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CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

We have a word or two to say in connection with Bro. Brown's article on the above subject which appeared in the September number of the EVANGELIST.

The reader will observe that the main points in the article are the assumed distinction between being overtaken in a fault, and wilful sinning, and the consequent different treatments suitable. The man overtaken in a fault is to be restored; the wilful sinner is to be rebuked, and after that he also may be restored.

The expression "overtaken in a fault" seems very generally to be misunderstood; many appear to think it is the same as being "overtaken by a fault," and regard it as being applicable when a man is taken by surprise by a fault—that is, sins without any forethought whatever. On the other hand we believe it means to be "caught in the very act" of committing a sin, and the Apostle's exhortation seems to be very necessary accordingly, because when a man is "caught in the very act," the natural disposition is to deal severely with him, and not "in the spirit of meekness."

It will be noticed also that Bro. B. supplies the word "wilful" in quoting Paul's command to Timothy, "Them that sin rebuke before all that others may fear." Paul does not say, "Them that sin wilfully." The expression, "sin wilfully," as used in Hebrews 10: 26, is one of terrible import, and had better not be used in an unscriptural sense. Moreover the words, "Them that sin rebuke before all," as the previous verse (I Tim. 5: 19) indicates, apply to elders who might sin. So we conclude that the Apostle in the passages cited by Bro. B. does not make the distinctions understood by Bro. B., but is laying down special rules for two particular cases, viz: a man caught in the very act of sinning, and an elder who sins. Whether the man who sins after premeditation is deserving of more severe treatment than the one who commits an offense on the impulse of the moment, is a question not raised by Paul in these passages; but, at the same time, is one on which there would not likely be found many to differ from Bro. Brown.

We think Bro. B. would find some difficulty in proving that the Apostle "John was never even overtaken in a fault," even in the sense in which he uses the words. Though there might be no scriptural record of the case, there might have been such.

With reference to the general question of Church Discipline, we do not propose particularly to deal at this time. That it is a subject of the highest importance to intelligent Christian, man will dispute. It is believed by many brethren of large experience, and of extensive Scriptural knowledge that, at the present time, there is no question which demands from Christians more careful consideration than this. That great diversity of opinion, has existed, and does exist, is well known,—from the extreme of no discipline, to the extreme of invoking the

power of the church to interfere in matters of a private and trivial character. What power the church has in the matter, and how that power should be exercised, are matters of the gravest consequence in view of the welfare of the cause of Christ. On no question should we be more careful to have for our rule,—where the Scriptures speak we speak, where the Scriptures are silent we are silent." G. M.

THE RESURRECTION.

I have considerable to say upon this most important and deeply interesting subject: and I am sorry the columns of the EVANGELIST are so "few and small" that it cannot be treated at more length. I am also sorry to see a minister of the gospel, intimate, that one of the two things,—Jesus and the resurrection—ACTS XXVII: 18 the resurrection—which constituted the subject matter of the Apostles preaching, is, "not of general interest."

In my last I cited Rev. xx: 4, 5, 12, 13, as teaching in unmistakable language, two resurrections, distinct from each other in time of occurrence. I fancy Bro. Fowler will have to ignore a number of rules in interpretation, before he will be able to explain this to mean something which it does not say.

I now call for one scripture passage which states in plain language, that the righteous and the wicked will be raised simultaneously, and when you have searched and failed—which you certainly must for the Holy Spirit does not contradict himself—we will there see if you belong to that class "to whom the absence of scripture evidence is no indication that there should be an end of controversy."

Bro. Fowler tells us that the resurrection, in verses 4, 5, is the resurrection of souls. What does he mean? Has he become infected with the soul sleeping theory at Everton?

With regard to this passage, I would remark first, verses 4, 5, do not describe the resurrection scene, that has already taken place, and the Apostle is here permitted to see the "first resurrection" or first resurrected company enthroned and reigning with Christ. Now who compose this company? Let us see, "I saw thrones and they sat upon them, etc." who? evidently those of whom he has just been speaking, viz, the Bride the Lamb's wife, whom he saw arrayed in fine linen, and following the white horse rider, who was coming to execute judgment on the ungodly; but whom he now sees, in accordance with the oft repeated promise of God, enthroned and reigning with Christ her Lord.

Then he mentions a certain class who by their faithfulness amid severe trials merit special attention. "The souls of them who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, etc." These he says "lived and reigned," etc., showing that they had formed a part of the vast company of dead ones, but were raised, so it could be said "they lived" while "the rest of the dead lived not again, until the thousand years were finished." If these were not literally alive then "the rest of the dead," are not literally dead. If the latter are literally dead, then the former are literally alive, which necessitates a previous resurrection, there is no escaping this conclusion.

But our Bro. asks, "If the resurrection spoken of in verses 12, 13, is of the wicked only, why is the book of life then?" and adds, "It seems they were not all condemned." When our Bro. finds any in that resurrection and judgment who are not condemned it will be quite time enough for him to make such a statement. The words of Christ forever settle that, speaking of those who believe on him, he says "They shall not come into condemnation," literally, the judgment.

They are not amongst the judged, and all Bro. Fowler's ingenuity cannot put them there. They are associated with the judge in the judgment. Does not Bro. Fowler know that the saints shall judge the world, in order to which they must be previously raised?

The book of life is there, simply as the testimony against the wicked that their judgement is just. The quotations from Milligan is simply the modern theory which originated with the Arian Whitsby and was sent forth by him under the name his "new hypothesis." It is a theory which runs counter to this scripture and our Bro. says truly such are mean things. With reference to this passage Dean Alford says "Those who lived next the Apostles and the whole church for three hundred years understood them in the plain literal sense; and it is a strange sight in these days to see expositors who are among the first in reverence for antiquity, complacently casting aside the most cogent instance of consensus which primitive antiquity presents. As regards the text itself no legitimate treatment of it will extort what is known as the spiritual interpretation now in fashion. If, in a passage where two resurrections are mentioned, when certain persons lived at the first, and the rest of the dead only at the end of the specified period after that first, if, in such a passage, the first resurrection may be understood to mean spiritual rising with Christ, while the second means literal rising from the grave; there is an end of all significance in language, and scripture is wiped out as a definite testimony to anything."

On John v: 28, 29 Bro. F. remarks, "He does not say the hours are coming, but a certain hour," and concludes, that this teaches two classes in the resurrection in a certain hour. I will grant him his conclusion—but by referring to the 25th verse he will see that Christ used the word hour, not in the limited sense, but to denote a long period of time, and according to the scripture we have just examined, the first class or the resurrection to life, takes place at the beginning of that hour, and the second class or resurrection to judgment, at its close. I will also grant him

that all this takes place in the last day. But he must remember that the last day is the day of the Lord, which is an age day, of one thousand years (11 Pet. 1: 11; 8), in the morning of which, as David says "The righteous shall have dominion over the wicked, (Psm. XLIX: 14). "But the rest of the dead live not again until the evening of that day.

That the 22nd verse of 1 Cor. xv teaches the resurrection of all mankind, I frankly admit, but the Apostle goes on to state the order, 1st Christ, 2nd "they who have Christ"—as a distinct class, and no more—"At His coming." And Bro. Fowler's attempt to crowd all mankind into that expression, is to put the construction upon the words of the Holy Spirit which he never intended; and is simply a desperate effort to bolster up a theory which runs counter to this scripture.

The Bro's positiveness that the end spoken of is contemporaneous with the 2nd order is not well founded, as will be seen from the use of the same expressions in other places see Mark 14: 17, 28, and the 5, 6, 7, 23 verses of the same chapter.

I would also assure Bro. F. that I have not the least difficulty about the "et" in Phil. 1: 11: 11 and elsewhere. It is he who seems to be in difficulty about it. He first has all raised together, then the separation takes place, which must be from amongst living wicked, not dead wicked.

In conclusion, I am sorry to trespass on your valuable space, and have condensed this as well as the nature of the case will permit. This however will end the matter as far as I am concerned unless Bro. Fowler wishes to discuss the question in any paper in which we will have equal space and privilege.

Yours in hope,

J. FYFE.

It was not the subject of the resurrection, as Bro. Fyfe would have you believe, but his theory about it that we said was not of general interest.

It is not an unusual thing for those who hold peculiar views upon a subject to imagine that the subject itself is ignored because their views upon it are not recognized. We are not surprised at this.

Let it be remembered that the word resurrection is not always associated with dead bodies, and does not always signify the raising up of bodies from death, but is used also to represent a spiritual awakening. "This child," says Simeon, "is set for the fall and rising again (resurrection) of many in Israel," Luke 1: 34. The return of the children of Israel from the Babylonian captivity is also called by Josephus a resurrection. It is, then, not enough to refer to a portion of scripture because it contains the word resurrection. It must be clearly shown that it is the resurrection of dead bodies that the writer had in his mind. By ignoring this and other simple yet necessary rules, the Bible can be made to support any theory, no matter how erroneous.

Now, let Bro. Fyfe show that John, in Rev. xx: 4, 5, is speaking in literal language of the resurrection of the bodies of dead saints, and then he will have proven something, but that cannot be done. "I saw," says John, not the bodies but "the souls of them that were beheaded" (v. 4). Why not accuse John with being infected with soul-sleeping? Soul-sleeping! Well, well. Does he really think that we believe that John here teaches a literal resurrection of souls? Everything is literal with him. If it is not a literal resurrection of dead bodies, then he thinks it can be nothing less than a literal resurrection of souls. Let him remember that Revelation is a book of symbols and figures.

Let us say again that few commentators agree as to the meaning of this passage, and yet to Bro. Fyfe it teaches, in unmistakable language, a resurrection of bodies. He can prove any thing by taking his premises for granted.

We deny that John is speaking about a literal resurrection of bodies. We might quote from as many authors and more than he does upon our side of the question, but it is scripture we want, not the opinions of the early Jewish Christians. We are not surprised at him clinging with such tenacity to this passage, for his whole theory depends upon its literal construction. Is it wise to cling to a theory which rests upon one obscure passage, when the theory runs counter to the general teaching of Christ and His apostles? We are asked to cite a passage which teaches that the good and bad will be raised simultaneously. We cited in our former reply a number of passages which clearly teach that the second appearing of Christ will be followed immediately by the resurrection of the dead and the general judgment. See Matt. xxv: 32-46; II Thes. 1: 7-9, and II Timothy iv: 1. The writer who, Bro. Fyfe thinks teaches that the righteous dead will be raised a thousand years before the wicked dead says, "Behold he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him and they also which pierced him." Rev. 1: 7.

We would call particular attention to his remarks upon Rev. xx: 12, 13. His attempt to evade the force of our remarks is desperate. The dead given up by the sea by death and hades are all lost! All the dead are in death and hell (hades), then, according to our brother's

construction of this passage, all will be cast into the lake of fire. We have heard a great deal about universal salvation, but here is universal damnation. We believe our brother's heart is more merciful, however, than his logic. We wonder what next? Well, here it is: "They (the righteous) are not amongst the judged." One error produces another. The righteous will not be judged! Did our brother never read that we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Rom. xiv: 10, and II Cor. v: 10. "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God." There is a sense it is true in which the "saints shall judge the world," but it is a very unsafe thing for any one to place too broad a construction upon such a passage, and flatter himself that he will stand before the judgment seat of Christ to judge and not to be judged.

In his former letter he cited in proof of two resurrections the language of Paul that there will be a "resurrection of the just and of the unjust;" also the words of Christ, John v: 28, 29.

In the above letter he admits the force of our remarks, but tries to escape by saying that the hour of the resurrection is of one thousand-years duration. Paul says that the resurrection of the dead shall take place before the living shall be changed, and that will be "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump." I Cor. xv: 52. Remember it, does not say some of the dead, but the dead.

When it is plainly stated that the dead shall be raised at the "last day," "at the last trump," who has the authority to draw that day out a thousand years long, or give us a trumpet blast which will last through the whole millennium? Paul, addressing the Athenians, says, "God has appointed a day in the which he will judge the world."

Some who take liberties, as does Bro. Fyfe, with the word of God lengthen out this judgment day through all time to suit a theory, but we protest against taking such liberties with God's word.

Bro. Fyfe again informs us that he has no difficulty with the Greek proposition et. No doubt. We have seen men before who did not even know the Greek alphabet, yet had no difficulty (in their own minds) in enlightening us upon the subject of Greek exegesis.

Yes, dear brother, we believe all will be raised when Christ comes; and in the resurrection the righteous dead will be separated from the wicked dead. One class will be placed at his right hand and the other at his left.

That such a separation would be from the living wicked and not from the dead wicked is a very fine point indeed. Why does he not object to the language of Paul, who says Christ will judge the dead? I suppose brother Paul made a mistake and should have said the "living wicked."

You have now seen what Bro. Fyfe can say upon this subject. You have the passages of scripture he relies upon before you. Judge for yourself.

If in his two long letters he has not been able to find room for the scripture which teaches his theory, we will yet give him room to produce it in our next issue. It is scripture, however, we ask for, and not special pleading in support of a man-made theory.

T. L. F.

MATERIALISM AND KINDRED SUBJECTS.

We stated in our last issue that enough had been said for the present upon materialism and kindred subjects, some of our contributors do not agree with us. The following from a private letter we think expresses the mind of the greater number of our readers.

SUNNDALE CORNERS, SEP. 14TH, 1887:
TO T. L. FOWLER,

DEAR BRO.

I trust the position of the EVANGELIST in regard both to the "Materialists" and "Adventists" is satisfactory to the most of its readers. Your strictures on J. Fyfe's production in the last EVANGELIST has taken him up to the point. Keep him there, don't give heed to his interpretations and references in trying to make his theory even plausible. If he or any one else is able to answer the question propounded by "C," and that pointedly, let him do so; if not let him enjoy the belief of his theory as much as he pleases in his own imagination.

For my own part as a reader of the EVANGELIST I would not wish to see much of its space taken up discussing either of those subjects, though their advocates make a "hobby" of them. Pleased to see that you have noticed that neither of these theories is "of general interest."

A wise self discipline in the matured is not so easy or so common that we may reasonably expect the young to be exemplary in that respect.