fact as well as in name, his devotion to the law, his fervent zeal and his righteousness. Now, in the next breath Paul states that these things, which were gain to him, he is counting as pure loss for Christ sake. In fact, he states that these seven things are now to him but refuse.

These words are the strongest words Paul ever spoke against the divine religion of Judaism, and they are the first words he ever spoke against it. These words do not express an attitude that was his from the day of his conversion, for that experience happened thirty years before these strong words were spoken. This new attitude of Paul came about as the result of some new revelation, which he did not have during the Acts period. In fact, during the Acts period Paul actually gloried in these things, which he suddenly counts as refuse. These seven things do not relate to the things before his conversion, for they have to do with the things in which he gloried from the day of his conversion to that time when he announced that the salvation of God was sent to the Gentiles. We will examine each statement in the light of Paul's experience between his conversion and Acts 28:28.

**Circumcised the eighth day.** There was no truth revealed between the time of Paul's conversion and Acts 28:28 which would cause him to regard his circumcision or the rite of circumcision as refuse. Paul's Lord was a circumcised man. Galatians 5:2 concerned Gentile circumcision. In Acts 16:3 we are told that Paul circumcised Timothy. This was after Galatians was written. In Romans 3:2 Paul insisted that circumcision was profitable. It is plain that he did not then count it as refuse. In 1 Cor. 7:18 Paul tells the circumcised believer not to become uncircumcised; that is they were not to repudiate their circumcision. When Paul, in Philippians, insists that circumcision was mere refuse, he is doing the very thing that he forbid the circumcised Corinthians to do. That circumcision is refuse, is truth after Acts 28:28, but not before.

**Of the stock of Israel.** This is another fact that he counts as refuse. But when did he do this? Certainly not in the Acts period. In Romans 11:1, Paul states emphatically that he is an Israelite. In Galatians 6:6 he speaks of the Israel of God. In 2 Corinthians 11:22 he insists that he is as much an Israelite as anyone. In Acts 28:20 he identifies himself with the hope of Israel. At no time before Acts 28:28 did Paul count his position in Israel as being mere refuse. In Philippians that is what he counts it.

**Of the tribe of Benjamin.** In Romans 11:1 Paul sets forth his tribal membership in Benjamin to prove that God had not cast away His people. The evidence is plain that Paul gloried in a thing in Romans that he counts as refuse in Philippians.

**An Hebrew of the Hebrews.** In 2 Corinthians 12:22 Paul insists that he is a Hebrew. He brings this forth to show that he is not a whit behind the foremost apostles. Are we to deduce from this that Paul reached out to the refuse heap and reclaimed this for a moment. Certainly not! Paul never counted being a Hebrew as refuse until after the dispensational change ushered in at Acts 28:28.

**As touching the law, a Pharisee.** The words "a Pharisee" may not come to us with much force, but to those to whom Paul wrote they were enough to establish his devotion to the law of God. In Acts 21:18-24 we read of the great lengths to which Paul went to demonstrate that he was one who walked orderly and kept the law. In Acts 23:6 Paul emphatically stated that he was "a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee." There are those who hold that Paul said this only to confound the Pharisees and to pit the Pharisees against the Sadducees. If this is true then his words to Timothy that he had "fought a good fight" are nothing more than the boasting claim of man who lacked both conscience and principle in controversy. But it is not true, for Paul meant just what he said when he claimed to be a Pharisee. He glories in this before Acts 28:28, he counts it as refuse after that time.

**Concerning zeal, persecuting the church.** Since we have already stated that the seven things listed in this passage have to do primarily with those things in which Paul still gloried after his conversion, our readers will judge that we face a positive difficulty in this statement, and the death knell of our position. And it does seem true, upon the surface that this statement refers to Paul's life before his Damascus road experience. However, we will be bold and state that this statement has nothing to do with Paul's experiences before his conversion, for it refers entirely to his life after his conversion. And if our position seems to create an insurmountable difficulty, we would point out that the real difficulty arises when we try to relate these words to Paul's life before he met the risen Lord. Let us face the problem.

We must not forget the theme of this passage. It is not that Paul is attempting to demonstrate his great zeal before his conversion. He is setting forth the things in which he could have confidence, things in which he could trust, things that were gain to him. In 1 Cor. 15:5 Paul recounts with shame and sorrow how he persecuted the Church of God. This was his greatest mistake. In view of this can we believe that Paul would bring forth his greatest mistake as something in which he could have confidence, something that was gain to him. And even if this mistake could be used to demonstrate his zeal, he could not count it on the profit side of the ledger. He obtained mercy because he persecuted in ignorance, but he never obtained a reward for it.

This whole matter will clear up when we make a study of the word, which is translated persecute. It is the Greek word *dioko*, and while it does unmistakably mean *persecute* in most of its forty-four occurrences in the New Testament, yet there are more than a dozen occurrences where it cannot mean persecute.

The meaning of *dioko* is always regulated by its setting or context. In an occurrence like Matthew 5:11 it is plain that it does mean *persecute* because it is linked up with reviling and slandering. The same is true of Acts 22:4 where it is linked up with death.

Therefore, it is evident that *dioko* does mean, to *persecute*, but that is not all that it can mean. Paul uses it many times to express something entirely different. In fact this same word appears in two places in Philippians 3. In Philippians 3:12 it is translated *follow after*, and in 3:14 it is translated *press*. This matter is important, so it seems wise that a concordance of all occurrences should be given. In each passage the word (or words) in italics is the word *dioko* in the original.

\*\*\*\*\*

## CONCORDANCE TO DIOKO

- Matt. 5:10** - *which are persecuted* for righteousness sake  
**Matt. 5:11**- when men shall revile you, and *persecute* you  
**Matt. 5:12** - for so *persecuted* they the prophets  
**Matt. 5:44** - despitefully use you, and *persecute* you  
**Matt. 10:23** - when they *persecute* you in this city  
**Matt. 23:34** - and *persecute* them from city to city  
**Luke 17:23** - go not after them, nor *follow* them  
**Luke 21:12** -lay their hands on you, and *persecute* you  
**John 5:16**-therefore did the Jews *persecute* Jesus  
**John 15:20** - If they *have persecuted* me  
**John 15:20** - they will also *persecute* you  
**Acts 7:52** - have not your fathers *persecuted*  
**Acts 9:4** - Saul, Saul, why *persecutest* thou me  
**Acts 9:5** - I am Jesus whom thou *persecutest*  
**Acts 22:4** - I *persecuted* this way unto the death  
**Acts 22:7** - Saul, Saul, why *persecutest* thou me  
**Acts 22:8** - Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou *persecutest*  
**Acts 26:11** - I *persecuted* them even unto strange cities  
**Acts 26:14** - Saul, Saul, why *persecutest* thou me  
**Acts 26:15** - I am Jesus whom thou *persecutest*  
**Rom. 9:30** - *which followed* not after righteousness  
**Rom. 9:31** - Israel, which *followed* after the law  
**Rom. 12:13** - necessity of saints; *given* to hospitality  
**Rom. 12:14** - Bless them *which persecute* you

**Rom: 14:19 - therefore *follow after* the things**  
**1 Cor. 4:12 - *being persecuted*, we suffer it**  
**1 Cor. 14:1- *Follow after* charity, and desire spiritual**  
**1 Cor. 15:9 - because I *persecuted* the Church of God**  
**2 Cor. 4:9 - *Persecuted*, but not forsaken; cast down**  
**Gal. 1:13 - beyond measure I *persecuted* the church**  
**Gal. 1:23 - he *which persecuted* us in times past**  
**Gal. 4:29 - *persecuted* him that was born after**  
**Gal. 5:11- why do I yet *suffer persecution***  
**Gal. 6:12 - *should suffer persecution* for the cross**  
**Phil. 3:6 - Concerning zeal, *persecuting* the church**  
**Phil. 3:12 – I *follow after*, if that I may**  
**Phil. 3:14 - I *press* toward the mark for**  
**1 Thess. 5:15 - ever *follow* that which is good**  
**1 Tim. 6:11- *follow after* righteousness, godliness**  
**2 Tim. 2:22 - *follow* righteousness, faith, charity**  
**2 Tim. 3:12 - in Christ Jesus *shall suffer persecution***  
**Heb. 12:14 - *Follow* peace with all men, and holiness**  
**Pet. 3:11 -let him seek peace, and *ensue* it**  
**Rev. 12:13 - he *persecuted* the woman which**

An examination of these passages will demonstrate that *dioko* can mean something good as well as something bad. While it is true that Paul did persecute the church before his conversion, this is not what he refers to here. In this passage he is referring to his intense service in behalf of the Church of God. In other words the thing that Paul told the Romans to do concerning peace, the thing he told the Corinthians to do concerning love, the thing he told the Thessalonians to do concerning good, the thing he told Timothy to do concerning righteousness, the thing he himself did concerning the high calling, is the very thing that Paul did in behalf of the church of God after his conversion. Before his conversion he pursued the Church to do it evil after his conversion he pursued it with the same intensity to do it good. It is this service for the Church of God that he brings forth as proof of his zeal. In the words "persecuting the church" in Philippians 3:6 Paul says in three words all that he said in **2 Corinthians 11:23-29**.

**"In labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times I received forty stripes, save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of**

**robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."**

Paul's service in behalf of the Church of God was unparalleled and unapproachable. It is this service that he speaks of when he would prove his zeal. But, some will ask why should Paul count this as refuse. Why should he fling it aside? In answer we would say that it was not the service that he flung aside for the work was done, it was in the past, and out of his hands. Such zeal was sure to accumulate a great reward. However, God's rewards are part of his allotments, and Paul's reward for his service for the Church of God would be his share in the blessings that God promised to Abraham. In these promises the seed of Abraham could have much or little, and Paul had much. But the promises of God to Abraham were not transferable, for God had confirmed them with an oath. The things, which have been allotted to the Church of God can never be transferred to the Church which is His body. If Paul turns his back on the Church of God to seek a place in the Church, which is His body, he must suffer the loss of all things that pertained to him as a member of the Church of God.

We remember reading the story of an American, who was soldier by background and a soldier at heart, who out of sympathy for the Allied cause enlisted with the French army at the beginning of the world war. He rendered magnificent service for which he received promotions, honors and rewards. When America entered the war his one desire was to fight under his own flag and with his own countrymen. He sought for a transfer, but for certain reasons could not obtain it. He refused to take no for an answer and his faithful record obtained him a further hearing. Finally he was told he could have a complete discharge from the French army, after which he could enlist as a private in the American army. His superiors urged him not to take these steps as it would mean the loss of all that he had gained by meritorious and faithful service. However, he chose to give up all that he had attained as a soldier in the French army, and took his chances on what he would receive as an American.

This, in some measure, illustrates the case of Paul. The position, attainments and rewards that he had gained could not be transferred to the new out-calling, the Church which is His body. If Paul becomes a part of this calling he must enter into it stripped of everything save the salvation that was his in Christ Jesus. We know Paul's choice. He chose to give up being "not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles" in the Church of God, in order to be "less than the least of all saints" in the "Church which is His body." Compare 2 Cor. 11:5 with Eph. 3:8.

**Touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.** As this statement has a positive bearing on the ninth verse we must examine it in some detail. And in doing so we must battle against the view that no one ever obtained righteousness by keeping the law.

After Moses had given the law to Israel he said:

**"And it shall be our righteousness if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as He hath commanded us." Deut, 6:25.**

This is the Word of God concerning the results that would come from a life that was devoted to the keeping of His commandments.

It would mean righteousness for all such. And there is no use for anyone to say that no one ever kept the law and obtained this righteousness for the Word of God will rise up and refute such a statement. In Luke 1:6 we read of Zacharias and Elisabeth:

**"And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless."**

This righteousness which they obtained is not to be confused, confounded or connected with that righteousness of God which is without the law spoken of in Romans 3. These are two distinct *righteousnesses* and Paul was the possessor of both. One of these came by the deeds of the law, and the other was unto all and upon all that believe. One was by works and the other by faith. In the Church of God these did not conflict, neither did one cancel the other. It is true that after the death of Christ, righteousness did not and could not come by the law. But if a believer possessed it before that time he did not lose it.

Paul, writing by inspiration of God says, "**Touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.**" It had required a lifetime of diligence to gain this, but he will count even this as refuse, for it can have no place in the out-calling upon which he has set his heart to attain. There is no place in the Church, which is His body for a righteousness, which is of the law. Just as there is no place in the American system for Lords, Dukes or Earls. If any who bear these titles would become a good citizen of this land he must abandon them as refuse.

Having examined the seven things in which Paul could have confidence, we can confidently challenge all to produce proof that Paul ever counted these things as refuse before Acts 28:28. This state of mind has been produced in him by the transcendent nature of the revelation he has received concerning the Church, which is His body.

**3:7-8.** The things we have considered, everyone of them, were positive gain to Paul. Just as a man might list his material assets, Paul has listed his spiritual assets, the things that were his by birth and attainments. These were credits, not debits. But now he announces that he is counting them as loss for Christ. Why did he do this, and why did he do it thirty years after his conversion? It is evident that the full reason is contained in the words "**for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.**" A new revelation of Christ has been given to Paul, which has set forth Christ in an office and character hitherto unknown to Paul. He has discovered that the glorious one whom he loves and serves is not only Savior, Messiah, Lord and King, but He is also Head of a new out-calling, even the Church which is His body. This glorious office excels all others, and to be identified with Christ in this out-calling, Paul is willing to suffer the loss of all things and count them as refuse.

**3:9. And to be found in Him.** Since Paul has been in Christ for thirty years we must look for some deeper significance in these words. They are explained when we read them with the whole sentence of which they are a part. Up to this point Paul has been in Christ with two "righteousnesses". Now his intense desire is to be found in Him without his own righteousness, which is of the law, retaining and standing only in that righteousness which is through the faith of Christ. This righteousness is in complete harmony with the *by grace* nature of the Church which is His body. Yea, Paul has been in Christ for thirty

years, but now he desires to be found in Him on a new basis, even the same basis as the vilest of sinners, with only a righteousness, which is by grace. This is the only righteousness that can have a place in the Church, which is His body.

**3:10. That I may know Him.** Paul had known Christ and preached Christ for thirty years. Why then should he speak of knowing Him? This has reference to the superior knowledge that he spoke of in the previous verse. He knows that Christ is the Head and now he desires to enter into an experimental knowledge of this great truth. This may be understood if we consider that many who knew a man as the Prince may not be able to say that they know him as King. Many who knew Mr. Roosevelt, as Governor of New York cannot say that they know him as President. Some of his associates advanced when he advanced and can say that they have known him as both Governor and President. Paul, by revelation, knew that Christ had been made Head over all to the Church, which is His body, but to enter into an experimental knowledge of this would require that he become a member of that body which Christ is the Head.

**And the power of His resurrection.** This is the second thing he desires to know experimentally. It is explained more fully by a revelation in Ephesians. It refers to the mighty power of God, "**which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies, far above all.**"

**The fellowship of His sufferings.** Paul had been persecuted and had suffered physical violence even as his Lord before him. But Paul had never suffered the loss of all or the giving up of all as Christ did. He now expects to experience in some measure the truth set forth in Philippians 2:5-8. Paul's reputation has been set forth under the seven points previously considered. In abandoning these he makes himself of no reputation.

**Being made conformable unto His death.** His death was death by means of crucifixion. The purpose behind crucifixion was not just to kill, but to **debase, degrade and to bring to shame.** It was the crucifixion that was the stumbling block to the *Jew*, it was foolishness to the wise. The Cross brings man very low for it reveals the depths to which the Son of God was forced to go in order to redeem. Crucifixion was the death of a slave. No Roman, no freeman, could be crucified. Our Lord's glory was laid aside and received again after the humiliation of the Cross. It was to this experience that Paul would be conformed.

**To Be Continued**

\*\*\*\*\*

## ***THE MEANING OF EPITELEO***

The exposition of Philippians 1:6 which appeared in the last issue created as much interest and brought about as many questions as anything we have ever written. Most letters received contained requests for additional information. It is evident that some further comment will be helpful, and we will try to include the answers to all queries in this present article.

For a number of years we have believed that Acts 28:28 marked a radical dispensational division. Before that point the Church of God dominated the scene, and after that time we have a revelation that concerns the Church which is His body. We have held and taught that this present dispensation is a parenthesis in God's dealings, and that at Acts 28:28 he discontinued for a time His work in connection with His purposes for Israel. Therefore, it was with much satisfaction that we discovered a positive statement in the Word of God that confirmed this view.

**"Being persuaded of this very thing, that he who began a good work among you will be bringing it to a full end until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. 1:6.**

When Philippians was written, God was closing out the work that He began on the day of Pentecost. This is the reason for the future tense in this passage. God did not abandon the members of the Church of God at Acts 28:28, for it is evident from the epistles of 1 Timothy and Titus that God arranged for the orderly closing out of that work.

We desire to state that we cannot furnish the name of a single authority who has translated Philippians 1:6 as we have. If the translation we have set forth is accepted, it must be accepted because it is true to the Greek and true to the truth, and not because a list of eminent authorities can be given who have translated it in this manner. We have furnished already the names of recognized authorities who say that *epiteleō* means "to bring to an end," but as far as we know none of them have ever put this meaning into Philippians 1:6.

As a rule Philippians 1:6 has been interpreted as referring to the work that God was doing in them as individuals, that is, their salvation. This passage is often quoted as proof of the believers' security in Christ. Some who read our former article carelessly, thought that we held that God was going to discontinue the work He was doing in them, that is, discontinue their salvation. Such teaching would be absurd to the extreme. The passage has no reference to the work that God was doing IN them. It speaks of the good work that God began AMONG them.

We have been asked if this word appears in the *Septuagint Version*, and the answer is that it does. a number of times.

In Leviticus 6:22 the Septuagint translators used it to express the thought that is set forth by the words "wholly burnt" in the Authorized Version. The dominant thought is that the fire made a full end of this sacrifice.

In 1 Samuel 3:12 it stands in contrast with the word *beginning*. It seems evident from this passage that *epiteleō* is a word that a Greek would use to express the thought of bringing to an end.

In Zechariah 4:9 it is used to express the thought of finishing a house. The Lord said that Zerrubabel had begun the house and that he would finish it.

These three passages from the Septuagint bear out our contention that *epiteleō* can mean "to bring to a full end."

It is utterly futile for anyone to bring us arguments that *epiteleō* cannot mean "to bring to a full end" since it will not bear this meaning in other passages where the word appears. No one must think that we teach that *epiteleō* can have only one meaning. Some

readers missed the statement in the last issue that *epiteleo* is a flexible word. A flexible word is one that can have several meanings. These meanings are always indicated by the context. In fact, it is the context that regulates the meaning, strength or force of the word.

Take, for example our word *dark*. Place it before the word *night* and it is very strong. Place it before the word *day* and it loses much of its strength.

In teaching a class we have often written the word *fast* on the blackboard and asked for a definition. Then, no matter what definition was given we would demonstrate that it could not mean that, simply by writing some word after it. For example, if they said that *fast* meant *fleet*, something that could run, we would write the word *color* after it. Of course this was simply playing tricks with words for the sake of illustration. Who would think of arguing seriously that *fast* does not mean capable of running inasmuch as a *fast* color is one that will not run. Put *fast* before *horse* and it means one that can run, put it before *color* and it means one that will not run, place it before *woman*, asleep, or after the word *held* and it will change in accord with its associations.

In view of this there is no profit in anyone insisting that *epiteleo* cannot mean "to bring to an end" in Philippians 1:6, because it will not bear this meaning in other places where it occurs. We insist again that the word is flexible, that it can bear several meanings, and that these meanings are regulated by the context. In the passage under consideration we have the only place that it occurs in connection with the word *until* (**achris**).

A concordance of all occurrences of the word will be helpful to those who are seeking accurate knowledge.

## **BIBLICAL USES OF EPITELEO**

**Luke 13:32 - I do cures today and tomorrow**

**Rom. 15:28 - When therefore I have performed this**

**2 Cor. 7:1- perfecting holiness in the fear of God**

**2 Cor. 8:6 - he would also finish the same in you**

**2 Cor. 8:11- perform the doing of it**

**2 Cor. 8:11- so there may be a performance also**

**Gal. 3:3 - are ye now made perfect by the flesh**

**Phil. 1:6 - will perform it until the day**

**Heb. 8:5 - when he was about to make the**

**Heb. 9:6 - accomplishing the service of God**

**1 Pet. 5:9 - are accomplished in your brethren**

An examination of these passages will show that *epiteleo* does not appear in connection with the word *until* in any of them. Therefore, the exact situation that exists in Philippians 1:6 is not duplicated elsewhere in Scripture. In every passage the thought of completion is either dominant or latent.

\*\*\*\*\*

## ***THE GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP***

THE GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP came into existence in September, 1935, through the efforts of a group of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who had been led into personal study of the Word of God along dispensational lines. The personal study of these people had led them into deep conviction concerning certain Biblical truths, and because of these convictions they found themselves disfellowshipped even by those who at one time had encouraged them in their studies in the Word of God. Fully convinced that to study and never learn was a waste of time, and that to learn and not change was to walk contrary to the light; they determined to bring into existence a fellowship of believers wherein true study of the Word would be paramount, and the fruits of such studies would be allowed to correct errors, change convictions and direct the walk. In this fellowship believers were to be encouraged to study the Word, no man was to be branded a heretic simply because he raised a question or expressed an opinion, and love of the truth was to be the cardinal principle.

During the first two years, the meetings of THE GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP were held in the auditorium of the St. Cecilia Music Society. In the spring of 1938 the group felt led to purchase the property formerly occupied by the East Congregational Church. This was done in such manner that it did not violate another important principle of the fellowship, namely, not to assume any burdensome debts. The building has been completely renovated and redecorated, giving the fellowship a permanent meeting place.

In February, 1936, Otis Q. Sellers, an independent student and teacher of the Word of God, whose studies had led him into many convictions held by the group, was invited to assume the task of ministering to the fellowship and leading them in their studies in the Word of God. For a number of years Mr. Sellers had held and proclaimed the conviction that *preaching sermons* did not in any manner fulfill God's command to "preach the Word." He did not feel it was right for believers to spend their lives listening to sermons, yet never come to any accurate knowledge of the Word of God. He insisted that the constant preaching of sermons had not produced a people who were familiar with the sacred Scriptures, and that a radical change was necessary if the ministry produced a people who, at least, knew what God had said. The fellowship concurred in this view, and thus began a ministry of Bible exposition, which has for its purpose the producing of a band of people who know what God has said. This purpose is being accomplished by bringing the people again and again into contact with every word that God has spoken.

THE GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP is just what its name implies. It is a fellowship of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. It has no membership. Being convinced that where a true unity and fellowship exists no membership is necessary. It does not presume to receive anyone into, or to exclude anyone from its fellowship. All believers who place love of the truth above all creeds, confessions and traditions will soon discover their spiritual oneness with others of like precious faith. No physical tie could produce any closer bond.

Convinced that much machinery makes much trouble, all physical and material affairs of the fellowship have been delegated to a committee of five men who are responsible for the administration of all such affairs. These men are selected at a meeting held once each year. They have no authority in spiritual affairs, for it is held that each believer is responsible to his or her Lord alone, and that God has not given one believer a single iota of spiritual power over another believer.

THE GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP stands on the positive side as a witness to the gospel of the grace of God, the unique character of God's present out-calling which is the Church which is His body, and the unique character of God's present administration. It contends earnestly for a right division of the Word of truth, the absolute equality of all members of the Church, which is His body, and for the unhindered privilege of every believer to study the Word and to believe and walk in the result of such study. It also contends that there is a crying need for reexamination, reinvestigation and diligent study of the great subjects of "What is man and what is his destiny."

It stands, on the negative side, as unalterably opposed to the superficial emotional evangelism of the present day. It is opposed to sensational sermons and sermon titles, and high pressure methods of money raising. It wars against the amazing "prophecy racket" which has fastened itself upon and has sucked the life blood from premillennial truth. It also opposes all such things as human experiences, life stories, travel lectures and motion pictures usurping the time that belongs to the preaching of the Word of God.

THE GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP does not seek for crowds. It believes in simplicity of worship and service. It has abolished all the modern trappings that are considered so essential in the lively human services of today. Those who attend its services can rest assured that what they see is the true fellowship. Behind its simple services there are no battle of boards, no splits among the people, no quarrels among fellow believers, no hatred by the minister of certain people, no hatred by certain people of the minister.

THE GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP observes no ordinances. Holding steadfastly to the unique character of the present administration, it believes that ordinances have no place.

The Bible study magazine, THE WORD OF TRUTH is sponsored by the Fellowship. It is edited by Mr. Sellers, and is sent to anyone anywhere upon request. It is circulated throughout the entire United States and goes into twenty-seven foreign countries.

Those who make up THE GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP have learned by experience what it means to be misrepresented, to be falsely accused and to be deliberately misunderstood. These experiences have produced within them a determination to never be guilty of the same things, but to love all with whom they may be led to differ.

THE GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP proclaims the verbal inspiration of the Bible; the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ; His virgin birth; His death and resurrection; His premillennial second coming; salvation by grace through faith, on the ground of His blood, apart from works or ordinances; the unique character, hope and destiny of the Church which is His body; the all sufficiency of Jesus Christ as Savior and Head.

\*\*\*\*\*

## THE EDITOR TO HIS FRIENDS

\*\*\*\*This issue is the final one in Volume 3. The nine issues will now be bound in cloth, uniform with the first two volumes and will be for sale at \$1.00 per copy (4s 2d). The income from the sale of bound volumes goes into the publishing fund. It has now been three and one-half years since the first issue of the magazine went forth, and in that time thirty-one numbers have been published. The labor involved in this has been great, but the deep appreciation of those who have been helped by the testimony has been sufficient reward. The magazine is not a work done out of necessity because the Editor needs to make a living, for it is a labor of love. This makes the task a pleasant one indeed.

\*\*\*\*Paul sent Tychicus to the Ephesians that they might learn of his affairs and how he did. It would be well if the Editor could follow the same pattern and send some beloved brother and faithful minister to all the friends that have become his since sending out the first issue of THE WORD OF TRUTH. It would be better still if he could make these contacts personally and get to know those who now stand with him in the truth. Since neither course is possible it seems well that he should write a few lines about his affairs and how he does.

\*\*\*\*The Editor has received numerous requests for his photograph. It seems that many wonder just what he looks like. Maybe they desire to know if he looks as bad as he sometimes writes. None of these requests have been granted as he fears the unfavorable reaction that a glance at his picture might bring. He receives many letters asking that he write more about himself so that the readers might become better acquainted. As he is not a converted Communist, nor a former criminal, and not a converted Hebrew there is little that he could write about himself that would be of interest. He has never been to Russia or Palestine so he can tell no sensational stories of his travels there. The only real journey he ever made was a figurative one. It was into the Book and he liked it so well that he took up residence there, and now nothing can induce him to move out. He still talks and writes about the Book even when there is a big war in Europe to talk about.

\*\*\*\*Most readers know that the Editor is a busy man. They also know that he has a stupendous problem in trying to provide the finances that are essential for the maintenance of the printed page ministry. But they must not think of him as being overworked or distracted. He arises each morning facing more work than can ever be done in one day, but there are days when he does not do a thing, just to show the work that he is the boss. Meditation and study demands leisure time so he is careful to make provision for this. As to the financial burden, the printed page ministry has no fixed expenses. That is, it has no fixed expense such as rent, light, heat or salaries, which go on and mount up day by day. If a magazine is printed there is expense, if not there is none. This keeps the Editor from distractions.

\*\*\*\*When the magazine first went out the Editor discovered a group of readymade readers who were interested in the rightly divided Word. He entered into the fruits of the ministry of others who labored before him. This was especially true in the British Isles, Australia and New Zealand. This band of readers were willing to become the Editor's friends and helpers if he proved himself worthy of their confidence. This he has labored

diligently to do and trusts he has succeeded. And, during the past three and one-half years, it has been a source of constant encouragement to see men one by one enter into the joys of a rightly divided Word. Thus, today, there are many who are standing loyally behind the witness who came to know the truth as a result of reading this publication.

\*\*\*\*It seems well to mention the growing appreciation of the magazine .by its readers. The letters that come are filled with words of sincere appreciation. Many of them speak of some definite matter, which was a help.

\*\*\*\*The magazine has now taken what will probably be its permanent form. It will be expository, setting forth the results of the Editor's studies in the Word of God. It does not publish the writings of others, it is not an open forum for Biblical discussion, it represents no group or movement. It is the witness of one man to the glory of the Word of God. Some might misunderstand this and judge the Editor to be self-centered and of the opinion that no one can write but him. This is not true, for many can write better than the Editor. All writers can publish their own writings, for there is nothing that requires the Editor to publish the writings of others, no more than he is required on Sunday morning to give a sermon that another has written. In this land of free speech there are no restrictions on starting a publication, so any student or teacher can start his own.

\*\*\*\*A statement of needs and an appeal for help has gone forth with the final issue of the two previous volumes. None is being sent with this issue. This is not to be taken as an indication that there are no present needs for the reverse is true and the need is greater than ever before. In fact our present needs are of such nature that you will receive a special appeal from us in the near future. This will inform you of our material needs and it is hoped that you will stand ready to help.

**End Vol. III, No. 9**

**End Vol. III**