

The
Grant Heresy



By DR. JOHN LAWRENCE

THE GRANT HERESY

As so few living are acquainted with the source and history of this schism, and therefore can form no true judgment of the case, I will give what I know personally, being long conversant with it and its source.

I met Mr. F. W. Grant for the first time at the Brantford Conference of 1875 or 76 and at his request spent ten days with him at Toronto, and on our visit to Guelph.

What struck me was his great desire to discover some new views of Christian doctrine. His brother Robert, although possessing a much less active mind, followed in the same train.

F. W. G. was very chary of acknowledging any fresh revelation of God's mind as fruit of J. N. D's. original study of the Word, preferring to attribute his indebtedness to some other person for it. This marked my subsequent knowledge of the Grants, both Fred and Robert, till 1882.

F. W. G. had always differed from what we had learned directly from scripture as to the experience detailed in Rom. VII, by asserting it was the experience of one who is sealed, while on its face, it is clearly the experience of a quickened but unsealed and undelivered soul.

Now upon the departure of J. N. D. April 1882, F. W. G., as a simplification of the teaching of scripture on the doctrine of life, conjured the theory and laid down as the doctrine of the whole question of the life of Old Testament saints and New Testament saints this teaching, that Old Testament saints had life in the Son and New Testament saints had life in Christ. This he based on a text in John I.4 where he found the word life. "In Him was life."

From this he assumed that the life was the life of men. Now if he had not been blinded, because enamoured with his theory, he would have recognized his error; and indeed his conclusion is inexcusable, seeing that the very next statement in the same verse "and the life was the light of men," warranted no such thought; and indeed only His own who believed in Him had this light of life, John VIII, 12.

The whole premise of his proposition being false, we cannot wonder at the labored confusion of the superstructure.

The remark of Mr. Grant, the author of "Life in Christ and Sealing with the Spirit," that "In the same sense in which Paul affirms we have life in Christ, John affirms it is in the Son" is true, but not in the

perverted sense he gives. For in both cases, it is in Him when risen and glorified, and only then, and not in the Son before incarnation and resurrection glory.

In Romans VIII.1 Paul says there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus—the glorified man, so John in I John V. 20 we read “We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.”

As to Romans VII one has only to read the same with an unbiased mind, to see that therein is described the state of a soul exercised by the law to know its lost condition and the need of a redeemer. The discovery in the gospel of God’s grace of this Savior, who has borne our judgment, and thus cleared us before God of our judgment as men in the flesh and set us in Christ, is its climax and close.

It is not the struggle between the flesh and the Spirit as seen in Galatians, to whom Paul could say, “Who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified among you.”

In Rom. VII the exercise under the law is to teach the need of that deliverance which the Galatians possessed. A deliverance from the first Adam standing into the new place in the person of the risen Christ, characterized by the presence of the Holy Ghost.

While in Galatians the saints are exhorted to walk in the Spirit, which they had received, in consequence of the new place they stood in as redeemed in Christ, and the result would be that they should not fulfil the lust of the flesh, but the fruit of the Spirit flowing from them would be love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith etc.

In Romans, the quickened soul seeks salvation or deliverance from sin.

In Galatians the saint or saved one is taught how to enjoy this liberty—“Walk in the Spirit.”

In Romans, the unwilling slave of lust seeks deliverance, salvation from it. Who shall deliver me? I thank God (he learns) through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In Galatians the saints are exhorted to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, Gal. V:1, and to walk in the Spirit and they would not fulfil the lust of the flesh. They were no longer debtors to the flesh, Rom. VIII:12; Gal. V.18.

As a corollary to the false reasoning on John I:4 that O. T. saints were in the Son, F. W. G. fell into the gross error that they were in the Son as God, holding that in John’s gospel the Son is always looked at as God. Now this has no warrant in Scripture and the deduction, if it were not gross ignorance would be blasphemy. It was after He became

man that the Lord declared "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." Here clearly it is the Son in subjection in manhood. It was thus as possessing life mediatorially that in John he says "Therefore doth my Father love me because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." John X.18.

It was thus by laying down His life, taken in incarnation, for our guilt, ruin and rebellion in Adam, He could take up in resurrection life all who had submitted to Him. And since He took them as members of His own body, He sealed their bodies as redeemed by blood with His Spirit, uniting their spirits, already in subjection to the Father of Spirits, with Himself in glory the risen and glorified man, so as to manifest in these bodies Himself as their life, while they waited redemption by power at His coming.

In the same way He said, "I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father who gave them me is greater than all and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." John X. In like manner, as man and Son of man, He became the corn of wheat to fall into the ground and die, John XII, and not abide alone, but bring forth much fruit, so that we, becoming identified with Him in resurrection life, His God becomes our God.

Just as He, as Son, has laid down His life for us and given us a eternal life in resurrection, He says as first-born "I go to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."

Another corollary of F. W. G's. false theory of life is that quickened souls are said to be forgiven whether they know it or not, have peace whether they know it or not, and have the Holy Ghost even if they are in bondage.

All this vicious and contradictory teaching is in the face of the Scripture which says upon believing the gospel we get peace with God. "Being justified by faith we have peace with God" Rom. V: 1. and, "where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." II Cor. III:17. Indeed to say I have peace and not know it is nonsense.

Another erroneous teaching, evidently a fruit of his erroneous theory, is that the atonement of Christ was a limited atonement, that Christ was a propitiation only for those for whom He was a substitute, and as He was only a substitute for His own, according to Mr. Grant, His atonement was a limited atonement.

Now the Scripture says, "He is the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only, but also for the whole world," I John II:2.

As this teaching contravened the whole teaching of Scripture on life and propitiation, it was rightly resisted, and obedient saints, fol-

lowing the scriptural injunction, marked him (Rom. XVI:17 and 18) as one causing divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine we have learned, and avoid him.

F. W. G's. expressed and determined aim as he frankly told his friend J. H. McNairn of Toronto, who warned him of the evil of it, was first to gain over the laborers and through them later the flock to these views. He began his party-making at Plainfield, N. J. Calling those considered intelligent together, he went over all the grounds, on which by his reason he rested his theories, and called for their opinions for or against, "for," said he, "I want you to stand by it," or words to that effect. When the bulk of Plainfield was won over, he pursued the same tactics elsewhere, forcing his views through the assemblies, all the while saying "I don't force them on anyone."

Talking with Paul J. Loizeaux at that time on the subject of F. W. G's. doctrine, he admitted to me that he could not understand his teaching, but that he (Grant) was right on so many things he accepted the rest on F. W. G's. authority.

Talking with another beloved brother in Plainfield, he said to me "I want to get out of here, but don't say anything about it, I want to slip off quietly". This got out and he was not allowed to leave.

Another brother told me "They have all pledged themselves to F. W. G., and I just leave them."

The truth was attacked by his supporters and their cry was "Grant is the teacher now that J. N. D. is gone."

There were a number of ardent supporters of Mr. Grant in Montreal in December 1884 and when the evangelists A. P. C. and Alfred Mace were laboring and preaching there with the form of sound words, these supporters attacked them with the theories of Grant, and Grant came to their aid and called Crain of Boston to their aid; and when the simple word of God was presented against the theories of Grant, it was scorned by Grant, and rejected by his followers who afterwards formed Craig St., and who as a whole were the embodiment of bitterness.

Upon this his teaching was rejected by some 38 brothers there, whereupon F. W. G. strained every nerve to get all within his reach pledged to his support, and when he was dealt with for this party-making, he at once counselled the Craig Street Schism to support his theories and doctrines.

RECAPITULATION OF THE TEACHINGS OF GRANT, PRESENTED FOR ACCEPTANCE BUT REJECTED BECAUSE WITHOUT SCRIPTURAL WARRANT.

GRANT'S DOCTRINES

Old Testament Saints had "Life in the Son."

—Life in Christ and Sealing with the the Spirit.

Driven by the flat refusal of all scripture to support his theory, he took the ground openly that Old Testament Saints had "Life in the Son as God" claiming that the Son is always looked at as God in John's gospel.

Letter answering enquiries F. W. G.' Mar. 17, 1885.

—Summerville, Printer, Brantford. Ont.

The experience of a quickened or exercised soul of Rom VII is said to be the experience of a sealed soul.

—Life in Christ and Sealing.

Quickened souls have forgiveness and peace without the knowledge of either, and have the Holy Ghost even though in bondage.

—Life in Christ and Sealing.

Propitiation is limited to the same persons as substitution.

Mr. F. W. Grant on his past course in later years and in his last illness.

IN LATER YEARS

If you had to pass through the same trouble again would you have acted the same?

Answer: No, it would be altogether different.

Question: Why not now?

Answer: It is too late.

SCRIPTURE

Without a word of support in scripture. All scripture as to "Life in the Son is confined to saved ones since Pentecost, I John V:20.

This is contradicted by John I. 14 and John V: 26 shows that the Father has given the Son to have life in Himself (as man) and thus mediatorially the source of life to His own—see also John VI. 57. John X. 17. John XII. 24. John XIV. 19.

Rom. VII is the experience of a soul learning its need which it finds in Christ and not in itself; and which puts it by faith in Rom. VIII.

We are not forgiven, justified or in Christ by the quickening knowledge of our lost estate in Adam, but by the Peace giving knowledge of our salvation through and in the last Adam, Christ Jesus, when, believing, we are sealed.

Propitiation is for the whole world John II. 2. Same as the ransom, I Tim. II.6. While substitution is for every one who feareth God and worketh righteousness Acts X.35. Or who wills to do His will John VII.17.

IN HIS LAST ILLNESS

If you had to pass through the trouble again would you have acted the same?

Answer. I trust the Lord would have given me more grace.

My solemn conviction is that Grant was righteously dealt with and remained in God's sight a schismatical man to the day of his death.

P. S. A very significant feature of the schism at Plainfield and Montreal is that in both cases it was led and engineered by men who afterwards showed their true colors and took independent ground separating from the Grant company also.

Note. A highly esteemed teacher of "the Grants" writes in Field and Work September 1922: "I ask many times 'Why are our meetings (i. e., Grant meetings) so unspiritual and disjointed where unity has been taught so much.'"

If these teachings which slight and dishonor God's Holy Word, and are even now eating up all the vitality out of the Word among those separated from us, were rejected and the schism honestly renounced, I should rejoice to see our brethren united in true heart with us again.

Yours for His sake,
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