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## One Universal Remedy

*by T. Austin-Sparks*

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Although our own all-dominating desire is that the absolute Lordship of Christ, which means the ground of His fullness in the saints, should be a realized thing by all of His own, we are bitterly hated and opposed by many children of God. They are praying hard against us. How strange it is that, while so many are thus beseeching the Lord to quench us, from so many parts of the world children and servants of God in various connections of missions and denominations are all the time sending written testimony to the enrichment of life and *ministry* through this instrumentality! And it is so often those who have been through, or who are in, the fires of trial, or who have passed from the elementary stages of Christian life and service, who so testify. I do not essay to give the solution to this enigma, but I do mention it in the hope that some might pause before jeopardizing the prospect of the fullness of Christ in their own case or in that of others, as did Israel of old, by taking up an "evil report". As for ourselves, we will seek to be faithful and commend ourselves to God's approval "through evil report and good report". If only the Lord's people universally would get away from things and be taken up solely with HIMSELF, how much of all this would cease; and what a way would be made for Him!

I would appeal to you, beloved of the Lord, to give yourselves to preparing a way for the Lord. Let the question which governs every matter and relationship be, not, how far will or does it help or hinder such and such an enterprise, movement, society, or piece of work? but, how does this minister to an increase of Christ in the saints? We can take it that a true increase of Christ will have effects in many directions, but the directions must never be separated and made the paramount

concerns in themselves apart. I am ever more convinced that for all such troubles as afflict the saints, individually and collectively, the secret of victory, deliverance, and salvation, is a very simple one, so far as both the prescribing and the working are concerned: the one difficulty being - as with so many patients - the honest and wholehearted taking of it.

It is found in a short sentence used frequently by Paul:-

### **"According to Christ"**

Romans 15:5. Colossians 2:8.

It would be a wonderful thing if in the realm of medicine one remedy could be found whereby every conceivable malady could be most certainly cured. What a tremendous amount of complication and confusion would at once be removed. It is almost too big a thought or prospect for us to take in; there is so much of life taken up with the endless systems of healing, and the countless number of remedies. Not only are there the varieties and multitudes of propositions and advocacies, but there are the strong and, sometimes, fierce rivalries in medicine and surgery; the opposing schools.

Someone years ago gave to spiritual ministry the name of "the cure of souls". That "cure" far outreaches the matter of individual salvation. The Apostle Paul, in particular, had all his time taken up with the "cure" of believers, and the "cure" of the churches. The maladies of individuals and churches were many; from sins of a very low level, through jealousies, factions, personal interests etc., to false doctrine, and all the complexity of church technique.

But this servant of God had and propounded one universal remedy, one panacea for all ills. You ask, "Is that possible?" Yes! In this realm of the spiritual disorders in the Lord's people, whether personal or collective, as for the unsaved of every different constitution, temperament, inheritance, etc., there is

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That simplifies things very much. It sets aside a thousand questions and perplexities. The evil germs of suspicion, prejudice, fear, jealousy, and many other such like things will be killed by the radium-like power of this new Life. The dislocations between people will be quickly and effectively adjusted. The whole question of order and technique in the churches, in all its particulars, will spontaneously resolve and answer itself. The malady of spiritual inertia and lack of concern for the salvation and eternal good of others will yield to a new vitality and energy.

Yes, there is one all-inclusive cure; but to say this is of no more value than an advertisement, unless it is believed and obeyed.

What then is this one all-embracing Remedy? It will not help a great deal just to give the answer in a simple sentence, so we must illustrate or instance it. It is quite clear that every letter written by the Apostle Paul had some maladies as the occasion of it. That is to say, there were things that were wrong in every place to which the letters were written, and which needed to be put right. The outstanding case is Corinth. The disorders and diseases there, both individual and collective, were many and great. While the Apostle referred to these specifically, and rebuked, reprovved, exhorted, and warned concerning them, he knew quite well that they could never be cleared up as things in

themselves. It was of no use to try and get a solution by discussion, debate, logic, personal persuasion or threat. His one all-covering Remedy is announced or prescribed very early in the first letter to them:-

"I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

In other words, Paul's finally settled position was that a passion for Jesus Christ in terms of His Cross - that is, in terms of love; the letting go of all personal interest, the yielding of all natural mindedness - will solve every problem and cure every malady. Paul believed that if he could get those believers to become really captivated by a concern for Christ as the objective of an ever increasing devotion and self-surrender, all the evils and hurtful things would fade out. If something more than the initial and basic personal advantages of salvation were to fill the heart, so many of the unhappy conditions in individual and corporate Christian life would disappear. That is to say, if the Lordship of Christ were to be given its place, and His *fullness* were to be the governing goal, life would be ever rising in ascendancy above the low level, and be enlarging beyond the small and petty measure which is characteristic of so many.

Oh, for the ability to show how the Lordship of Christ in a life, or in a church, and in all the churches, is the solution to *every* problem and difficulty! Will you ask the Lord to impress you, firstly with this *fact*, and then to lead you into its reality. To this ministry, by His grace, and as helped by your prayers, we give ourselves until we - with all saints - "attain unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ".