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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION. I was much interested in the article, “The Resurrection,” in last paper, and would like to enquire—when we read of the resurrection of the Prophets and Saints and those that fear God’s name small and great, (Rev. 11:18.) are we to conclude that these are the orders Paul mentions in 1 Cor. 15:23, “Every man in his own order”—or rank? If so, does the mention of the *prophets* first, imply that they constitute “The *first* resurrection?”

ANSWER. No, the “*first* resurrection” is first in the sense of *chief* or *principal* and not because it precedes others.

If it meant first in point of time then Jesus was not the beginning of the first resurrection (as declared, Acts 26:23.) for the prophets had raised the dead and so had Jesus. [Lazarus was *dead* for a longer time than Jesus]. But, none of these were raised *spiritual bodies*, Jesus being the first of that *order* and all others who are raised in his likeness—spiritual, immortal beings—are sharers in the chief—most excellent—or *first* resurrection. It does not follow then that because mentioned or raised first, that the prophets would be in *the first* resurrection.

QUES. Bro. Russell: How do you interpret Phil. 4:3. “I entreat thee with me in the gospel ... whose names are in the book of life.” And Acts 1:14: “All continued with one accord in prayer and supplication with the women.” And 1 Cor. 11:5: “Every woman that prayeth or prophesieth (teaches)?”

ANS. We understand these scriptures to teach, that women did a work in the apostles’ days which was approved and appreciated by them and by the Lord. Yet we believe that women usually spoke only at the smaller gatherings, and that when Paul said “Let the women keep silence in the [congregations,] he probably had reference to the *public* gatherings, at which it was the custom to have more or less of a *debate*. In these public debatings, Paul thought a woman’s voice would be out of place, and this is the opinion of most thinking men and women to-day, though we think that it has by many been carried to an extreme, forbidding them to pray or teach on *any* occasion, even in more private assemblies of christians, and this we regard as an error.

God has arranged that the man and woman are representative of Christ and his Bride the church, and this rule by which the husband is the *head* of the wife is always maintained in scriptures.

(Though there are exceptions to the rule in nature.) And probably this is one reason, that men have always been given the more active and public work of the ministry and women more the work of assisting and more private teaching, yet equally as acceptable to God. So Christ is the *active* agent in carrying out his own plan. He is the great minister of all, and we as His church do a lesser part and yet an acceptable part, well pleasing to God.

QUES. Bro. Russell: Please explain 2 Cor. 6:17.

ANS. Paul makes a quotation from the Old Testament to support his teaching of the preceding verses, that Christians should be separate from unbelievers. We are to be a temple of God; and what association is proper between God's Temple and Idols? None. The quotation is as follows: "I will dwell among them and walk among them, and I will be their God and they shall be to me a people—Depart from the midst of them and be ye separated, and touch not the impure; and I will receive you, and will be to you for a Father, and you shall be to me for sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

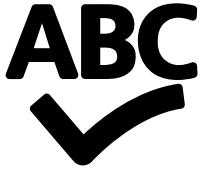
In *person* we are to be separate from sin—pure—clean in mind (and in body, for cleanliness of person is almost always associated with purity of thought. Sometimes the impure within, will clothe and cleanse the outward form to purity; but the pure within, clothing the outward form in filth can scarce be imagined), and we are to live separate from sinners. (See 1 Cor. 5:10.)

But we think that the pith of the apostle's reasoning is directed against association with false *religious systems*. Paganism claimed to be a religion then, and there was danger that Christians should come to look with favor upon *moral pagans* and treat them as though they were Christians and thus countenance their *evils*. In a word, whatever God condemns and disapproves we are to condemn and discountenance both in word and in deed—not even to encourage or countenance with our presence.

The circumstances are different now from then, here Paganism does not require resistance, but it has its equivalent in modern "*Spiritualism*," "*Freelovism*" and "*Infidelity*." And more dangerous because associated with more light, are the worldly practices and customs of the nominal church of Christ to-day, which constitute her the *Babylon* of God's word. As we have already seen there is a message to us, to leave Babylon and thus discountenance the worldly corruptions which have of late years been brought into God's Temple as idols to distract and divide the worshiper's attention. Therefore, "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues." And this voice must be obeyed at any cost, or you become one of the *idol worshipers*. "What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?"

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— May, 1881 —



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