

## ***Conflict Resolution***

John Cheever, Bowen's Mill, July 2015

Are we saved by faith or are we saved by grace through faith? So we have faith, for we are dealing with what's not seen, but we have to give full evidence to what's not seen. We have to have the power of God working in us to form us into an expression of what isn't seen, so it can be seen.

If you go into a church, any church and say, "You know, the only evidence of a fully manifested son that the world will ever see is in me." Oops....wouldn't be a great day. They wouldn't say, "You need to come back. We need more of this, but rather it would be tar-and-feathers. I wasn't saying that to be presumptuous concerning myself personally, but there is a company; there are people who have been born of nature that are called to be an expression to creation of the life of God. It's clear from Scripture, and it's even clearer in the Spirit than even the testimony that is in Scripture, that the world will not believe in God's purpose until they see the evidence of it being able to be effective. So most of the church today doesn't even teach what the letter of the word says; they teach contrary to what the letter of the word says. They say it's not possible to live in this body without sin. They do not even hold it as an anticipated destination while we're here. Yet it's clear that Paul taught that if we are yet subject to sin, we're not subject to God. John even went a little further; he opened the doors making a broader stroke when he said, "If the love of the world is in you, the love of the Father is not." So it gets pretty narrow.

I think the contest that we face is: Are we willing to be narrowed; whether we are willing to be confined, whether we are willing to be focused, whether we are willing to be joined at this very day and moment – that the goal for the remainder of our life become that what we have in our heart to be what was motivating God when He made the world? If our heart is not made one with His heart, if we're not joined by heart desire to what His intent was, somewhere along the line we're going to be diverted from the fulfillment of His purpose, by what's still working in us. That's kind of "A-B-C simple."

I want to talk a little this morning about conflict resolution because the world in its spirit is into crisis management. Their focus and their intent is to deal with things once they become a crisis. God's purposes aren't to deal with crisis management. His redemption for man was there before He made man, so He's not into crisis management. He's into conflict resolution, and He actually introduces the conflict on purpose to join us to the resolution of the conflict. So, think it not strange; this is "of God." We think of the grace of God in terms of the first two feasts and what God's going to do for me. But if grace comes according to measure of the gift of Christ, then my context, in relationship with what grace is should change as I come and approach maturity in Christ. If I'm just involved in this for

what benefit it is to me, I'm going to be washed out of the work of the Holy Spirit before it's finished because Jesus came in order *to give for us*. We were wanting; there was an outstanding balance in the justice of God. There was the sin of man and it was great. In order for God to be just, there had to be a balance; there had to be an atonement made for that sin – not so that God could be joined to us, but that we could be joined to God. That was His purpose in making man. If God was separated by sin from man, how would man ever be purified? Think about the garden; the story is there. Adam sinned. What showed up next? God. He said, “Adam, where are you? What have you done? Why did you do it? Where did you go?”

He sought to join man back to Himself, not to be separated from man. He joined Himself to man. He knew what man was made of. He actually put the tree there so that man would eat of it. He gave him a commandment to make sure he knew it was there. I think I said it before, but translating it into ‘God speak,’ God essentially was saying to Adam, “You know that tree you haven’t eaten of yet? Don’t....see you tomorrow.” Think it not strange because David said, “Before I was afflicted, I didn’t have a clue what direction to go in.” Alright, he said, *Before I was afflicted, I went astray*, but astray from what? What do we know? We don’t know where it is; we don’t know the destination. How would we do this? Grace isn’t something we ‘do.’ Grace is something that ‘does us.’ Isn’t that right? It is not using grace as a tool, but rather the working of grace teaching and training us as we recognize our need and yield to His provision.

We come into this and we engage the purpose of God through humility; it’s a humbling of ourselves. I don’t think there has been a time in history where there has been less conflict than there is now. But I also don’t think there’s ever been a time in history, when there’s been a greater expression of the conflict that’s always existed, because the source of conflict is the collision between natures; the nature of man and the nature of God. Spirit and flesh are opposed to one another, right? *‘The flesh lusts against the Spirit, the Spirit against the flesh’*; there’s the *source* of all conflict. *The resolution of the conflict is a resolution of the difference in the natures*. The problem is that theologians think that God made man for destruction when actually the purpose of God was that He made man to divine him by bringing him into Christ.

The lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world wasn’t a four-legged woolly animal because lambs hadn’t been made yet. It wasn’t until the 5<sup>th</sup> day that lambs were made. So the provision of God’s heart toward the man that He hadn’t made yet is the resolution of the conflict of the natures.

So, there’s the definition of the problem; what’s our solution? This is going to be really short. The solution in our path is sacrifice. Janet (Meyers) was talking about love; she wrapped up things this morning in what she was sharing with love as the true measure of a man. Sam stood over there decades ago and said, “I want

to tell you how to spell love: S-A-C-R-I-F-I-C-E, sacrifice. The resolution between the call of God on my life and the fulfillment of the purpose to which God has called me, is my offering of myself to God. And then, whatever is lacking in the purity of that offering, trusting God to clear it up and to perfect it. *'God will provide Himself a lamb.'* God will perfect that in you that concerns His purpose.

So Paul said, *'As many of us that have this mind (which is going on to maturity), trust God that if there is any other mind, He'll reveal it.'* He'll purify it. This is the path of sacrificing. The problem with sacrifice is that in our mind, sacrifice involves death. So the best man could do, and the best God could encourage the natural man to do, was to bring a substitutionary sacrifice, that would die on his behalf, so that man could continue as the result of the atonement made by that blood, to have a relationship with God; which by itself a testimony that God is not trying to destroy man. He made a substitutionary provision. Instead of killing a person when he sinned, he killed a lamb that was offered for the man's sin, in order to bring the man back into a right standing.

Most Christians use Jesus for the same thing; as a four legged wooly beast that was used under the law, just for the forgiveness of sins; eminently effective; no more effective, but eminently effective. But the problem remains, that the man under that order of government went back to his tent and kept sinning! And those same Jews, who used repeated offerings of lambs for sin, were concerned about Paul's doctrine. This is really funny. They were concerned and said, "Look, if you teach grace the way you preach it, people are going to use that as a reason to continue sinning!" Their whole culture was based on sacrifices that would enable them to continue sinning! What they didn't want to do was change, and give up their heritage, and some sense of 'I can do this', for something that would actually work! Wow....

Conflict resolution ...by sacrifice. But the conflict has not been resolved by what Jesus came and did. Did you notice? Anyone watch CNN lately? Oh, I'm sorry, this is the wrong crowd....what is that other one? Fox. Oh yes, that was that other crowd I talked to. It's messed up – it's irretrievably messed up and it's going in an accelerated fashion toward its demise. It doesn't matter what plane you look at; you look at political circumstances; it's a terrible mess. A friend of mine said, "The problem with politics isn't that power corrupts; the problem with politics is that it doesn't attract a good quality of person to begin with, and then power corrupts." The economy, someone mentioned recently, is like a train going down the road, just throwing dollar bills up into the air because our economy wouldn't look as bad as it does now unless they had been printing money as fast as they could on paper. I'll rephrase for clarity. It would look a lot worse than it does if they weren't artificially inflating it with paper. The only reason it looks as good as it does is because they've been pumping it up with paper, and the rest of the world

is getting tired of taking our paper for their goods. So there's another level of destruction in crisis. We've become a country that doesn't produce anything.

But we need to be careful because if we're just trading Spiritually on the basis of what God did for us in Jesus, we're not producing anything either. When Jesus came, he lived, he was testified to as the Lamb of God sufficient to expunge the sins of the world; he hung on a tree, rose from the dead; he was here for forty days to testify that there was a resurrection and he left. "I'm done; I'm leaving." And people have an adulterous relationship, an idolatrous relationship with the historic Jesus, when actually he said that "the reason I'm leaving is that you can have a Spirit within you that can produce in you the life that I live."

So the substance that is Christ is formed in us as we offer ourselves on a daily basis to the Spirit of God's work. And the measure that Christ is based on the extent, the continuity, and the accumulation of our offering. No more, no less.

Paul, concerned for the Galatians said, "Do I have to travail until Christ be formed in you so that he can grow up and come to full stature in you?" You were quickened; there was an embryonic development, an instigation of the Holy Spirit that was Christ that was being birthed in you – but it's got to come to formation so that it walks and talks and evidences its nature and comes to full stature.

You know, Jesus, when he was twelve thought His calling was to teach. Little did he know; but he came to know because he stayed in union with the Spirit of God. The Spirit taught him. Jesus learned full obedience. He wasn't born with full obedience; it doesn't mean that he sinned. A child learning haltingly to walk is not a sin against mobility; the child is just learning to do it better. Jesus being in the temple teaching wasn't sin; it wasn't disobedience. It just wasn't a full expression because he wasn't fully mature. He was not ready to hang on a tree at twelve – that full offering was full obedience. So what is an appropriate expression of obedience? It depends on the level of life. Don't expect a child to address quantum physics – but you do expect a child to come to maturity. That is what God is waiting for.

He made a creation and on the 6<sup>th</sup> day. He gathered some dust into a rough form; 2 legs, 2 arms, 2 eyes and He "blew upon it," and man became a living soul. And of that nature, of that Adamic race, He has been gathering and is gathering now, that dust and seeking to breathe on it and bring forth another life, another man; to gather unto Himself those who will yield themselves to the breath of God, and to allow substance to be built in them, to become formed to the measure of the fullness of Christ – not just starting. Starting is necessary, starting has value, but starting is not the answer that is conflict resolution.

Conflict resolution is only by one thing, and there's our marker that gives an indication to that, and it's twofold. One aspect is that we have a glorified body. If you ain't got one yet, you're not done; simple. If you're not done, there's a path to walk; humbling yourself before the Spirit of God, so you can offer Him today what

is the appropriate sacrifice in order for His Spirit to work in you to bring you forward to a greater measure of maturity. The other indicator, in case some-----‘you know the religious spirits are really obnoxious’ ---- because there are some that are going to say, “You didn’t see it when Jesus was here, and you’re not seeing it now, but I got one, I’ve got a glorified body.” The evidence of having a glorified body is that the world will notice, and it says that the remnants of the nations are going to come to Zion to be taught of the God of Jacob. If we are still involved in evangelism, it’s because we don’t have a glorified body; for when we do, they will come to us, we won’t have to go to them. So, just a balance – you need a glorified body; if you do, it’ll be testified to by those for whom it’s designed.

God so loved the world and He’s seeking to bring conflict resolution to the world – not just crisis managing. We’re in crisis management as we grow, and that’s not wrong – it’s not wrong. We come together to edify one another, to strengthen one another, to encourage one another. We are not to be the source for one another, but out of being joined to the source individually, we have that which we can bring for one another to encourage one another.

I remember that years ago, I was going to a Lubbock Convention and there was this guy, and he just seemed obnoxious to me. I was looking forward to going to Lubbock, Texas and it’s a 20 hour ride, and along the course of that windshield time, I was thinking, “This is going to be great, ohhh....that guy’s going to be there.” The Lord said, “Are you expecting he’s going to be the same? You’re trusting Me to change you, but your expectations of him is that he’s going to be the same? So what is the measure of your faith that I am changing you?” The essence of conflict resolution is that Jesus said to Nicodemus, “The beginning of the answers are, that if you are not born again, there’s no point in us discussing anything further.” Essentially he said, “If you’re not understanding this, I’ll pay the tab. You get the tip and we’re done.” I thought they were having coffee at a cafe – maybe they weren’t. But Jesus said, “There’s no point.”

Paul’s gospel, however, is less obvious than that. I Corinthians 2:5-7 *That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. We’re not saved by faith, we are saved by power and we’re saved by that power working in us effectually; according to His great power that worketh in me effectually. Howbeit, we speak wisdom among them that are perfect, yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nothing; But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory.*

Paul was saying that the gospel that’s been given to me is not the obvious gospel, and he committed that gospel to us, and it has been passed down to us through the writings that have been preserved of his letters, an unveiling of the purpose of God from Genesis, chapter *minus* 6.... before the world was made. Right? He said, “I’m not talking to you about Genesis....Exodus.....Leviticus ....No,

there's a better hope being brought in; it is what was in the heart of God before He made the world. The wisdom that's been hidden was God-ordained before the world; Genesis *minus* 6, and this is my gospel and if you don't hear my gospel, it's not because there is a veil on my face, it's because there's a veil on your heart and this veil is removed in someone who is disposed to the will of God and lives as a sacrifice, a living sacrifice; not trusting only in the death of another on their behalf; be it a 4-legged wooly beast or a 2-legged man historically named Jesus, but there is a disposition that the Holy Spirit wants to perfect in me that I would live my life by another Spirit, fulfilling another will than my own. So Peter didn't get everything that Paul wrote, but he got a lot and he said, (I Peter 4:2) *Let it suffice the time up to now in our lives to have lived to fulfill the lusts the lusts of the flesh; let's live the rest of our life unto the will of God.*

How do I sacrifice? How do I offer? Do it! How? Do it in faith. Do it in trust. I don't care, do it wrong! Are you going to wait to do it perfectly? Just do it because as you do it, as you present yourself to God – not out of sufficiency, then you're putting yourself in the pathway, the Holy Spirit's teaching you, and He will clean it up as you go. But if you don't do it, then you are in the Galatian church waiting on Paul's letter, that they didn't know was coming -- but we do -- and he says, "Are you bewitched? Have you fallen under the spell of the spirit of this world? Do you think that beginning this path by an initiation of the breath of God and a response to that and a thankful heart, that you're going to finish by learning Greek? The Greeks had this as their primary language; by the way it-- didn't help them. I'm not saying that the word won't support the Spirit, but I am saying, the word – the scriptures, won't give you life. It's only the Spirit that will give you life.

So we offer ourselves. Paul said to the Galatians 6:8, *Here's the solution to the conflict. If you sow to the Spirit, you will of the Spirit reap that which pertains to eternal issues.* Rescued from temporality, rescued from mortality, and as this continues, as you sow to the Spirit; 'I don't know how to sow to the Spirit, give me a list; tell me how to do it'. Just do it. God is teaching those who will worship Him in Spirit and in truth, and sent the Holy Spirit to improve your level of truth, if you'll continue to sow to the Spirit. It's a great program. It's simple, too. But it's not easy, unless you do it His way.

So the heart being veiled is the problem, and the unveiling of the heart is that it begins to resonate, begins to dance with Him. It's as a woman begins to allow herself to be led by Him, to be imprinted by the pathway that He chooses, until my heart is like His. Until I desire what He desires, I shouldn't anticipate finishing this. Janet said, "It's from the inside out."

In Luke 12:50, Jesus within a couple months of hanging on a tree said, *How am I straightened until this be accomplished.* He wasn't talking about going to the synagogue as had been His habit. He wasn't talking about doing miracles, as had been the testimony of the Father to certify who He was. Do you know that Jesus did

not come to heal physical illness? That's crisis managing. He came for conflict resolution. He said, along the way on three separate occasions {I actually did a little study on this} "She's not dead....He's not dead." You say, "Well, he doesn't look like he's alive, in fact, he smells dead." And it says, in the same verse in the Bible that John Hinson mentioned last night, "*Jesus wept*".....and the Jews said, *Oh how He loved Lazarus!*" Jesus heard that; the next words in that story are ...*and He groaned within Himself.*' He wasn't weeping for Lazarus. He was weeping for their unbelief because their unbelief was keeping them separated from the grace of God who was standing before them seeking to elevate their understanding that "that isn't death that you see." Say, well it hadn't been conquered yet – Yes it had—He said, *I am the resurrection.* But wait, he hadn't died yet; how could he be the resurrection? He didn't say, "I'm in a resurrected body!"

See, the gospel's always been hidden. Paul's responsibility, he said of himself was, that there's a gospel that has been given to me to declare that which has been hidden from the foundation of the world. I speak the wisdom of God in a mystery – that which has been hidden from the foundation of the world. My calling, my purpose here on this planet, my apostolic ministry, is to declare and to unveil that which has been hidden. That is not our job. It's been done. Our job is to manifest the benefit of the gospel that was unveiled through Paul's ministry – to come to the life that's the expression of the working of the gospel that he described.

Ephesians 2:3-4 (Paul, laying out the basics that Peter learned from him, when Paul was with him for a fortnight.) ....*so we all had our conversation in times past in the flesh.....But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love.* Because of His great love, He is rich in mercy; He doesn't 'skimp' mercy; He's got an excess of mercy. In fact He has something that Paul referred to as *mercies*. Seems like more than one. I think it was just different applications but based on growth. Paul wrapped this thing up on this thing of sacrifice, and he said, "I beg you; I beg you; I implore you; *I get down on both knees.....*by the 'mer—cies' of God.

I'm not sure I'm going to say what Paul had behind his eyes when he said or penned those words; God knows. But I do know this – my first blush with mercy is not the same mercy that I'm encountering now. My first blush with mercy was that I didn't get what I deserved. It was a great day!

You know, in Romans 1:21 there's a big key, and that big key is ....*and were not thankful.* I came to the Lord. My expression, my experience, my benefit was that my sins were forgiven. It's almost the first thing that happened when I came to the Lord. My sins were forgiven; they were expunged – I didn't know the expunged part, I only knew the forgiveness. If that's all that would ever happen, would I not always be thankful? When thankfulness dries up in your heart, in your viewpoint, in your walk, in your thoughts, repent; get on your knees and say, "God, what is wrong? Where have I gotten off the path?" It's a big key! Listen to me.

Just thankfulness drying up like the Brook Cherith should send you straight to repentance because what He's already done!...Wow! It even has eternal consequences, which means our thankfulness should be ongoing.

But that's not all – it's '*mercies.*' I began to recognize that mercy isn't just not getting what I deserve today – I don't mean just when I was born again, but I mean today. But mercy is actually so much greater. It said, *according to His great love wherewith He loved us.* Great love is the foundation of mercy; so some love; atonement, expiation....but *great love!* It's not just that I don't get what I deserve, but *great love* is that I have the opportunity to partake of that which I yet need – that He's not looking for me to come to Him out of sufficiency. He's waiting for me to come out of my great need. He's waiting for me to recognize that my need is to be perfected in this offering of myself to God.

One of the most dangerous things to finishing is feeling like you've got something. There are three definitions that I'm aware of in the letter of the word for sin.

- #1. Violation of the law. Another definition Paul came up with, when he said;
- #2 Anything that is not of faith is sin. But John put the capstone on the thing and he said;
- #3 All have fallen short of the glory of God, and sinned.

Standards, measures....what's the measure of a man? What's in your heart? What's God calling you to? Faith? Good! Without faith you can't please God. What's not of faith is sin. However, you can end up wandering in the wilderness and dying sustained by a miracle. There were millions of people that proved that....sustained by a miracle – and died.

So, what God does for you through a substitutionary sacrifice, as big a provision as it is, as necessary and fundamental as it is, won't bring you to life – not eternal life. Hope? Yes. Does it determine what that hope is? No. Hope is that which enters in to that which is within the veil because we're not there, and it begins to allow what's in the veil to work in me while I'm on this side of the veil, so I can actually get through the veil – because there is no big door there, by the way. The natural man stops there, and that's where the deception comes in.

The glory of anointing, revelations, callings, and giftings makes the Holy Place the most deceptive place on the earth, and it catches most. Getting through the Holy Place is almost the apex of our fidelity to the Spirit of God; the proving of our hearts. Are we in it for what is beneficial to us, or have we actually shifted gears, and we are in it for the fulfillment of His purpose?

Romans 16:24-26. Everything that Paul laid out in Romans is a legal exposition of Christ, the exposing of Christ from the legal point of view. Having said, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all now...* now that the grace –



not just any grace, but the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is with you; *Now, to Him, that is of power to establish you according to my gospel....the one that has been hidden (kept secret) from the foundation of the world.* The intent of the Father in making mankind is hidden from the foundation of the world; eye has not seen—eye hasn't seen it yet! It hasn't been seen! Mary thought he was a gardener – she didn't see Him....*and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest.* That word manifest doesn't mean the life was seen. Manifest means that the gospel that has been hidden has been unveiled. It's still in the realm of revelation but we're called to translate it from revelation to manifestation. The conflict resolution is right here in my body by the Holy Spirit. What's the obstacle? What's the crisis? It's a daily issue; whatever it is.

You know how emails are; most of them are delete, delete, delete. However, somebody sent me a cartoon and it said, "Some days I wrestle with my demons, other days we just cuddle." That's a crisis, but that's just a management system. God's looking to resolve the conflict. It's going to be something that has to grow as conflict resolution in us. So what is that sacrifice? I don't know. What's your today? Where are you at? Where's your heart? If it was finished, you'd have glorified bodies, so we know nobody's finished. I'm not seeing any haloes. I know I don't have one, so you don't have to tell me that.

The conflict resolution? It was God in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. You know that's not finished? God is seeking, in you, to reconcile what's not of Him in you – because this is what it said about Him, right? That He reconciled in his flesh – He reconciled it in 'here' so He could bring reconciliation out there. So it's God, still in Christ, reconciling you to Him, so He can reconcile through you, the world to Himself.

Sam said one time, "If God can find a man that will be one with all men, He could, through that man, make all men one." That man is Christ, in fullness, in some.