

The Other Side of the Cross Part 2

John R Gavazzoni

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Thousand Oaks, CA

It has always been a priority of the true and mature teacher of the Word of God, that he or she maintain a proper balance, that is, not to emphasize a truth or truths at the expense of other truths. That awareness is seen at it's best when seeking to find the cohesive bond which unites all spiritual truth into a full presentation of Him, who is Truth, our Lord Jesus. We find ourselves today at a point where the extant prophetic word, with it's varied expressions, gives indication that we are:

- (1) in a dynamic time of transition and
- (2) that God is calling us to take a fresh look at what we have called, "*the finished work of Christ*" (**Jn. 4:34; 17:4; Rom. 9:28; Phil. 1:6**).

If we do not realize that the normative Word is an ever unfolding Word which demands constant adjustment in our thinking and that, at it's cutting edge, may disturb what has been our status quo- understanding of doctrinal balance, we may get stuck at a place where that which is deemed to be a balanced approach has been depriving us of the full truth of all that we have attempted to hold with equilibrium.

Such is so when we do look afresh at Father's saving work completed in the Person and life of our Lord. As the Spirit of truth presses His claim upon our minds whispering gently but insistently that we have stopped short of valuing what God in Christ has accomplished for us, we find ourselves experiencing intolerable intellectual tension, tension that causes us again, and at a deeper level, to realize that "*the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness unto Him...*" (**I Cor. 2: 14**).

The prophetic declaration that ushers in a new day with a new norm is rarely one that speaks in what most would think is an appropriately centered emphasis. It is bold, demanding and seemingly impervious to the more conventional wisdom which says, "make room for the other instruments in God's orchestra of revelation to blend with your trumpet blast." But at some point after we hear from the piercing brass section, along does come the string, reed and percussion members to give a full bodied sound to the symphony of redemption.

We have heard the blast of the trumpet announcing the next movement in the musical score, but we must be brought to a new level of understanding of what has been sounded forth. For those who know a little about music let me illustrate a point. A composer or arranger may at times use a musical device whereby, either with a somewhat dissonant chord or a less than conclusive chord in the music's flow, he will "tease" the ear of the listener as it naturally craves a note and/or chord of resolution. By momentarily withholding that sound

of consummation the composer or arranger makes the fulfilling sound all the more satisfying.

So it is with the unfolding of biblical revelation. We must be bold enough to assert that until we reach the place that the New Testament writers pointed toward, we find in their inspired record a certain God-ordained dissonance, a construction of written revelation that leaves the most sincere seeker with a divinely induced frustration that cries out for that final, clear Word.

Example: In **Eph. 1:17-21**, the Apostle Paul declares to us that the God of our Lord Jesus, the Father of Glory raised up Christ from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in heavenly places far above all rule, authority etc. In **chapter Two**, he goes on to state emphatically that He (**the Father**) raised us up with Him (**Christ**), and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus. Please go next to **Col. 3:1**, where he enjoins us, "*If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God*" (**NAS**).

Now I am as capable as the next fellow of coming up with some pretty plausible sounding explanation as to the obvious contradiction here. And in all modesty, many of my explanations have been better than most, and increasingly dissatisfying to myself. But when all is said and done we have a divine dissonance in the declaration that on one hand we've arrived by God's grace and yet on the other hand we should keep seeking. The same apostle assures us in **Romans, Chapter Six**, that our old man has been crucified and buried with Christ and we have risen in newness of life with Him and yet he, himself feels compelled to tell the **Philippians** that he had not yet arrived or obtained or already become perfect but he was pressing on in order that he may lay hold of that for which also he was laid hold of by Christ Jesus and goes on to say that he pressed on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (**Phil. 3,12,14**).

Remember that the New Testament teaches us that the Lord, in His humanity, was perfected by the things that He suffered (**Heb. 5:8**), so that our identification with Him in death, burial and resurrection explicitly involves perfection. Our inner man cries out, "Paul, you're composing in the key of C, for God's sake end on a tonic chord of C, E and G, don't leave us hanging." Am I saying that Paul was not exactly inspired as God intended? Most certainly I am not saying that. Here is the biblical tease, the penultimate which cannot fully satisfy. Father never intended for us finally to accept that as the fully normative Word but to play it out to conclusion.

Brethren, may we be so bold as to herald to you that the day of pressing on, the day of yearning for more, of consecration and reconsecration, of understanding the Day of the Lord to be sometime yet ahead on the calendar and down the road of our experience; that day is closing. The majestic silver trumpet is sounding. "It is finished, it is finished, fully finished, without qualification or modification, all is done."

There is now in the economy of God a new and more stringent command for all men, beginning with the Church, to repent in the light of the gospel, a new and more stringent application of the warning by the writer of Hebrews, "*How much severer punishment (corrective discipline) do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified,*

and has insulted the Spirit of grace?" (Heb. 10:29 NAS, my editing).

Stay tuned for future serious, seminal samplings.

John Gavazzoni