

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

VOL. XI. June 1, 1928 No. 11

THE APOCALYPSE AND THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH

WITH good reason it has been remarked that the Apocalypse is a "prophetic story of the trials and triumphs of the Church of Christ," and was so regarded by the early Church, who attached a Christian meaning to the entire book. To those who constituted Christ's Church of the first three centuries the fulfillment of the visions of Revelation had already begun and they were to continue without any cessation until all should pass into history.

Immediately upon opening the book of St. John's visions, the early disciples and followers of Jesus saw plainly written upon its forefront the impressive title, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to shew unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass, for the time is at hand." The language is clear and plain. Those disciples needed none other than this authoritative definition of the subject of the prophecy indicated in the title itself. They saw that it was not to some distant period in the Church's history merely that the prophecy related, but to those occurrences and transactions that were even then, nineteen centuries ago, "at hand." The inspired asseveration contained in the introductory words determined this primitive interpretation. "Not a single trace is to be found," says Mr. Guinness, "in that interpretation of the 'gap theory' of modern Futurism, the theory that the prophecy, overleaping the last nineteen centuries of Christian history, plunges at once into the remote future, and occupies itself with the events of a brief closing period, a mere stormy sunset hour, in the story of the world."

As Seen by the Early Writers

It would be most natural and logical that copies of the Apocalypse received from the seven Churches of Asia Minor, multiplied by Christian hands, and were very quickly spread in all the churches throughout the Roman Empire. The sacred character of the Revelation and its Apostolical authorship apparently was recognized from the first. It was early admitted to the Canon of the New Testament and became the concluding book of the entire Word of God with which the Church is thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

The facts as we are permitted to read them in history today indicate that no book of the New Testament was given more general reception. Nothing is lacking in the chain of evidence on this subject. As showing the prominence of the Apocalypse and that it was early in the Age accorded a very hearty and enthusiastic reception, Mr. Guinness submits the following facts:

"Justin Martyr, a Christian philosopher, born about A. D. 103, six or seven years after John's banishment to Patmos, in his dialogue with Trypho thus refers to the Apocalypse: 'A man from among us by name John, one of the Apostles of Christ, in the revelation made to him, has prophesied that the believers in our Christ shall live a thousand years in Jerusalem.' Justin Martyr suffered martyrdom for the Christian faith about A. D. 165. Irenaeus, Bishop

of the Lyonese Church, in his book on Heresies written between A.D. 180 and 190, speaks of the Apocalypse as the work of John the disciple of the Lord, that same John that leaned on His breast at the last supper. Melito, Bishop of Sardis, about A. D. 174, wrote a treatise on the Revelation of John. Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, about 181, according to Eusebius, made use of quotations from John's Apocalypse. So also did the martyr Apollonius, at the close of the second century, in an eloquent apology before the Roman Senate, in the reign of Commodus. Clement of Alexandria, who flourished about 194, frequently quoted the Apocalypse. Tertullian, the contemporary of Clement, one of the most learned of the Latin fathers quotes or refers to the Apocalypse in more than seventy passages in his writings, and declared that 'the succession of bishops traced to John "rested" on John as its author.' Hippolytus, a greatly esteemed Christian Bishop, and martyr, who flourished about A. D. 220, in early life a disciple of Irenaeus, wrote an express commentary on the Apocalypse. Origen, the most critical and learned of the early Fathers, received the Apocalypse into the Canon of Scriptures . . . In the centuries which followed the times of these Fathers, the acceptance of the Apocalypse by the Christian Church, both in the east and in the west, was universal. In all the early and later translations of the Scriptures, the Apocalypse found a place; and the literature to which its exposition has given rise has proved by its exceptional magnitude the interest which the prophecy has awakened in almost every age of the Church's history."

The Mirror of the Church's Experiences

The study by the early Church of this symbolic prophecy must have revealed to her that it was of Christian character. There was no avoiding the conclusion that the Revelation was sent to those gatherings or assemblies of disciples who bore the name of their illustrious Leader, Jesus Christ. Its opening messages were in the nature of letters addressed directly to these Churches. It is manifest too that its leading prophetic features had their parallel and were clearly indicated in these prefatory letters; further, "that the warnings and promises in the letters related to things set forth more fully in the visions of the prophecy; that the saints of the prophetic portion of the book were those who kept 'the commandments of God and, the faith of Jesus,' and that its martyrs were 'the martyrs of Jesus.'"

Considering that the Apocalypse was given to the Church toward the close of the first century, while she was enduring great suffering from the cruel persecutions of Pagan Rome, when such characters as Domitian ruled the Roman world, this prophecy of the trials and sorrows of the saints and martyrs, "struck a cord which strongly vibrated in every Christian heart. To the Martyr Church of the first three centuries," continues Mr. Guinness, "this book of martyrs was at once the mirror of her experiences, and the treasury of her hopes. It illuminated the darkness and dreariness of her lot with rays of celestial brightness. It was recognized as the golden crown of Revelation; the highest stone of its structure; the most triumphant note of its lofty music. What wonder that every sentence of the mysterious prophecy should have been studied with earnest attention by the Church of primitive times? What wonder that its visions should have arrested the gaze of men eager to read the meaning of the present, and to pierce the secrets of futurity? What wonder that the hands of humble sufferers, of lonely exiles, of holy martyrs, should have transcribed its pages with loving care, and transmitted them to their beloved companions in 'the Kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ'?"

"And that they did so study this closing prophecy of Scripture is evident from the fact that the entire, Apocalypse can be reproduced from its quotations in the writings of the early Fathers which remain: in our hands. One complete commentary on the book has come down to us from the third century, that of the martyr Victorinus; a brief and simple exposition, exhibiting the views of the Church of that period on its mysterious meaning."

Recognized Daniel's Prophecy in the Apocalypse

Thus as we go backward in our investigation, to those primitive days of purer faith and nobler heroism and endeavor to realize what must have been to the brethren of that time the first faint dawns of the understanding of this mysterious prophecy that penetrated their mind, we are able to appreciate and mark the dawn light gradually increasing and growing brighter "as the course of history unfolded the meaning of the prophecy, and the secrets of Providence became revealed" to the eye of faith.

Remembering that there were divinely inspired prophets in the early Church, of whom were the Apostles, and bearing in mind that they possessed the ability to a more or less extent to interpret the Old Testament prophecies, it seems more than probable that the early Church considered the Book of Revelation as the New Testament continuation of the prophecies of Daniel. Accordingly, since the history of the Gentile powers from the era of the Jewish captivities presented then, as at the present time, the succession of the four great Gentile Kingdoms -- Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome, the primitive Church must have recognized that Daniel's prophecy was well on the way to fulfillment. The last of these, Rome, the greatest of the four great powers, was at that time at the zenith of its glory and in the fullness of its strength. The eminent astronomer and chronologer of the second century, Ptolemy of Alexandria, had traced and tabulated the exact order and succession of these four great empires; and had associated the whole of his astronomical observations with the dates in the reigns of their kings. To the disciples in the early Church, therefore, these four kingdoms of history were "mirrored in the visions of prophecy." It is recalled that the Prophet Daniel had duplicated his prophetic forecast of the four great world powers in his vision of the fourfold metallic image of gold, silver, brass, and iron; and in his vision of the four beasts -- the lion, bear, leopard, and ten-horned wild beast which had overrun and crushed down with iron strength the nations of the earth. Surely it was not difficult for the Church of the early times any more than it is for the watchers of today to recognize that the visions of the Revelation were a continuation of those of Daniel, as relating to the fourth or last of these Gentile kingdoms, and to that final or fifth universal empire in the hands of Christ, which Daniel had foretold, destined, to consume and replace all other governments of men.

A Remarkable Passage by One of the Early Fathers

There is the best of evidence that the early Fathers interpreted the fourfold image and the four wild beasts of Daniel, as prophetic symbols of the kingdoms of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. We quote below a striking passage of Hippolytus, one of the early writers.

"The golden head of the image, and the lioness, denoted the Babylonians; the shoulder and arms of silver, and the bear represented the Persians and Medes; the belly and thighs of brass, and the leopard meant the Greeks, who held the sovereignty from Alexander's time; the legs of iron, and the beast, dreadful

and, terrible, expressed, the Romans, who hold the sovereignty at present; the toes of the feet, which were part of clay and part of iron, and the ten horns, were emblems of the kingdoms that are yet to rise; the other little horn that grows up among them meant the Antichrist in their midst; the stone that smites the earth and brings judgment upon the world was Christ. Speak with me, O blessed Daniel. Give me full assurance I beseech thee. Thou dost prophesy concerning the lioness in Babylon, for thou wast a captive there. Thou hast unfolded the future regarding the bear, for thou wast still in the world, and didst see the things come to pass. Then thou speakest to me of the leopard; and whence canst thou know this, for thou art already gone to thy rest? Who instructed thee to announce these things, but He who formed thee in thy mother's womb? That is God, thou sayest. Thou hast spoken indeed, and, that not falsely. The leopard has arisen; the he-goat is come; he hath smitten the ram; he hath broken his horns in pieces; he hath stamped upon him with his feet. He has been exalted by his fall; (the) four horns have come up from under that one. Rejoice, blessed Daniel! thou hast not been in error! all these things have come to pass. After this again thou hast told us of the beast, dreadful and terrible. 'It has iron teeth and claws of brass: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it.' Already the iron rules; already it subdues and breaks all in pieces; already it brings all the unwilling into subjection; already we see these things ourselves. Now we glorify God, being instructed by thee."

Saw the Resurrection in Daniel and Revelation

As Hippolytus concludes his treatise on Christ and Antichrist he expresses himself in the following impressive manner.

"Moreover, concerning the resurrection, and the Kingdom of the saints, Daniel says, 'And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall arise, some to everlasting life.' Esaias says, 'The dead men shall arise, and they that are in their tombs shall awake; for the dew from thee is healing to them.' The Lord says, 'Many in that day shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.' And the Prophet says, 'Awake thou that deepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.' And John says, 'Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power.'

Concerning the resurrection of the righteous, Paul also speaks thus in writing to the Thessalonians: . . . 'The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice and trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. These things then, I have set shortly before thee, O Theophilus, drawing them (from Scripture itself) in order that maintaining in faith what is written, and anticipating the things that are to be, thou mayest keep thyself void of offense both towards God and towards men, "looking for that blessed hope and appearing of our God and Savior," when having raised the saints among us, He will rejoice with them, glorifying the Father. To Him be the glory unto the endless ages of the ages. Amen.'"

Saw Christ as Victorious Conqueror

The evidences cannot be disputed that the early Church interpreted the first vision, that of the crowned rider seated upon a white horse, armed with a bow, going forth "conquering and to conquer," as a representation of Christ going forth on His victorious mission. In support of this we have but to read the commentary of Victorinus on the Apocalypse written in the third century; he says, "The first seal being opened he saw a white horse and a crowned horseman bearing a bow. For this was at first drawn by Himself. For after the Lord ascended into heaven and opened all things, He sent the Holy Spirit, whose words the preachers sent forth as arrows, reaching to the human heart that they might overcome unbelief."

The various and repeated successes of the Christian forces in the early centuries of the Age, ultimately gaining the mastery over Roman Paganism, were regarded as fulfilling the lesson of the first seal. The words of Origen in his reply to Celsus strikingly exhibit the conviction of the primitive Church that its marvelous progress could be explained only by attributing it to the action of supernatural power: "Any one who examines the subject," says Origen, "will see that Jesus attempted and successfully accomplished works beyond the reach of human power. For although from the very beginning, all things opposed the spread of His doctrine in the world -- both the princes of the time, and their chief captains and generals, and all, to speak generally, who were possessed of the smallest influence, and in addition to these the rulers of the different cities, and the soldiers, and the people yet it proved victorious, as being the Word of God, the nature of which is such that it cannot be hindered; and becoming more powerful than all such adversaries, it made itself master of the whole of Greece, and, a considerable portion of barbarian lands, and converted a countless number of souls to his religion."

Other writers of that time could also be cited in support of this generally accepted interpretation of the opening of the first seal.

Key to the Entire Prophecy

It matters not that some of the views entertained were more or less hazy; not discerning the fullness of the truth respecting the Divine plans and purposes, they nevertheless recognized the underlying principles indicated in the visions throughout that Christianity was ultimately destined in the consummation of the Divine purpose to prove itself a mighty conquering force, bringing all things and all creation in subordination to the Divine will as indicated in the Redeemer's prayer, "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, even as it is done in heaven."

Brethren in the early part of the Age were therefore enabled to recognize with many today that the vision of Christ going forth on, His world-conquering mission, most naturally begins the Apocalypse. In the very beginning of the drama the glorious conqueror goes forth, to whose head at the close of the drama, are transferred the "many crowns" of universal dominion.

In the vision thus understood, is discovered the key to the entire prophecy; for this is the starting point of the whole. Seals, trumpets, and vials present a continuous course of history stretching to the great consummation, having as its commencement the going forth of the Gospel of Christ to accomplish ultimately its world-subduing work. "The inference is unavoidable that the

Apocalypse presents a prophetic foreview of the entire course of Christian history, from the foundation of the Church to the end of the world. Nor was any other interpretation ever known in the Christian Church till the rise of modern Futurism."

Again the Apocalyptic prophecy filled a place of the very highest practical importance in the Martyr Church, pointing as it did, ever and always, toward Him who is the Alpha and Omega, announcing again and again, "Behold, He cometh," thus sustaining in the Church of that time, as it ever has since, the blessed hope of the speedy Advent of the world's Redeemer and King. The eminent historian, Gibbon, recognized the powerful influence on the early Church of the teaching and hope of the speedy coming of Christ: "The ancient Christians," he said, "were animated, by a contempt for their present existence, and by a just confidence of immortality, of which the doubtful and imperfect faith of modern ages cannot give us any adequate notion . . . It was universally believed that the end of the world and the Kingdom of Heaven were at hand. The near approach of this wonderful event had been predicted by the Apostles"; a view "productive of the most salutary effects on the faith and practice of Christians, who lived in the awful expectation of that moment when the globe itself, and all the various races of mankind, should tremble at the appearance of their Divine Judge. The ancient and popular doctrine of the Millennium was intimately connected with the Second Coming of Christ. As the works of creation had been finished in six days, their duration in their present state, according to a tradition which was attributed to the Prophet. Elijah, was fixed to six thousand years. By the same analogy it was inferred that this long period of labor and contention, which was now almost elapsed, would be succeeded by a joyful Sabbath of a thousand years; and that Christ, with the triumphant band of the saints and the elect who had escaped death, or who had been miraculously revived, would reign upon earth till the time appointed for the last and general resurrection."

One Bright Star Shone in Their Sky

While the early Christians were correct in applying the historical principle in their study of the Revelation, and in leading features, yet their interpretation of the Apocalypse was necessarily deficient in scope. Their viewpoint must of necessity be narrow as compared with that of Christians of this time, who are now permitted to have before their vision the grand sweep of centuries with the many occurrences and developments which throw so much light upon the Apocalyptic visions. And so as Mr. Guinness appropriately remarks in his concluding word on this point, the early Church "knew nothing of the long centuries which were destined to elapse before the dispensation had run its course. It knew nothing of the great Apostasy which was to darken the earth by its long and terrible eclipse; and nothing of the glorious reformation which was to follow, although all these were foretold in the far-seeing prophecy. Rome Pagan, in her declining dominion, and proximate doom, filled the scene on which the early Christians gazed. One bright star shone in their sky, burning with intense and pristine splendor, the hope of the speedy coming of Christ. For that great event they watched and waited. They believed that to suffer with Christ was the prelude to reigning with Him, and that His Kingdom was at hand. And this conviction nerved them to endure the utmost torments which heathen Rome had power to inflict. In this conviction they lived and died, 'more than conquerors.'"

As we of these last times thus read the record of that noble band of Christ's followers, of how they were blessed in heart and soul as a result of their patient and earnest inquiry into the visions of the beloved John, we are reminded of how wonderfully the Lord fulfilled to His faithful people of those early times, as well as through all the Age unto the present moment, that blessed promise with which the Revelation opens, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy." And realizing from the progress of events in our time and from all that surrounds us that "the end of all things is at hand," what joyful inspiration should the Church of Christ feel today as she recognizes the manifestation and revelation of the Redeemer! For she is thereby made to know that the next great act in the Divine Drama is the sweeping away of the present Order of things, the glorification and exaltation of the Bride of His love and the inauguration of the long promised Kingdom.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF GODLY LIVING

"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made know, unto God." -- Phil.4:4-6.

WHILE THE Scriptures repeatedly affirm that the Church of Christ shall through much tribulation enter the Kingdom of Heaven, and while they declare in definite terms that the way to heavenly glory is a difficult, narrow way, beset with trials, discouragements and reverses, giving occasion for distress, suffering and pain, yet this same Word on the other hand is ever counseling in the direction of joy in the Lord and to a constant rejoicing of spirit on the part of the Lord's people as they journey toward the heavenly Caanan. "The Savior Himself drank to the dregs the cup of suffering; and of Him it was prophetically written that He was "a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." Additionally, St. Paul assures us that it was through His suffering that He experienced development and preparedness for the final, glorious exaltation to the Divine nature. Yet in the midst of all His sorrows; and sufferings the Savior must have known very much of what it was to rejoice and to joy in the God of His salvation. The importance of faith again comes to our attention as furnishing the basis for the state of joy, of heart and mind, as indeed it furnishes the foundation for every advancement and, success in the life of godliness and in overcoming the world, the flesh, and the Evil One.

A most valuable lesson for the Lord's people to learn is how, though shorn of all earthly riches, to be rejoicing Christians, to be glad and happy in the heavenly prospects and in the communion and fellowship of Him who has their every interest at heart and gives perfect assurance that He is causing all things to work together for good to them who love Him.

Who Can Rejoice Always?

St. Paul, who in his Christian career passed through the lights and shadows of joy and sorrow, has given to us, in his letter to the Philippians, some valuable and practical suggestions and wise counsel. Laying down certain general principles for godly living, healthful for New Creatures, the Apostle in the early part of chapter 4, exhorts, "Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say

rejoice." Under present conditions it is not supposable that outward circumstances will always be favorable to rejoicing, from the natural standpoint. He, therefore, who would rejoice alway in 'the Lord must have faith in the Lord, trust, hope, love. Without these he could not so appropriate to himself the gracious promises of the Word as to be able to rejoice in tribulation and suffering and under trials and difficulties, and when falsely accused. and misrepresented and when slandered and evilly entreated of or the truth's sake. Those who are living very near to the Lord; and who can feel always their oneness with Him, and that His protection and care are over them, and that His promise is sure, that all things shall work together for their highest welfare, as New Creatures, are the only ones who can rejoice alway. These can well appreciate the poet's admonition

"Children of the heavenly King,
As we journey let us sing;
Sing our Savior's worthy praise,
Glorious in His works and ways."

Others may rejoice today and be cast down tomorrow; only the faithful in Christ Jesus are privileged to rejoice alway. The thought of the Lord's favors, past, present and to come; makes all the trials and difficulties of such to appear very light afflictions, as but for a moment, not worthy to be compared with the glory, honor, and immortality promised, and the blessed privileges of Divine service, both here and hereafter. The Apostle emphasizes the matter by saying, "Again I say, rejoice." The true Christian can not rejoice too much, if his rejoicing is in the Lord. This rejoicing of the child of God is not necessarily boisterous, nor of necessity the reverse. Rather it relates to the inward condition and state of the heart and means serenity, happiness, peace, pleasure of soul. There may very properly be outward manifestations of this inward pleasure of the soul.

Moderation, Sobriety as We Approach the Day of the Lord

The Apostle further exhorts that the faithful let their moderation, their forbearance, be manifested, not only toward the brethren, but toward all with whom they have to do. This is most essential in these days, when, among professing Christians there are so many who tend toward extremes and that which is immoderate and unreasonable, both in the daily life and in that upon which they, build their hopes in life. Again some are immoderate in respect to what they exact from others.

Faithfulness in the performance, as far as possible, of all that justice would require of. us, and mercifulness in respect to all our requirements of justice from others should be our rule. So shall we be the children of our Father which is in heaven, for He is kind and merciful even to the unthankful.

"The Lord is at hand!" The thought apparently is, that those who are the Lord's are not living for the present time. They are expecting great changes to be ushered in when their King shall take to Himself His great power and begin His, reign. Such are not to be struggling for the last inch or the last penny, nor for the extreme of their own rights; but, rather, to be so full of rejoicing in the good things coming, and already theirs by faith, that it will make them generous, as respects the things of this present time in their dealings with the brethren and with others. We are not expecting justice from the Lord, for nothing we have, or have done or could do would justly call for such exceeding great and precious things as He has promised to us. And as

we are expecting grace or bounty in so large measure we can well afford to be generous and liberal in our sentiments toward others -- especially toward the household of faith, because they are our brethren and fellow-representatives of the Lord Himself, from whom our bounty is to come; and toward the world without, because they have not the future prospects which we possess, and hence set their hearts upon the things of this present time; and we can well afford to accord them their full share of these or more, since we are so rich through our Heavenly Father and our Heavenly Bridegroom.

That the Apostle did not mean to be understood that the Lord's Second Advent might be expected momentarily, nor before his death, is evident; for elsewhere in his epistles he clearly sets forth his expectation to die, and to wait for the reward, the crown of righteousness laid up for him; elsewhere also he clearly intimates that the day of the Lord could not come until after the great falling away, mentioned in the prophecies, and the manifestation of the man of sin, etc. Evidently, therefore, his only thought in this exhortation, "The Lord is at hand," was, as already suggested -- that we are living in the close of the reign of evil, that the dawning of the day of the Lord is not far distant, and that to the eye of faith it is so near that its influence should affect even the smallest affairs of the present life.

Why Some Are Anxious and Burdened

"Be careful for nothing" is the next exhortation; but since our English word careful has lost its original meaning, there is danger of error here. The word originally had the thought of being full of care -- anxiety, trouble. The Apostle's words correspond exactly to our Lord's injunction, "Take no thought," and signify, Be not anxious, burdened, full of care. It is proper that the Lord's people should be careful, in the meaning of the word careful as used today. We should not be careless, indifferent, loose in our conduct or words, but be circumspect.

Anxiety and burdens are unavoidable to those who are depending on themselves, their own wisdom, their own strength, their own skill; but the members of the Body of Christ, accepted in the Beloved, adopted into the Divine family, sons of God, are assured over and over again in the Word that if they abide faithful, all things shall work for their highest welfare. Why should they be burdened? Why should they feel anxious? He who guards their interests slumbers not. When Christians find themselves anxious, fearful, burdened, the evidence is that they are lacking in faith, and the probability is that they have either never grown to the point of having the proper faith in the Lord, or that they have allowed "earth-born clouds" and cares of this life to come between them and the Lord, so that they no longer have confidence that they are abiding in His love and in His care. All in such condition should go at once to the throne of heavenly grace, and to the Divine promises, and obtaining mercy at the former and feeding upon the latter, they should grow strong in the Lord and in the confidence in Him, and their corroding cares will give place to faith, confidence, peace of heart, whatever the outward conditions. Such as follow this course will realize with all the faithful the meaning of the words:

"Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe from corroding care,
Safe from the world's temptations,
Sin cannot harm me there."

Such is the counsel of the Apostle-that instead of continuing in the anxious condition, we should lay all of our affairs before the Lord, supplicating His promised providential care, acknowledging our own lack of wisdom; and gladly accepting His wisdom and the provisions of His love, we should make every request in a spirit of thanksgiving. This spirit of thanksgiving implies a recognition that the circumstances and conditions in which we are, have been supervised of the Lord, and, that we are appreciative of His care, and trust it for the future. Thanksgiving for what we have, and a full appreciation of the Lord's leadings hitherto, and now, will preclude any anxiety for the future; for the thankful heart will conclude that He who favored us and redeemed us while we were yet sinners will much more favor and do for us now that we are His through the adoption that is in Christ Jesus.

The Peace of God Shall Keep Your Hearts

The Lord would teach us to claim His promises according to His terms. He could give us the things which He sees us to need without our praying for them; but this would not be wise procedure on His part. A proper attitude of heart is most essential to receive His favors and to be profited by them. Even as it is, we may be sure that we do not sufficiently appreciate the Divine care bestowed upon us hitherto and now. Even in following His instructions in the matter of prayer and thanksgiving we probably do not grasp and appreciate as we should, the many reasons we have for gratitude, as we shall understand them when we shall know even as we are known.

If we have the foregoing described spirit of rejoicing and trust in the Lord, and make all of our requests, so far as we are able to discern, in harmony with His promise, and accept with gratitude and thanksgiving whatever His providence may send us, then the Apostle assures us, "The peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." The thought here is distinct. How evident it is that the peace with which the Christian is blessed is not one which he possesses of himself. We may by nature be more or less indisposed to peace, restless, dissatisfied, discontented, fearful, foreboding, or quarrelsome; but, following the course outlined above, we learn to trust God, in all of our affairs, and it is the peace of God -- the peace which comes to us from a realization of God's power and goodness and willingness to hold us by His right hand as His children. It is a peace that keeps us from being continually downcast and from being' burdened with anxiety, etc. This peace of God is opposed to the spirit of discontent and unrest ; it drives away anxious care and fearful forebodings. It keeps the Christian's mind, so that he at heart is at rest in the Lord, and is in constant fellowship and communion with Him; and it guards his mind also, his powers of reason, instructing him and assuring him respecting the Divine power and wisdom and love. But it does not assure him of anything respecting his own perfection or worthiness of acceptance before God. This proper peace merely assures him of his standing in Divine favor through Christ Jesus, His worthiness, His sacrifice, His aid.

The Essentials of Truth and Justice

Now we come to the Apostle's grand summing up of the way in which the Christian is to set his affections -- fix them, fasten them, hold them upon profitable things; that he may grow in grace as well as in knowledge and love of God. The Apostle points out that the will having been consecrated to the Lord, faith having been exercised in rejoicing and thanksgiving in all of the Lord's providences, the peace of trust having come in the further steps in the development of character will be through guarding our thoughts; and this means also the guarding of our words and acts, because it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh, and that the whole course of life is directed. What, then, should be the trend of the Christian's thoughts after he has reached the grand development already outlined by the Apostle? It should be toward things that are true, having no sympathy with anything that is false or even exaggerated. Whoever sympathizes with falsehood or exaggeration is more or less defiling himself. Whoever purifies his mind and refrains from untruthful thoughts and statements, etc., is in that degree purifying his soul and his entire character, and coming the more into touch and sympathy with the Lord Himself, who is "the Truth."

There is also a higher consideration than that of merely knowing that what we tell is the truth. The follower of Christ must desire true nobility, and the highest standards of honor in his heart, in his thoughts, in all of his dealings with his God and with his fellows. The test of honor is therefore to be applied after the test of the truth. The thing might be true, but is it honorable, to about it or tell about it, is another question.

There are still other tests: one of these concerns justice. Is our course of action just toward others? The child of God must not allow his mind to run along lines that would be unjust, and he is to learn to apply this test of justice to all the motives and purposes of his heart, as well as to his words and acts; while learning at the same time to consider the conduct of others from the standpoint of mercy and forbearance; and so far as reason will permit, from the standpoint of pity and helpfulness.

Things That Are Pure, Virtuous and Praiseworthy

Our Master said, "Blessed are the pure in heart," and thereby introduces another holy quality. Those who love and cultivate purity will feel a revulsion toward everything that is impure and will desire to drop it from memory, and this will be accomplished only by continually thinking upon those things that are pure, and avoiding the giving of the thought to the things that are impure. We are to recognize true loveliness, and to esteem it. From our standpoint the impure, the unjust, the untrue, the dishonorable things, cannot appear lovely, desirable, worthy of emulation. When we would think on the purest things, we must of necessity lift our mental vision to as high a point as possible, and, as nearly as we may be able, discern the loveliness of the perfect character of our God and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and proportionately the loveliness manifested in one or another of the followers of Jesus, who walk closely in His footsteps. The mind that frequently calls up the lovely perfections of the Lord and the truth, and is well filled by these, is guarded greatly against intrusions of unlovely and unholy things, contrary to the spirit of the Lord. The Apostle concludes the list, by referring to all things of good repute: things of any virtue or any value, things in any degree praiseworthy -- the noble words or noble deeds or noble sentiments of

anybody, we may safely meditate upon, and as a consequence find ourselves growing toward these ideals upon which our minds, our new natures, thus feed. We will become more and more transformed by the renewing of our minds; and approach nearer and nearer to the glorious likeness of our Lord and Master, being changed from glory to glory, inch by inch, step by step, little by little, during the present life ; and our thoughts being in this attitude and our union with the Lord maintained, we shall have part in the First Resurrection, which will perfect us forever in the Lord's image and likeness.

"In Whatsoever State I Am"

How many (how few!) can say what the Apostle says in verse 9? "The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things do" ! This should be the standard of every Christian, because they each and all are representatives of the Lord, ambassadors for Him; hence, so far as in them lieth, their conduct and words should be such as would be living epistles, read by the brethren and by the world to profit. No wonder the think Apostle adds that, doing thus, "the 'God' of peace shall be with you." So surely as He was with the Apostle He will be with all others similarly walking in the footsteps of Jesus.

"I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at length ye have revived your thought 'for me.'" These words seem to imply that their thoughtfulness for the Apostle, and earnestness to improve opportunities to serve him, had to some extent relaxed for a time and been revived. Then, as though fearful that his words might be understood as a reproof, he adds, "Ye did indeed take thought, but ye lacked opportunity." How, careful was this man of God not unnecessarily to wound the feelings of the brethren, and how careful we all should likewise be to let the love of God extend not only to the degree of giving us liberal sentiments toward the brethren, but also to the extent of influencing our tongues and pens not to wound unnecessarily even the least of them.

The Apostle hastens to point out that he is not complaining of want. He had learned to put into practice himself the lesson which he was just communicating to them, regarding rejoicing in the Lord -- to cast aside anxious thought and to approach the Lord in prayer and supplication in thanksgiving, and he possessed the resultant peace. In this condition of heart, however many may have been his necessities, he was not in want, for he was satisfied that the Father would provide the things which he really needed -- and more he did not want; for, as he explains, he had learned the lesson, "In whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." We are not to be contented after the manner of the tramp or the indolent and shiftless, who would prefer to "live by faith," at the expense of others who "labor working with their hands." We are not to be content to allow the opportunities and talents and privileges which the Lord has given us to lie idly by, unused; but while using these talents and opportunities to the very best of our ability and intelligence, and while seeking in prayer and supplication, rejoicing and thanksgiving, to use them all as would please the Lord, we should be content with the result of such efforts.

Learn How to be Abased and How to Abound

We should conclude that our Heavenly Father who feeds the sparrows and who clothes the fields with verdure is quite able to supply our needs in the manner and to the degree that would be for our highest welfare; and so, after having done our part to the best of our ability, we are to be thoroughly contented with the results -- even if the results should be the barest necessities of life. But we are not to be contented with the barest necessities unless these are the best results obtainable from reasonable and judicious use of opportunities and talents which the Lord has given us, consistent with our consecration to His service. "Be content with such things as ye have" does not ignore our talents and opportunities, for these are part of the things which we have, the things which, as stewards, we are bound to use to the best of our judgments.

Surely the Lord was fitting the Apostle for a grand place in the heavenly Kingdom, when He gave him such a variety of experiences as are detailed in this epistle. Surely, as the Lord was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, that He might be a faithful High Priest for the Millennial Kingdom (as well as to us now), so the Apostle by his experiences, evidently was being fitted and prepared for a very honorable and prominent place in the Royal Priesthood of the same Kingdom. And so with us: if we find our experiences in life very checkered, we may conclude that the Lord sees that we need both the heights and depths of prosperity and adversity to properly instruct us and qualify us for the position He designs for us in the future. Let us, then, as the Apostle did, learn how to abound, not allowing the abundance of earthly good things to swerve us from our consecration vows; and learn also how to be in want (need) and yet not to want anything beyond what the Lord's wisdom and providence sees best to give, to be content.

The secret of the Apostle's success is found in the expression, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." It was his close relationship to the Lord, his intimate union with Him, his reliance upon Him: he was abiding as a branch in the Vine, and was strengthened by the same spirit, and, thus was enabled to do all these things and to pass through all these experiences with gratitude, with thankfulness, with rejoicing. Let us, all thus learn to "Rejoice in the Lord always."

GOD'S WILL IS BEST

"God's will is best; faith's vision may be darkened,
And tangling influence our feet arrest;
Yet to our cry for guidance One has hearkened;
God's will is best.

"We raise our tear-dimmed eyes with eager longing,
To pierce the clouds that crown the mountain's crest;
And watch the chill mists round the pathway thronging,
With hearts distrest.

"God's will is best -- oh! tired heart and weary;
Each footfall finds you nearer to your rest;
And God prints on your pathway, lone and dreary,
'God's will is best.'

"Why seek to know the secrets of the morrow;
Or what new dangers may your way infest?
'Tis Providence apportioned joy or sorrow
To be your guest.

"God's will is best -- seek not to do God's planning;
Nor of the future make untrusting quest;
He only of your whole life has the scanning;
God's will is best.

"Enough, for mortal feet, the step before them;
Enough, for mortal hands, life's next behest;
Enough to know Immortal Love is o'er them;
God's will is best.

"God's will is best -- your first dawn may be over;
Life's noon be past, its sun low in the West,
And night full nigh; but Heaven's morn will discover,
God's will is best."

LIKE UNTO MEN THAT WAIT FOR THEIR LORD

"Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." -- Luke 12:37.

AS THE First Advent of our Lord was foreshadowed, announced, and in various ways indicated centuries in advance of His birth, so likewise with regard to His second visitation to men. As a full description of the Messiah. His work and office was given in type and prophecy whereby those who were living up to their privileges might at the proper time know of His presence and be prepared to receive Him, so likewise has there been given a clear outline of the times and circumstances that mark the Savior's presence again, whereby those who are soberly watching and observing the Word of His Testimony, may be assured of this day of His visitation. How comforting the thought that the Master while He was uttering messages for the encouraging and strengthening of His disciples when He was with them in the flesh, was also expressing important truths that were intended for the nourishment and edification of faithful disciples who should be living centuries in advance of that time-yea for those too who should be living in the very days of His second presence, which He referred to as a 'time of special trial and stress upon His Church, saying, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."

"Let your loins be girded about and your lights burning," said the Master, admonishing His followers to give diligence that they might be found in the days of His second presence in a state of such piety and readiness for His presence as that they should receive the promised blessing that His presence would bring to the faithful. During the Lord's absence His people were to be continually on the alert; their loins girded would represent that they were to be ready for service all the time -- actively engaged in promoting the interests of the Kingdom. According to the custom of that time, loose, flowing garments were used, and the girdle at the waist drew these into proper place

so as to permit of the ordinary services of life. When rest was sought, the girdle was loosed. Consequently, the lesson of the figure is constant activity on the part of the Lord's people during His absence from us. We are not to become charged with the cares of this world and slumber and, sleep, and thus refrain from attending to the duties properly devolving upon us.

A Parable and Its Lesson

Each one of the Lord's servants is represented as a light bearer, and instructed to let his light so shine before men that they, seeing his good works, may glorify the Father in heaven. The picture is that of general darkness, ignorance, superstition, and sin in the world, while the Lord's disciples have been granted the light of Divine revelation and wisdom and understanding, which not only transforms them and makes of them new creatures, but also shines through them unto all with whom they come in contact. "Ye are the light of the world." It is proper to observe here that the Great Light, the glorious sunrise of the Millennial Morning, has not yet taken place; the Lord's people are still in the world as little lights, shining in the midst of general darkness, and watching and waiting for the morning. The Prophet's words were in line with this when he said, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." This night time of spiritual darkness and ignorance and separation from God began with the curse of death, when sin entered the world; and the whole creation is groaning and travailing together, waiting for the morning, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God -- Christ Jesus and His brethren, His joint-heirs in the Kingdom.

Our Lord gave a parable to illustrate the alertness and attentiveness that should characterize His followers. Amongst the Jews there would be no occasion on which the servants of the household would be expected to be more alert or to manifest more interest in the welfare of the household than on the night or morning on which their master would come to his home bringing with him his bride. And so the Lord chooses this as an appropriate illustration of the alertness that should characterize His followers while waiting for His second coming. As a matter of fact, the servants in this parable are the bride of another parable, but represent the matter from another standpoint. The sole lesson here is that diligence in service, that watchfulness for the interests of the Master's cause, that faith in His promise to return and expectancy of the event, serve as an aid or stimulus to proper service. When the master of the house should arrive with his company, it would be a reflection against the interest of his servants and their love and devotion for him if on such an occasion they were found asleep or otherwise than ready to open the door at the master's intimation of his arrival.

If Thou Wilt not Watch Thou Shalt not Know

The parable implies that at our Lord's second coming He will have arrived before any of His faithful servants will be aware of the fact. His presence will be made known by the knock, and the knock would correspond to an announcement, through some special unfoldment of His Word and a recognition of the fulfillment of prophecy. For instance, the publishing of time prophecies showing that the time is fulfilled -- that certain prophecies marking events belonging to the close of the Gospel dispensation and the opening of the Millennial dispensation are accomplished, and that certain signs mentioned in the Scriptures are fulfilled -- such testimonies are in the nature of a knock, which would be heard by such of the servants of the Lord

as would be awake at that time. It is not for the servants in general to do the knocking, but for the Master Himself to set in operation the forces and agencies He may choose to use for producing this knock and the announcement.

A blessing is promised to those servants who at that time shall be on the alert and hear the knock and understand it, and welcome the Master. His words show quite distinctly that none except the servants are to appreciate the knock -- that men in general will not know of the time of the Master's return, but only His servants. No particular time for the Master's coming is set, but the intimation is clearly given that it is not for them to know long in advance the times and seasons, but for them to be on the alert continually, not only during the first watch, but during the second and during the third, that at whatever time the Master's knock may be heard they may respond, promptly. So then the earnest watching was to go on all through the Age; all faithful disciples were to maintain this attitude. It is not the thought, let it be noticed, that the servants are never to know when the Master will come: it is the thought that on His arrival He will cause such a knocking to be made as will be appreciated by all of His servants who, are awake and waiting and watching. Wherein would be the use of the knock if the servants were not to know when they heard the knock? The knock is to be the evidence of the presence, and the servants are not to know in advance, but are to know at the time of the arrival and that without seeing.

The Master Will Serve His Servants

What will be the special reward of these servants? The parable states it: their Master will "gird Himself (He will become their servant) and will make them to sit down to meat and will come forth and serve them." This implies that at our Lord's second coming He will be present before any of His servants know of His arrival. He will knock or cause announcement of His presence to be made. Those who will hear the knock will be such only as are awake and ready, expecting Him and on the alert for the knock. These will receive a special feast. It will be a spiritual feast, an experience therefore that relates to the heart, the soul, and would come as a result of feeding the soul with refreshing truth. It will be special because it is on a special occasion and intended as a special reward for their manifestation of interest and devotion. It will be special also, because the Master of the household, turned to be its servant, would have all the keys to all the riches of grace and blessing, and, as elsewhere explained, will bring forth from His treasuries -- his pantries -- things new and old, substantials and delicacies. The faithful ones will surely have a royal feast, such as never before was granted them.

These things, we maintain, have been in process of fulfillment for a number of years past. The knock or proclamation of the Lord's presence as indicated by both Old Testament prophecies and New Testament messages has been given and is still being given. It is not necessary that we shall be able to establish the exact year or month when the matter began; it is sufficient that as we look around us and observe the signs, the developments, the progress of events, we are able to recognize in all of these, unmistakable and convincing evidences that the Master is present* and that the end of the Age draweth nigh.

* For an exhaustive discussion of the Lord's presence, see issues of this journal, October to December 1926: supplied free upon request.

The knock of the parable might appropriately be but for a few seconds, but the fulfillment would properly cover a period of years. The servants of the household are taking notice, and each one as he opens his heart and mind to the fact of the Lord's presence receives a fulfillment of the blessing promised -- receives a feast of fat things, spiritual -- an understanding and appreciation of the Divine purpose and a soul nourishment and strengthening such as was never his before. That this serving of the servants by the Master should be understood to be an individual work and not merely a collective service and feast is evidenced by the Lord's statement in Revelation 3:20. Here the Lord represents the same event in connection with His message to the last phase of His professing Church, the Laodicean phase. He says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man [individual] hear My voice [knock] and open the door, I will come in to him and: sup with him, and he with Me."

"A Thousand Years . . . Are as a Watch in the Night"

According to the ancient Jewish method of reckoning the night time, the second watch would be from ten to two o'clock and the third from two to six o'clock. The parable does not state in which watch the Master may be expected. That question was left open; the faithfulness of the servants would be tested in proportion to His delay. Many would find it easy to keep awake and alert during the first watch, not so many during the second watch and still fewer during the third. It is in accord with this implication of the parable that we find today general lethargy prevailing amongst Christian people respecting the return of the Bridegroom and the glorious things of the Kingdom then to be brought unto His faithful household. Many are asleep in Zion, many are overcharged with the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches. Not only have worldly people made a god of business, money, and pleasure, but many who are at heart lovers of righteousness and who desire to be considered servants of the Lord, are seriously overcharged: -- absorbed in worldly things. Their hearts are so filled with these and their minds so occupied with dreams of great works, movements, and outward success, pleasure and personal interest that they cannot hear the knock. They know not in the sense of a heart appreciation of the Master's presence; they open not their hearts to the things appertaining to this wonderful announcement, for which the Lord's people have waited so long and prayed so earnestly, "Thy Kingdom come." Such are missing, as a consequence, a great blessing implied in our Lord's parable.

His Presence Unknown to Men

"But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, .and not have suffered his house to be broken through."

The reference here is to a thief-like coming, and the Greek word, translated broken through, would mean literally "dug into." Many of the houses of olden time were not built of stone or bricks, but of dried mud, somewhat like what are known as adobe houses in some parts of the West and in Mexico. Entry into such houses could be gained more quickly by digging through the

wall than by forcing the door. The goodman of the house or its master does not refer to the Lord, for the house referred to is the "present evil world" -- social structure as at present organized. It is not necessary to conclude that Satan is meant, although he is in a general way the master of present institutions, "the god of this world;" the "prince of this world." We may properly enough understand the goodman of the house to here signify earthly governments, the powers that be, the representatives of the ten toes of Daniel's image and of his fourth beast.

This matter of the second presence of the Lord and the knock which will be heard by those of His servants who are awake, but not heard by His servants who are asleep and overcharged, will be totally unknown to the world. To them His presence will not be that of a master longed for and served, but that of an opponent whose house they have in His absence taken possession of and used contrary to His interests. These, if they knew the time of His coming, would have fortified themselves in some manner and have sought to defend present institutions and to perpetuate them.

The coming as a thief upon the world signifies a quiet coming, unostentatious, unknown, without heralds or any commotion likely to disturb. The breaking up of the strong man's house--the breaking up of present institutions, civil, religious, political, financial -- is already under way, just as the knocking for His servants has been in process. The entire social structure is under control of the new Prince. He is marshaling His forces, and will cause even the wrath of man to praise Him and to work out His purposes in the overthrow of every known institution built upon selfishness. Great will be the fall thereof -- "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation"; but upon the ruins the King of kings and Lord of lords will rear the grand Kingdom of the Lord, for which all who are His already pray, "Thy Kingdom come," and which, when it shall come to be instituted by the Lord, will be indeed the "desire of all nations." -- Haggai 2:7.

"In Such an Hour as Ye Think not"

The essence of this lesson is summed up in the words, "Be ye also ready; for in an hour ye think not the Son of Man cometh." No one will be aware in advance of the hour of the Son of Man's coming; it is not a matter that is left in such a form as to be speculated upon beforehand. His knock, represented in the unfoldment and application of prophecy as we have seen, will be the first intimation of His presence. And so it is being fulfilled: none of the brethren were to know in advance when the Lord's coming would take place; it was after it had occurred that the knock was heard -- is voice through the Prophets of the Bible declaring to us that we are already in the sifting and gathering time and in the days of the presence of the Son of Man. Herein we have fulfilled the words of the Lord: "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the parousia [presence] of the Son of Man be." The language shows that the thought is that as the world was ignorant of coming events in Noah's day, and, being ignorant, was eating and drinking and planting and building, so it will be in the days of the presence of the Son of Man: the world will be ignorant of the fact of His presence, and the ordinary affairs of life will be progressing as usual. Only "ye brethren" who hear the knock will discern the presence and receive the blessing.

Signs Discerned only By Eye of Faith

It is obvious inasmuch as the early stages of Christ's presence are to be of a secret character, that men in general will be ignorant of His presence even as they were ignorant of the coming flood in the days of Noah; there will not be anything outwardly supernatural or extraordinary about this early period of Christ's Second Advent. Jesus truly gave in His great prophecy, in answer to the question "When shall these things be?" a vivid description of events and transactions which He said would be the signs of the Son of Man in heaven -- of His presence. And these signs Jesus mentioned were evidently such as related to the world's condition politically, socially, and ecclesiastically, and not of a character therefore to be recognized by the world as indications that Christ's Second Advent was at hand. "Each of these signs," remarks an eminent expositor, "taken separately and singly, or occurring in any other connection, or at any other time, might argue nothing remarkable; but occurring as they do, as links in a predicted series, as the closing stages in a long movement, and at the precise periods indicated twenty-five centuries ago, they become to 'the wise' clear signs that the end of the present state of things is at hand. To the world they seem, as they are in themselves, perfectly natural and ordinary events, easily to be accounted for by second causes, and having about them no special providential character, or evidential value as signs of the approaching end; but to the understanding eye they portend the near approach of 'that sudden destruction' which impends over a guilty and Christ-rejecting world, and over a corrupt and apostate Church, as well as the glorious deliverance speedily to arise to the true people of God, though there is nothing in them to interrupt the world's dream of 'peace and safety,' or to disturb the scoffer's conviction that 'all things continue as they were.'"

When the Curtain Rises Again

Referring to the changing scenes, in the governments of the world, which have been in fulfillment of the "sure Word of prophecy," and what is to succeed the present world powers when they have come to their predicted end, this same writer goes on to say:

"We have watched the various acts of a long drama; the same figures have reappeared continually on the stage, their mutual relations have changed from time to time, and we expect still to see them in a few more final configurations: but then the curtain must fall on them for every and when next it rises we behold a glorious transformation scene. The Gentile ages have rolled away, and the Lion of the tribe of Judah reigns over a ransomed earth. The kingdoms of the image are gone, the kingdom of the mountain is come; the wild-beast empires are no more, but the Son of Man and the saints have taken the Kingdom. BabyIon has fallen, Rome has vanished, Jerusalem shines resplendent. The sanctuary is cleansed, and Israel's age-long exile is over. The martyrs are enthroned beside the great Martyr, who resisted unto blood, striving against sin; the Millennial Sabbath has dawned, and Christ is King indeed, no longer in the hearts and lives of a little flock alone, but in all the earth, and for evermore. We cannot love Christ's appearing, or long for the promised times of the restitution of all things, the glorious Millennial Sabbath, without inquiring, 'When shall these things be?'"

The sublime and blessed consummation to which the entire lesson and admonition of vigilance and watchfulness in connection with the Lord's return, point is that of the ultimate gathering together in heavenly glory with Christ, of all the faithful. It is the purifying process, the sanctification of the spirit, the fortifying and establishing of the soul in pursuit of the ways and

will of the Lord, that God is looking for in those whom He would honor with His dear Son in that glorious and exalted work of the coming ages. Truly of what solemn import are these days in which we live! Days indeed that are fraught with evidences of the presence of our Heavenly Bridegroom; days in which it is the privilege of the watchers to hail the announcement, "Behold the Bridegroom!" and to join in the proclamation that the Kingdom is at the door, which signifies that in the not far distant future all the faithful watchers, all who have been guided by the sure Word of His Testimony will have gone in with Him to the marriage.

"O hail, happy day, that speaks our trials ended!
Our Lord has come to take us Home;
O hail, happy day!
No more by doubts or fears distressed,
We now shall gain our promised rest,
And be forever blest! O hail, happy day!"

OVERCHARGED

"Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." -- Luke 21:34-36.

ONE WOULD suppose that words so full of warning, and of such deep significance, spoken by Jesus to His disciples, for the benefit of those who should be living in the trying time of which He speaks, would be kept constantly in mind and not for a moment forgotten by those who are running for the "prize of the high calling."

One of the strongest evidences which we have of the truth of the prophecies spoken in connection with these words is, that at the very time when they are being fulfilled by rapidly succeeding events, at the very time when His people should be lifting up their heads knowing that, their "redemption., draweth nigh," at the very point where expectation should be on tip-toe we find many who have been enlightened, so **busied** with a multitude of other things that they cannot attend to-preparation for the coming Kingdom.

They are so overcharged (there is no more fitting word to use) that they have not time to heed the caution and derive benefit from the injunction given in the Scripture to which we have referred.

To the lover of Jesus, one who expects to be everlastingly and intimately associated with and united to Him, there are perhaps, no more deeply interesting Scriptures than the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, the thirteenth of Mark, and the twenty-first of Luke, the more deeply interesting because they define more particularly the events which are to immediately precede the coming of Him in whom their "soul delighteth" and so mark more clearly the time when the Bridegroom and the Bride shall be united, .and. introduce the glorious reign of righteousness and truth.

What Are the Dangers of the Hour?

The fact that a deeply trying time is to immediately precede the coming of the Bridegroom, should put every expectant soul on the alert. But what are, the principal dangers of the hour?

We find they are the **liability of being deceived**. Four times in the thirteenth of Mark we find Jesus saying, "Take heed!" His first caution is, take heed lest any one deceive **you**, 5th verse; next, **take heed to yourselves**, be careful what you do and say, be circumspect, 9th verse; again, take heed to what I have told you, 23rd verse; and last, take heed, watch and pray, 33rd verse.

While there is a similarity in the general narration, as given in these three chapters, yet each narrator gives some points more prominence than the others; and so we find here, in the text quoted, more explicit directions given regarding **ourselves**. "Take heed lest your hearts be **overcharged**."

There are three things here mentioned with which the heart is especially liable to become overcharged-surfeiting, drunkenness, and **cares of this life**. Perhaps some who read these pages may think they are not troubled with the first two. If there are any, let them take heed and see if they are among the number spoken of by Isa. 29:9-14. But many, no doubt, feel the force of the last, and are exerting themselves to **overcome**; while still many more, who are really "overcharged," are not fully conscious of it; but the words of Jesus are very peculiar if we will notice them. He does not simply say, You will have a great deal of worldly care, but says, "Take heed that your hearts be not **overcharged** with the cares of this life." Now, it is **possible** for a man to have a great deal of worldly care requiring his attention, and yet not have his heart much affected or influenced by it. He may have just all he can attend to, and yet his **heart** be quite free from the burden. Why? Because his heart is not in it as much as his **head**. If he is doing all **as unto the Lord**, there will not be much danger of his heart being overcharged. We need right here to "take heed" and not delude ourselves with the idea that our hearts are with the Lord, and that we are in full sympathy with Him and His work, if we do not find, or **make**, or **take** time to commune with Him and feast upon His Word, and partake of His Spirit.

The Overcharged Condition the Snare of the Adversary

So it is the heart that is in danger. This being the case, what are the methods most likely to be made use of by the enemy to load down our hearts to the extent of being "overcharged"? We may be sure that he will not for a moment think of inducing us to be recreant to our trust. O no, not at all; he would be the last one to suggest anything like unfaithfulness; he would have us "diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving (?) the Lord." if we were likely to forget that passage he would quote it to us, but not with as much stress upon the last part as upon the first.

O yes, we must be diligent in business so that we can provide for our own families, for he who provides not for his own house has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel. -- 1 Tim. 5:8.

O yes, provide for your own house, certainly, and see that your family have a good house, and a large one; see that it is fully as good as your neighbor's; no matter if it is a little better, let no one get the idea that you are not providing well for your own house.

Now, if we were to picture the whole truth to the life, and show to what an extent the enemy is leading many who mean to be the Lord's children, it

would; look absurd enough. In accord with our desire to be faithful, the Adversary is crowding overmuch work upon us, all of which is claimed to be duty, though the demands are so numerous that we have insufficient time for the accomplishment of them all. This crowding upon us more than we can possibly do, is evidently the enemy, and is intended to keep us from the most important of all work, the study of God's Word, through which we are enabled to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, and by which we are thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work. Are we not, in our over-burdened condition, forgetting to "seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness"? There is manifestly no work so important as to keep the love of God burning brightly upon the altar of our hearts, and no means so likely to accomplish this as the study of the Word of God, and prayer. Of course we do not mean that these shall be done to the exclusion of good works, but we do mean that good works should not be allowed to exclude these.

We verily believe that just now the enemy is more than usually active in his efforts to keep all classes of Christians so busy that they shall, not have time to look after the truth and watch for the **sign** of the presence of the Son of Man. -- See Matt: 24:3. -- Diaglott.

Doing Wonderful Works Neglecting the Spiritual Life

Some who could not be induced nor pressed into worldliness he will keep busy looking after the welfare of others, to the exclusion of their own growth in the knowledge of the truth. Some casting out devils; some relieving the distressed; and all engaged more or less in doing "many wonderful works"; but while doing wonderful works they are leaving undone that which is of greater importance, i. e., fitting themselves for union with Christ, and for efficient service in the world's great seed time and harvest, in the Age to come. Work done in the Lord's vineyard now and not done according to His Plan will be superficial and need doing over again.

So-called revival work has to be repeated. Not that we are opposed to revivals, in the true import of the term, but the work done in the way it is done, has to "be done over and over; devils cast out do not stay out! souls converted have to be reconverted, "reclaimed" as it is called, until the wonderful part of the "wonderful works" is, that there is as much demand for the "shoddy" as there is, though the demand for it is less in proportion as people come to understand God's Word.

We do not question the sincerity of those engaged in such work to the neglect of the Lord's work in their own souls, for in their sincerity they will say to the Judge, "Have we not prophesied in Thy name and in Thy name cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works?" But they will find that such works will be no more appreciated, then than they are getting to be now.

They will find that their wonders were performed under the influence of a zeal without knowledge. Love of the truth, would lead to the exposure and rejection of every religious sham, and there would be no demand for the superficial. Love of the truth would lead us more and more into the truth, would make business cares and anxieties give place and stand aside while we take a sufficient amount of time to study God's Word and worship Him in spirit and in truth.

When we are in any doubt about the amount of time we should take for the purpose of feeding upon the Bread of Life, let us put into one scale all our worldly cares and worldly demands upon our time, and into the other these words: "Seek ye **first** the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." "How shall we escape if we neglect **so great** salvation?" -- Selected.

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

Dear Brethren:

I am submitting the following brief report in connection with my recent Pilgrim trip South, covering the dates from February 12 to March 25-forty-three days. Commencing at Boston and Brooklyn, and going by boat from New York to Jacksonville, Fla., we visited friends in that State in a general way, touching some of the larger places a second time, and then continued to visit and meet with friends or brethren in the following States: Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington; D. C., Maryland, New York, and return to Boston.

The entire trip, covering a distance of 5,130 miles, was surely one fraught with the Lord's abundant help and blessing. I am grateful for the privileges that have been mine and thankful to the Lord for all His blessings and care. There was much in the nature of encouragement at all places visited. I should be so thankful if it pleased the dear Lord to comfort and help by His Word presented by the weak earthen vessel, some of the dear ones I was privileged to fellowship with in the meetings and in their homes.

It has been my privilege to enter more fully into the sweet fellowship with those of like precious hopes, and to meet in brotherly, and Christian love dear ones who give evidence of being of the remnant that are abiding in Him, in this day of strong delusions, which surely is now here. My great desire was to lend a helping hand and heart, and to utter words of encouragement to them that each might look to the great Head of the Church, our dear Lord Jesus, and trust in Him as the Good Shepherd, who loves and cares for His own. -- John 10:28, 29.

The great need now existing among the Lord's people has been deeply impressed upon my heart; and how few there are that have the God-given desire to help and comfort these needy ones! Oh, that we might not only hear the words of the Master, but also catch His spirit as He bade the disciples of old, "Give ye them to eat." But it must be His food that is given. And when we bring our little all to Him for His blessing to be used to His praise and honor, surely there will not only be an inward blessing . in our own lives and hearts, but a strengthening and encouragement of other hearts will come from the Living Head, through the weak earthen vessel.

With much true Christian love,

Your brother in Christ,

I. I. Margeson

Sear Brethren:

I greet you in Jesus, our beloved Savior's name.

I am just recovering after a severe heart attack. A week ago I received a book from your address, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ." I accept it from my Lord and Master, as I take all good gifts as from Him. A Brother in Mexico, who knows I was hungering for the strong food told me of this book and offered to send his to me. I wrote him that if I was to see it, some one would give it to me or loan one. From that time until last week I have never heard it mentioned. But in my illness, here this one came all the way from Brooklyn; and now I have almost finished reading it through. To me it is beautiful -- a great aid to our trembling faith. How I have enjoyed the deep truths. Truly we are in the time to be careful -- "watch and pray." I do not know whether I am at liberty to loan this book to other's or not. I should be glad to send it to a sister who I know loves the Lord for His own sake. I am getting such a blessing from it that I wish her to read it too. I feel that the dear Lord directed some one to send it to me. Our Father is kind and merciful to us that trust Him day by day. (1 John 4:18.) I thank the one whom God used to remember me just when I felt sad and crushed.

Being deaf and often laid aside with pain; I have not much fellowship. "Just one here and there." I have no one in my home who loves the truth; but I do, and I keep the standard high. I find the way getting narrower, yet we have not resisted unto blood. I thank my heavenly Father for His love and care, and I often say, "What can I render unto Him for all His benefits to me?" Dear brethren, I am poor in this world's goods, but, bless His Name, rich in faith. . . . My trials are many, but as I read Psalms 34:18,19 I am comforted. Where can we go to get such promises? He tells us to hold fast. Lord grant us grace to "hold fast." We all need more of that spirit of love. "A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another." Dear brethren, love will be the overcoming test. Accept my love for you all. May He grant you all, that promise in Psalm 32:8.

Your sister by His grace, Mrs. A. M. -- Scot.

Dear Sirs:

Enclosed find one dollar for which please send me your paper, "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom"; also send me a list of your books and pamphlets. As money is scarce I can't order them now, but want to as soon as possible.

By chance I had the opportunity to read one of your leaflets, "Where are the dead?" and became so interested would like to have more, also would like to have the pamphlet that shows the Bible teaching respecting our Lord's return. Send me the price of these and I will send it to you as soon as I can.

Respectfully yours,

J. H. R. -- Tex.

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

VOL. XI. June 15, 1928 No. 12

THE INSTITUTE'S ANNUAL REPORT

IT IS with deep gratitude and profound recognition of the Lord's providential leading that we summarize and lay before the brethren the result of their labor and ours in the work of the Lord and in the ministry of the Truth. "It is required of a steward that he be found faithful," says the Apostle; and the Lord's people in general, those who have given over their talents and all to Him may be regarded as "stewards of the manifold grace of God." It is His approval that we all crave, and therefore it is our hope that as He reviews the results of our united efforts during the year, we have His smile in connection with the same.

At the Threshold of the Morning

Considering, that our co-operation together in this ministry relates to the spiritual life and upbuilding of the people of God in the faith that was once delivered unto the saints, it is recognized that we should look for our refreshment of spirit and encouragement in connection with these annual reports, along the lines of spiritual results, in observing how the Lord has graciously continued His providential care and granted His sustaining grace by which a goodly number of brethren have been enabled to press on, holding fast to the faith while they have earnestly endeavored to show forth the works and fruits of the Spirit in their daily battle in the Narrow Way. These results we look for as ground for renewed confidence and courage rather than the results of outward show in the way of an increase of numbers, or in being able to show immense finds with which to do a great work, etc.

We believe the Master would say to His followers today as He did when He sojourned with them in the flesh: "Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear." As a result of this seeing and hearing we realize that the word of reconciliation has been committed to the Lord's people from the beginning of the Age, with the object in view of choosing out of the world those who shall become fitted and qualified to constitute the Bride of God's dear Son. The fact, however, that we have not been commissioned to convert large numbers of humanity and effect a general transformation in the world should not be allowed to cool our ardor or hinder our zeal in witnessing to the Divine Message. In the face of apparent failure and defeat, Jesus said; "To this end was I born; and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." Evidently it is this implicit faith in God and loyalty to Him under all circumstances that continues steadfast against many odds and in the face of unfavorable conditions, that the Lord is specially seeking and favoring.

As the Lord's people thus come together year by year, there is the occasion for them to be reminded of the fact that they are marching nearer and nearer to the great consummation of all their blessed hopes. St. Paul endeavored to encourage brethren in his time by having them look onward by faith to the approaching day of deliverance and victory. He said, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand, let us put off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light." And are not his words of equal force, indeed of greater import, to the consecrated today, in view of all the array of testimony before us to the effect that we are very near to the close of the nighttime and are at the threshold of the morning? Truly, therefore, we have fresh and substantial reasons for keeping awake and lifting up the head with hope and confidence today, in the realization of the fact that the long promised salvation of the Church and the world is near at hand.

As the brethren have labored together throughout another year, they have earnestly endeavored to keep before their minds what is their real mission and chief object in this ministry, namely that of edifying and building up fellow members of the Body of Christ, of provoking one another unto love and good works. Throughout the New Testament the Lord's people are time after time assured that God's will concerning them is their sanctification, and that the chief business of faithful disciples of Christ is to spend and be spent in the service of truth and righteousness, which evidently signifies that they are to both live the truth in their daily experiences as well as preach it by word and by pen to the extent of their time and ability.

High and Exalted Privileges

The spirit of the true Church was to be indeed evangelical: "Go ye and teach all nations," said Jesus. From the New Testament records we learn that the early Church was imbued with this spirit. It was definitely set forth that the Church was to be the repository of the Truth, "the pillar and ground of the Truth." Again, we note the Apostle's instructions, "Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men. For as much as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart."

Considering then how high and exalted are the privileges of the faithful in Christ in thus being ambassadors for God, they realize truly that there is a holy solemnity and carefulness that should be associated in the conduct and lives of all who make that profession. Experience clearly makes manifest that only those who are in vital union with Christ by faith and by full consecration to Him, realize and feel the power daily impelling them to faithfulness in bearing testimony to the Truth. They realize increasingly the importance of this thought, that with all their preaching and united efforts to spread the Truth, the Lord would have them give first consideration to their own spiritual necessities, and earnestly hearken to His Word and admonitions respecting their own sanctification and preparedness through the development of the character of Christ, to be vessels fit for the Master's use. If our daily communion with God is such as to prompt us to careful and devout living and conduct, then will our testimony to others concerning our God and His message of Truth be all the more effective and acceptable to Him.

The Ministry of the Herald

The friends who are participants with us in this movement and association, realize that of our resources, "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom," comes first as a means of doing good, of ministering to the requirements and needs of the Lord's people in these days. God's children in these times, perhaps more than at any other time in the Age, need to feed upon the Word of the Lord, need the message of encouragement, need the illumination of the Spirit and to be assisted in understanding the meaning of the Lord's providences and what is His will concerning His people under the present trying circumstances. The Apostle earnestly admonished the brethren in his day, saying, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together," well knowing that in so far as the brethren should mingle together in Christian fellowship, prayer, and praise, they would be availing themselves of this divinely provided means of keeping the fires of their love and zeal brightly burning. But it has fallen to

the lot of some throughout the Age, to be isolated and alone, and this is the situation with many at the present time. In fact, taken as a whole, throughout the world, a considerable number of the friends do not have the advantage of meeting regularly with a Class of the brethren. It is in view of these peculiar circumstances that the visits of "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom," seem most appropriate and seasonable. Through the messages of this journal there is kept up this continual contact with other minds. We are assured the various subjects dealt with and the Scriptural views presented have the effect of stirring up the pure minds of the friends by way of remembrance and of assisting to stimulate their faith, hope, and courage. Again, the spirit of our time seems to be that of running after that which is novel and new; accordingly new ideas, new interpretations; new theories, are constantly being advanced and spread before the friends everywhere, and the test upon the Lord's people is one that makes manifest who is really established in the Truth, rooted and grounded therein, and who is willing to be carried about with every wind of doctrine.

Those who have been carefully reading "The Herald," we believe will recognize that the Editorial Committee have constantly given encouragement in the direction of advancing into further light and in the knowledge of the Lord. Progress has been the order of all the ages. God's servants and children have been permitted to understand His purposes increasingly down the stream of time, and this is truly the spirit of the entire Bible. Accordingly, admonitions have frequently appeared in "The Herald," directing the attention of the reader to the need of making progress in the school of Christ, and of endeavoring to see more clearly the Truth as it relates to one or another of the features of the Divine Plan, that thereby the work of grace in the heart and the sanctification of the Spirit may be promoted.

Need of Giving Heed to Sound Doctrine

However, words of caution have also been given lest we, instead of advancing in the light, should be found of the Lord being led astray and away from the great and vital things that concern our salvation. If the Church of Christ needed to be admonished in the Apostolic period to seek and follow only that which was sound doctrine, surely we should carefully consider and make sure that we are today engaged in appropriating to ourselves only that which is clearly demonstrated to be well established Truth, even as the Apostle admonished Timothy, "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and of which thou art fully, assured."

The brethren who have been entrusted with the work of preparing the matter that appears in our journal have earnestly sought the Lord's guidance, and they desire to present only that which will be found to be profitable, edifying and uplifting spiritually. And though they are aware that there is room for improvement in one way or another, and though they doubt not that there are others who might render this service just as efficiently, or more so, yet, the Lord has been pleased to grant much encouragement during the past year, as from all parts of the world the letters tell how much the brethren have been helped and renewed in spirit as they have perused the pages of our journal. We may safely say that during no year since the commencement of this movement have we received so many warm expressions of appreciation of what is published in "The Herald" as have come to us during the past year. Our regular list of subscribers, which is steadily increasing, from various parts of the world, contains those who we feel sure are to the best of their

ability seeking to know the Lord better and to assist fellow members of His Body as best they are able.

Repeating what has been already stated a number of times in our journal, provision is made whereby all who desire the visits of "The Herald" may have them whether they have the means to pay or not. Though the journal is being published at a continual loss, so far as the financial viewpoint is concerned, the cost of its production being more than twice the subscription price charged, nevertheless, we are permitted to draw from the fund that is supported by contributions which are for the cause in general. We do not wish to annoy any of the friends with regard to their subscription, but in order to comply with the postal regulations we are required to remove the names of those who do not specify that they wish their subscription renewed. This will explain why a slip is placed in the issue of expiration, indicating the situation. In order to give time to hear from this notice, two more issues are mailed before the name is removed. It will greatly facilitate our arrangements therefore if the friends will promptly indicate their desire when their subscription expires. The one thought we have is that all lovers of the Truth should have the advantage of the regular visits of "The Herald."

Ministries of Pilgrim Brethren

It is truly gratifying to be able to express considerable encouragement along the line of the lecturing or preaching services, otherwise known as the Pilgrim branch of the ministry. Several brethren have been enabled to devote a good portion of their time to this branch of the ministry during the past year; two brethren in particular have given nearly all of their time in this service. The principal portions of the United States and Canada have been covered by these pilgrimages, with the result that a large number of Classes have been visited, some of them several times. In these travels and visits of the brethren are included stops at places where perhaps there is only one or two of the interested residing.

In addition to the travels and ministry of brethren above mentioned, some twelve or fifteen others whose circumstances will not permit devoting all their time in the service, have been serving more or less locally to good advantage on Sundays, going out to points not far distant from where they can return home Sunday evening or early Monday morning. We have received excellent reports from all of these ministries; in fact, the Institute is receiving most encouraging messages constantly from the Pilgrim visits; and suggestions especially from brethren isolated and located in remote districts that they would appreciate more frequent visits by a brother who might minister to them in holy things. Like other lines of service open to us, we recognize that there is room for much more to be accomplished in the way of capable brethren visiting the Classes and imparting the word of comfort and cheer to their edification. The means placed in the hands of the brethren in charge, of course, more or less regulate the extensiveness of this branch, while at the same time the number of brethren who are really qualified and have the opportunity of thus serving is quite limited. We might add that during the past few months in particular we have been communicating with some of the brethren of different Classes -- brethren of some ability as servants to the Church; and suggesting our desire to co-operate upon a little larger scale; and that they consider the proposition of making Sunday visits to Classes not too far distant, and take part in this line of the ministry that has been specially blessed of the Lord ever since the days of the primitive

Church. Some are considering the suggestion favorably and it is hoped that still others may see their privilege of ministering to the spiritual needs of the Lord's flock in a larger, way. The following is a summary of the Pilgrim branch for the past year:

Miles traveled 38,259
Meetings held 607
Total attendance 10,511

Fellowship through the Mails

It is recognized, of course, that the sending forth of a journal twice a month, together with the preaching services of various brethren here and there, and additionally, the mailing out of books and pamphlets to all parts, would produce considerable of correspondence. There is mutual encouragement in this contact with many of the friends by letter. Some avail themselves of this privilege freely and others are heard from less frequently. Letters come to us from all parts of the world; some making inquiry along one line or another of the Truth, others expressing desire for assistance in applying the teachings of the Word to the affairs of daily life; while others are in the nature of business correspondence. Perhaps we can safely add that during the past year a larger number than during any previous year of our ministry, have become awakened to the unhappy and unprofitable conditions and circumstances of the association in which they have been trying to serve God. Receiving a sample copy of a tract or Herald or one of the Volumes, they have been attracted by the message and made to feel that there is something better for them in the spiritual life than that with which they have been struggling. Very frequently messages are received from these dear ones, and the Lord's guidance is earnestly sought whereby they may be wisely assisted and helped into an appreciation of the fullness of the liberty and blessings that there are in Christ Jesus our Lord. Great indeed are the opportunities God has given His people in these days, in that all His dear children are afforded this means of fellowship and communion through the mails, in a manner that was not possible in earlier times. Number of letters received, 4,304: Number of letters sent out, 5,735.

Conferences On Holy Things

The past year has been one during which several conventions have been held and it is truly encouraging to observe that the convention spirit, the disposition of the friends to assemble and commune together respecting the things that appertain to their faith and hope; is on the increase. We have had the privilege of assisting and endeavoring to encourage the friends in these conferences held in different parts of the country. Some of these gatherings have been reported in "The Herald," but we are sure that they have all been seasons of much refreshment to the inner man. The characteristic feature of these conferences has been that of singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs and making melody in the heart unto the Lord. It is to be observed that the brethren more and more realize the sore need of one another's assistance, the need of one another's encouragement All have their severe reverses, trials of faith, .and these seasons of spiritual communion are one of the best means of assisting the brethren to rise above their troubles and to gain a position of advantage over their besetments. Then, too, the ministry of the Divine Word at these gatherings is generally along lines peculiarly fitting to the tines and experiences of God's people, and is such as to strengthen them for the

warfare of the Narrow Way. We earnestly urge the friends to make greater effort if possible to have a share in the convention blessings.

The Message Heralded Through the Printed Page

We have continued to recommend to the brethren everywhere the distribution of free literature, as we all know that preaching the Gospel story through the printed page has been a method greatly blessed of the Lord in modern times; and so continues to be amongst the most effective ways of presenting the Truth. The Lord's children are still richly blessed with privileges of service along this, line. The office of the Institute is continually hearing from newly interested persons who have had their interest aroused by one or another of the free pamphlets. It is a delight, of course, to follow up this interest by a letter of encouragement. These newly interested inquirers frequently become "Herald" subscribers, and secure "The Divine Plan of the Ages," and thus progress into a fuller understanding of the Lord's will and purpose. These remarks we make desiring to share the encouragement with those who are making use of their opportunities in distributing the free tracts. The second page of "The Herald" frequently contains a suggestion as to the various kinds of tracts that we have on hand, and all are urged to order as many of these as they can place where there is reason for believing they may be read. While a good many of the friends have been availing themselves of the privilege of the tract distribution, we believe that many more could be exercising this privilege and thus be letting their light shine, in fulfillment of the great commission that Jesus gave His disciples, that they should witness to the Truth everywhere; even unto the end of the Age.

The Divine Plan of the Ages

As our regular readers are aware, "The Divine Plan of the Ages," published by the Institute, being an exact reprint of the First Volume of "Studies in the Scriptures," by Brother Russell, is available to all. We regret to report, however, that not as many as we could wish are making use of this very excellent means of spreading the Truth of the Lord's name and goodness. Yet surely there is no better and no more comprehensive statement of the truth of the Divine purposes than that which this volume presents. It seems difficult to imagine how it could be improved upon; and especially in this day when infidelity is making such inroads upon Christian people of all denominations. Let us, dear brethren, be more aroused if possible to a sense of our responsibility toward the Truth as contained in this book that has been the means of enlightening and satisfying the longings of so many people.

The Apocalypse and the Book of Daniel

From our correspondence, we are assured that the two volumes of the exposition of Revelation are quite generally made use of amongst the friends to their further encouragement and spiritual uplift. Those who are most interested and appreciative of the truths set forth in this exposition are of course active in circulating the volumes, in calling the attention of others to the special blessings which these volumes contain. Some report to us that they are making an individual study of the matter, others advise of how, as a Class they have a regular study of the Revelation, and give assurance that they are realizing the blessing promised. (Rev. 1:3.) And this is as we would reasonably expect at this time when it is recognized that so many of the Revelation visions have been fulfilled and are matters of history; the recognition of this fact cannot be otherwise than stimulating to the faith and hope of the brethren.

The exposition of the prophecy of Daniel just recently published, entitled, "Daniel the Beloved of Jehovah," is being well received by the friends. What we have said with regard to the Revelation exposition is largely true of this work on Daniel, especially as there, is a close relationship between the Apocalypse and Daniel's prophecies. Both appertain to the history of the Church and the world, and portray those events particularly that have to do with the transfer of earth's sovereignty from Satan to Christ. Realizing that we are already in the midst of these stirring scenes, the brethren who are alert and watching today recognize increasingly the importance, of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation.

Brethren of Other Lands

It is a source of genuine encouragement at this time to realize that the theme, the Message the truths that so refresh and gladden the hearts of God's children in this land, are being enjoyed and are equally appreciated by the people of God in various other countries of the earth. And this is according to the Word of the Lord, that His message of truth and grace, calling attention to the one Lord, the one faith, and the one baptism, has the one effect wherever it finds the proper soil of the good and honest heart. Thus the ministry of our Institute includes a good list of names of the faithful in Christ Jesus in various other countries. The correspondence from these is of an encouraging nature, and the assistance and co-operation received is indeed warmly appreciated. Foremost amongst these, of course, are the brethren of Great Britain and Australia, the population of which, similar to our own land, is made up principally of English speaking people. Some are co-operating with our Institute in an individual way and others more unitedly or as groups of friends desirous of having a share in the work of bearing the message of comfort to others. We may properly name the following countries as those to whom "The Herald" is mailed regularly and from whom we have general correspondence: Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, France, Scandinavia, Holland, Denmark, Germany, Finland, India, South Africa, South America and British West Indies. In many respects the circumstances with brethren in these lands are much the same as they are with us in America. Similar to our brethren here, they have their discouragements and besetments. Indeed the Christian life and warfare are practically the same no matter in what part of the earth one may be dwelling. It is one continual struggle and battle against selfishness and sin, in many forms as well as against the powerful forces of evil presided over by the great Adversary of

God and man. Truly, how earnestly the Lord's people look forward to the day of deliverance, when the great change shall come and the darkness be scattered!

It is encouraging to learn from time to time that there are brethren in various of these countries who to the extent that they are able, engage in translating some of the literature, such as some of "The Herald" articles or the Revelation exposition, into their own language that thus the people may have the greater advantage of the Truth. Our dear Brother Lauper of Degersheim, Switzerland, is still engaged in sending out the German "Herald" containing principally the matter that appears in our journal. The spirit of co-operation and the zealous endeavors of others in other countries and far-off lands give much encouragement, and we are sure that their own hearts are richly blessed in the same.

"He Must Increase but I Must Decrease"

In reviewing these various items and resources of this ministry today; it is recognized that our united efforts and endeavors seem feeble and small. Still we are admonished not to despise the day of small things; and inasmuch as what is being done seems to us in line with the Lord's purpose and such as He has led us to reasonably expect under these circumstances, we content ourselves and render thanks to Him for the little share we have had in ministering to His cause and His people. From time to time we have been impressed to feel that the endeavors and ministry of the Lord's people in these latter times need not be expected to result in the creation of a strong and imposing movement amongst men; however, to whatever extent it may please the Lord to increase the abilities and privileges of the brethren to serve the Truth and to assist a larger number of the friends in these times to understand more clearly the way and will of the Lord, we should surely want to be found of the Lord worthy of such increased opportunities and honors in His service. We recall the statement made by John the Baptist in the days of our Lord here on earth -- of Jesus and His ministry then, he said, "He must increase, but I must decrease"; thus indicating that he expected a curtailing of his own work, while that of Jesus and His Apostles was to enlarge and expand. If we are to apply the lesson to the present time and consider that John the Baptist prefigured the last members of the Christ in the flesh and their testimony, and that Jesus and His disciples represented Christ and the work in the glorified state at the present time, the inference would then be that we might expect a decrease of opportunities of service and ministry for the Church in the flesh, and an enlargement and increase of activities and ministry on the part of the Christ in glory. The spirit of love and loyalty toward God, of zeal for the Truth, and the giving of a testimony thereto, will prompt all faithful disciples of Christ to zealously labor and do with their might what their hands find to do, to strive as far as possible for increased privileges in the Master's service and leave for Him to indicate in His own time and way, by His providences or what not, the matter of decreasing and closing down the work of the Church in the flesh. Faithfulness to duty and to God must continue to be the watchword of all of God's children, for He has admonished even from the beginning of the Age, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

ANNUAL MEETING

THE tenth annual meeting of the Pastoral Bible Institute held on June the 2nd, was an occasion of profitable and happy fellowship in the Lord. The meeting was opened with devotional services at 2 p. m. The usual order of proceedings was followed out -- general reports of the Institute, that of the Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer were read, and after opportunity was given 'or discussion and suggestions, were approved by the members. Further opportunity was then given to take up any new business, and the brethren were asked to make any remarks in the nature of friendly or constructive criticism or to offer any suggestions with regard to the various features of the work, that they might think profitable. Several of the friends took advantage of this opportunity and expressed themselves freely; various suggestions and friendly criticisms were heard and discussed in the spirit of brotherly love, the results of which, it should seem, were to mutual advantage. Following these discussions, balloting for directors to serve the ensuing year resulted in the re-election of the brethren who constituted the directorate for the year past, the names of which appeared in the May 15th issue of "The Herald."

The brethren whose administration of the affairs of the Institute thus had the endorsement of the members once more, give thanks to the Lord for the privilege of co-operation in the ministry of the greatest of all messages. The brethren who had been serving as officers of the Board were also re-elected, including the same brethren who had been serving on the Editorial committee, whose names appear on the second page of each issue of our journal. In taking up these positions of service again, the brethren desire the earnest prayers of the friends everywhere, realizing that there is a solemn responsibility attaching to every endeavor to handle the holy things. Each of these brethren feels very weak in his own strength. Their fervent desire is to serve the Lord and His cause in any and every way that may be pleasing to Him; and to this end they will much appreciate the co-operation and assistance of all other co-laborers in the Master's vineyard. It is a pleasure to assure the brethren that the conferences of the trustees held from time to time are in the nature of spiritual fellowship meetings. Considerable time is devoted to prayer, and each occasion is a time of deep and personal self-examination, that anything in the nature of pride, ambition, selfishness, and roots of bitterness may be put away, and that their own spirit may be chastened and brought into subjection to the mind of Christ. Thus in the counsels of these conferences the blessing of the Holy Spirit is constantly invoked, that responsibilities may be discharged with a clear and unselfish vision.

The convention associated with the, annual meeting also proved to be a continual Jove feast and enjoyment of the contemplation of spiritual things. The convention really commenced Saturday morning prior to the business meeting. An address of welcome, followed by a discourse, was listened to with deep interest and profit. Saturday evening two further sessions, which were given over to discourses were refreshing. There were meetings all day Sunday, commencing about 10 o'clock and lasting till 8:30 in the evening, during which there were upwards of 100 present. A Praise and testimony meeting and four discourses made up this day's exercises, which according to many warm expressions of appreciation, had the effect of stirring up the minds of the friends by way of remembrance, and in causing them to be much edified in spirit and strengthened in the inner man to press on in the fulfillment of the duties and responsibilities which appertain to making their calling and election sure. "God be with you till we meet again," was the closing hymn of the day, which brought before the vision of all, that glorious

day of Christ when all the faithful shall be assembled in the presence of the great King.

STATEMENT OF AUDITORS

Brooklyn, N. Y., June 2, 1928.

To whom it may concern: _

The undersigned auditors, appointed by the Ecclesias of Brooklyn, Springfield, and Utica, have examined the accounts of the Pastoral Bible Institute for the year ending May 15, 1928. We find the books well kept! all necessary vouchers on file; and balances to agree with the Treasurer's report.

(Signed) G. W. Jeffrey
G. E. Miller
A. N. Dougherty

TREASURER'S FINANCIAL STATEMENT

May 15, 1927 to May 15, 1928

Balance on hand May 15, 1927 \$4,895.12

Receipts during the year:

Tract Fund \$6,845.96

Herald Subscriptions 2,794.42

Revelation Volumes 420.33

Daniel Volumes 815.42

Volume 1 59.00

Bibles, Mottoes, etc. 511.05

Rentals 565.00 12,011.18

\$16,906.30

Disbursements during year:

Herald Expense \$5,353.66

Free Literature 288.20

Pilgrim Expense 2,481.13

Office Expense 690.16

Revelation Volume Expense 1,184.10

Daniel Volume Expense 1,831.76

Bible, Mottoes, etc. 830.54

Administrative Expense 254.50

Maintenance of Property 1,667.50 14,581.85

Balance on hand, May 15, 1928 \$ 2,324.45

LOVE'S IMPELLING INSPIRATION

"He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love . . .

And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." -- 1 John 4:8, 16

ST. JOHN, the Apostle of love, in the above language makes one of the strongest appeals to the brethren to form proper conceptions and estimates as

to the value and greatness of the quality of love. Love is of God, he says, and therefore we ought to love one another. Moreover, he affirms that every one that really loves, is begotten of God and knoweth God. Likewise, the reverse is also true . . . he that loveth not, knoweth not God. And since God is love, he that dwelleth in God, dwells in love. What greater inspiration could the Word of God afford us, to long for and seek the possession of this charming quality that so beautifully adorns the Divine character and is playing such an important part in God's great redemptive purpose! He therefore that loveth, that dwells in love -- who in his contemplations, motives, and purposes is living in love, conducting himself according to love's direction and dictates, such an one can be truly said to dwell in God. He dwells in God in the sense that he is dwelling in, living in, the grace and smile and favor of God. Such a condition and state of life means supreme love to God, which places the will and Word of the Lord paramount, not only to our own will, but also to the wills of others, and thus makes us loyal to the King of kings and Lord of lords in the highest sense of the word and in every affair of life.

Those who are really having their existence in the power and atmosphere of love, are making others around them feel it, for the law of love so operates toward our fellow men that it leads us to consider and think in their behalf and to do good unto all as we have opportunity, but especially, in keeping with the Divine program for the present time, to the household of faith. It has been truly said that love is the light and sunshine of life. This is true because we have been so constituted in the image and likeness of God, with the capacity of appreciating love and responding to it when it is caused to shine upon our way from the life and heart of another that possesses it. The one who has found the pearl of great price, who has experienced the joys of salvation and has been brought nigh to the Lord, will feel the impelling power of love directing him to carry the message of truth and grace to others, that they may be made to enjoy the same gracious benefits; for love rejoices in having others share its treasures and joys of Divine grace.

God First Loved Us

In the commandments given to Israel of old, God forbade them to indulge in acts or to deal with one another in any manner that would do harm or cause injury. But as we consider the office and power of love as it should operate in followers of Christ, we recognize that love not only would not kill the neighbor nor steal from the neighbor, but that it would hinder us from speaking evil of the neighbor, from stabbing him with slander and from stealing from him a good name which is more to him than his purse. It is recognized, too, that love would not only utterly repudiate and contradict and hinder such conduct, but on the reverse it would lead us to be kind; gentle, patient, forgiving, merciful, not only to them that love us and who are gentle and kind to us, but also as our Master explained, to the unkind; to the unthankful, to enemies who injure us and who say all manner of evil against us falsely. "Love suffereth long and is kind."

Under the present existing conditions of human depravity, weakness, sin, etc., the manifestation of love in the direction of mercy, sympathy, and compassion is most necessary. And true indeed it is, as the Apostle affirms, love covers a multitude of sins. God's redemptive program, though founded upon justice, because justice is the foundation of His throne, has been inspired and is being executed and carried forward by love's impelling inspiration, as the poet has truly said,

"Twas love that first contrived the way
To save rebellious man."

Thus we have the great and sublime example of our Heavenly Father before us in respect to the marvelous exhibition of love. It was not that we first loved God that He was drawn toward us and was prompted to provide redemption; rather, as the Apostle suggests, God first loved us and was prompted to give His only begotten Son that we might be delivered and be given an opportunity to renounce sin and return to our Father's house. The Savior as He appeared in sacrificial form was thus God's manifestation of love to the children of men; and He who thus undertook to be man's Redeemer in presenting Himself in sacrificial offering, likewise shared the Father's love, mercy, and compassion toward the human race; it was love prompting the Master to lay down His life. It was love that inspired sympathy, forbearance, and patience toward His enemies, who so cruelly contradicted and brought about the tragedy of the cross.

Love Stays the Tongue from Smiting Others

And so must it be with those whom God is choosing to be joined with His dear Son in sacrifice and who shall be made partakers with Him of His glory and share the great exaltation of the Millennial Kingdom. Calling attention thus to what Jesus was caused to do as a result of the love of God dwelling in Him, the Apostle admonishes the brethren, saying, so ought we to lay down our lives for others. And He appeals continually to the Church to seek for and exhibit the love of Christ in its fullness, in all the affairs and ways of life.

Love and its resultant fruitage, mercy, take hold upon the heart, the sentiments, the affections, and should ultimately permeate every channel of life. Love, mercifulness, would extend not only to the household of faith and our own family households, and to our neighbors, but also to the dumb animals. The man who has accepted love (mercy) as the ruling and controlling principle of life, the law of his covenant with God, which is to control in every act and word and thought, will be loving (merciful) toward his horse, toward his dog, his chickens -- toward everything with which he has to do. And if love (mercy) would restrain him from whipping his horse unmercifully, and if it would lead him to provide amply for the sustenance and comfort of the dumb creatures under his care, will not the same spirit of love extend also along to higher lines of the family, and lead him to be thoughtful of the comfort and welfare of all the human beings under his care, in matters both spiritual and temporal? And if it would stay his hand from smiting his beast an unnecessary blow, would it not much more stay his or her tongue from smiting the hearts and feelings of humanity with whom he or she may come in contact, with needlessly sharp, cutting words, irony, sarcasm, etc. -- or still worse, with the poisoned blade of slander and suspicion and evil suggestion and surmise?

And all of this which applies to the beast, to the home circle and family, applies with equal or still more force to the family of God, the Church; hence the Apostle urges that evil speaking, bitterness, anger, wrath, malice, hatred, strifes, envyings, which are all parts of the old nature, the nature of the world and of the devil, be put away. These are to be supplanted by the new spirit of Christ, in harmony with the law of the New Creation -- Love -- with its gentleness, meekness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness. "If these things be in you and abound they shall make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore, the rather; brethren, give diligence [to the cultivation of these graces] to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." -- 2 Pet. 1:8-11.

Progress Only in the Power of the Master's Spirit

He who finds his heart not in harmony with this new commandment, love -- mercy, kindness, gentleness, goodness -- lacks the evidence of proof that he is in any sense of the word accepted as a son of God, and a joint-heir with Christ. If he have not this spirit of love, he will find it impossible to go far in the footsteps of the Master, for the sacrifice of Christ was not vain-glorious, not for outward show, not for honor of men, but prompted by love toward

God and men. Similarly will it be with all of us; if we do not have the love of Christ truly shed abroad in our hearts, that love for the brethren that will be on the alert to exhibit itself in thoughts and acts of patience, and sympathy, it is an evidence that we do not possess the power of the Holy Spirit in that measure that will enable us to perform the terms of our covenant of sacrifice and be faithful unto death. Under the severe tests and ordeals that the Lord will permit to come, there will be a manifestation of the lack of love, evidence that selfishness has the upper hand and is showing itself by really taking control of the situation. It becomes manifest to all who travel the Narrow Way that if they would succeed in making any degree of progress, it must be in the power of the Master's spirit; in the spirit of self-sacrifice, unselfishness, and love; and this is what it is to walk in His footsteps. And the Apostle truly reasons, "He that saith, I love God, and hateth his brother, is a liar. He that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" Very logically do the Scriptures therefore place love toward God and fellow brethren as amongst the proofs of our having been begotten from above and of our being in true and acceptable relationship with our Divine Master.

This Law in Practical Operation

Love of the brethren does not mean merely love for a faction, or clique, or for some of the brethren who have natural qualities which we admire. It means love for all who have accepted the covenant of sacrifice, and are seeking to walk by the Golden Rule of live. It means that if some have peculiarities of natural development and disposition, which are discordant to our ideas and sentiments, nevertheless, we will love and cherish them, and cheerfully serve them, because they are trusting in the Lord, and have been accepted of Him, and have adopted the law of their covenant of sacrifice, the royal law of liberty and life, as their standard. We thenceforth know them not after the flesh with its peculiarities and knots and twists, but after the new nature, as "new creatures." It means also that each of us in proportion as we discover our own natural crooks and twists, which are contrary to the law of love, will seek to get rid of these imperfections of the flesh as rapidly as we may be able by the Lord's grace, and to make them as little obtrusive and offensive to others as possible.

From this standpoint love will not be forever noting the defects of the various members of the Body of Christ, nor holding them up to ridicule and scorn of others; but each will be, as far as possible, fully, as anxious to cover the defects of others as to cover his own defects; and to sympathize with others in their conflicts with their besetments, as he sympathizes with himself, and desires that the Lord shall sympathize with him, hi his own conflict with his own imperfections, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ [the disposition of Christ, love]. he is none of His." -- Rom. 8:9.

So Also Is the Body of Christ

The figure of the human body which St. Paul uses to illustrate the oneness, unity, and sympathy of the Church of Christ is perhaps one of the most forceful and impressive that could possibly be employed. Because every one recognizes how directly connected and associated are all the members of the human system; of how it is the one blood stream and one system of nerves that permeates the entire body, thus establishing a bond of sympathy, of feeling, that completely unite every part of the body, so that it is as the

Apostle says, "When one member suffer, all suffer." And there is the constant disposition of the various members to protect, to nourish and strengthen one another that the general life and health of the entire being be preserved in the best possible order. So also is Christ -- at least so should it be with those who compose the mystical Body of Christ. We are told that there is but the one Body; and that there is but the one spirit, the one hope and the one faith for all the members of the Body; that all are called in one hope of their calling and that thus there should be the spirit of mutual helpfulness, the disposition on the part of all the members to sympathize with, nourish and strengthen one another and so preserve the spiritual health and best interests of the entire Body.

No wonder the Apostle points out that where there is disorder or schism in the Body it is an evidence that all is not right; that to some extent there is weakness and spiritual disease and an evidence that, the Body is not functioning as it should: In other words, that there is a lack of the Holy Spirit, the spirit of love, the spirit of patience, gentleness and brotherly kindness. The remedy therefor is in coming to the Lord and seeking fresh supplies of His grace and the power of His spirit whereby the normal condition of oneness and unity may be attained.

The object of the present call of the Church, in advance of the world's opportunity to share in the benefits and privileges of Christ's death, is to select in advance, not those who are perfect, not those who are the copies of God's dear Son, but those who desire and will seek to become copies of God's dear Son, "conformed to the image of His Son." That image is love itself, for as God is love, so Christ's character is love, the express image of the Father. This is the mold into which we are to be fashioned. But God will not impress us into this mold, He will not force upon us these lines of character; rather, the only influences which He exerts to this end are the "exceeding great and precious promises; that by these we might become partaker of the Divine nature" and impress upon ourselves the Divine character of love, and thus escape the corruption, that is in the world through selfishness, or rather, we are to keep ourselves in the love of God while He causes the pressure of all things to deeply engrave it upon us. -- Jude 21.

The Supreme Test Upon the Church

It would seem that if the supreme and final test upon the Church of Christ would be along any one line, it would be in the direction of love for God and for the brethren in the faith: Indeed, all the circumstances as we are permitted to observe them in our time, clearly indicate that the brethren everywhere today are being sorely tested along these important lines. It is recalled in this connection that the Savior in the closing hours of His earthly career took occasion to admonish His disciples particularly with regard to the importance of the exercise of the brotherly spirit. He spoke of the new commandment of love and urged that His followers copy His example, "That ye love one another as I have loved you."

It need not astonish us that the Lord directs that, we love, one another, but we may stand amazed with the thought contained in the words, "as I have loved you." How can we love one another with the same love which the Lord has for each of us? is our first inquiry. The reply is, that this is impossible at first, but as we become more and more filled with the Spirit of the Lord and receive of the wisdom from above, we approximate more nearly to this standard of perfect love to all that are His, a love that not only would refuse

to do injury to another, but a love which would delight to do good to a brother, yea, to do good at the expense of one's own time and convenience. It was thus that Jesus loved us all and redeemed us with His precious blood, and to whatever extent we grow in grace, knowledge, and love of Him, in that same proportion we are Christians and have a Christlike love. This love is the fulfilling of the law, and whoever has such a love for the brethren will have undoubtedly a full sympathetic love for the whole groaning creation and will be glad to do now the little that is possible to be done on their behalf and doubly glad that the Lord in His own good time and pleasure has a great and wonderful blessing for every member of the fallen race.

Strife, Intolerance and Sectarianism Evince Lack of Love

How evident it is, however, that it is essential for the Lord's people to, go further and beyond the mere theory of love. Some one has said, "Do not imagine that you have got these things because you know how to get them. As well try to feed upon a cook book." There is a good and profitable thought here: It is important that we should know of and about love; it is important that we should know various matters and understand much about the Lord's Plan and appreciate the principles laid down in His Word; but though we had all knowledge it would not benefit us unless we used it. We must then think not only of getting the benefit of the Lord's gracious provisions by learning how to get them, but we must take the necessary steps -- see that we are fully His, that we are living close to Him; that we are daily experiencing in our hearts and lives the power of the love of Christ, that we are fruit-bearers -- and are thus abiding in His love, in the Father's love, in the love for one another, which He has enjoined.

As we go back into the history of the Church, we observe that the general failure of God's professing people has been along the line of insufficiency of love. The strife and intolerance, the factionalism and sectarianism all speak eloquently of the sad lack of the love of Christ. Had there been a greater amount of the Spirit of the Lord and the power of love, professing brethren in Christ would not have been so willing to divide themselves into various sects and parties, and to carry on a warfare one against another. But sad to say, this same spirit, this same manifest lack of brotherly love is found in our midst, even in these days when the Church of Christ is on the very threshold of the Kingdom. We still have the spirit of intolerance, we still seem disposed toward dissension and strife over matters that are non-essential, and the spirit of intolerance to a large extent occupies the place that should be accorded Christ-likeness and the spirit of love.

Those Who Purchase Bitter Disappointment

Truly, there is need in these days for all who name the name of Christ, to hear and heed the Master's kindly admonition, "that ye love one another as I have loved you." There is need for all to consider deeply the lessons that come to us both from God's revelation and from life's experiences, and to recognize that many of the items and matters over which we have been disposed to make so much at times and which become the occasion for intolerance to enter in, are really of comparative insignificance along side of those other matters presented in the Word of God as being really essential and fundamental, the greatest of which is love itself. Line upon line and precept upon precept does the Lord appeal to His people to put out of their lives and entirely away from them those things that savor of the carnal life

and that are opposed to love. The Word of the Lord assures us that our inheritance in the great things of eternity depends upon our faithfulness now in undergoing the transformation from selfishness to Christ-likeness.

The matter is left open to us; we can either avail ourselves of these promises and permit them to mold and fashion us according to the copy, little by little, daily and hourly, in thought, in word, and in deed, or we can resist their proper influence, and we can hold the truth in unrighteousness. Those who take the latter course are purchasing for themselves thereby bitter disappointment; for such are not of the kind to whom the Lord will say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." The degree of our devotion to the Lord, therefore, will be indicated in the degree of our love for Him and His; and the measure of our love and devotion will be manifested by our activity in conquering self and its selfishness, in all its ramifications throughout the affairs of life, and in bringing all our thoughts and talents, great or small, into active Service, prompted by love to God and to His people. And such will appreciate the sentiments of the Apostle, when he appeals to the Church to exhibit the self-sacrificing spirit in behalf of fellow members of the Christ.

The Royal Law During the Millennium

These same principles given to govern God's children now will be applicable to a large extent during the Millennial Age; some of the differences between then and now, will be occasioned by the New Covenant which will then be in operation.

First, the Mediator shall then draw or call all men to a knowledge of the grace of God bestowed upon them in the provisions of that New Covenant; whereas now all are not called, but only "Whomsoever the Lord your God shall call," for no man cometh unto the Son now, except the Father who sent the Son draw him. (John 6:44.) Not many great, or wise, or learned, or rich are called.

Second, the acceptance of the New Covenant will be less a matter of faith and more a matter of knowledge than are God's dealings now, because the Lord shall take away the veil of ignorance which now is spread over all the earth and the blinded eyes shall see out of the obscurity. -- Isa. 25 :7 ; 29 :18.

Third, nevertheless it will be equally necessary that each one who would then avail himself of the blessed provisions of the New Covenant shall for himself enter into a positive covenant with the Mediator, that he will obey the law of the New Covenant, love. Love is the voice or command of the great Teacher, who will then stand up with authority, and cause that all the world of mankind shall hear this message. "It shall come to pass that whosoever will not hear [obey] that Prophet shall be cut off from amongst the people." All who will not conform themselves to the law of love, the law of the Millennial Kingdom, shall be cut off in the Second Death.

Fourth, but even in the Millennial Age God will not compel mankind to be conformed to this law. He will compel them to bow to and acknowledge the rule of love, as it is written, "Every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess"; because, when the Kingdom is established, and righteousness is laid to the line, and justice to the plummet, every violation of the law of that Kingdom, the Golden Rule, will meet with swift punishment; to the intent that evil doers shall be afraid, and that the righteous shall flourish. But God

will stifle not impress the law of love upon the hearts of any; He leaves that for each to do for himself, just as at the present time. Each then, as now; must "put away" from his heart selfishness and all of the concomitant evil resulting from sin. Each then, as now, must "cleanse himself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord" (2 Cor. 7:1) ; because God seeketh not such as are merely forced into obedience -- He "seeketh such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth" -- such as love the law of God with all their heart, and who are at warfare with selfishness and sin, especially in themselves.

Love the Final Test Upon All Humanity

Hence we see that at the close of the Millennial Age, after the full opportunity has been granted to the world to have two-fold experience--now, with sin and selfishness, and their misrule and the evil results; and then, with righteousness and love, as their blessed rule of peace and joy -- when all shall have had fullest opportunity to develop in their hearts the spirit of love, then will come a test, a trial, in the close of the Millennial Age, which will prove and demonstrate those whose love and fidelity to the Lord are of the heart, versus those whose obedience has been because of expediency. This trial, we may suppose, will not be a trial to see whether or not they will commit some open and flagrant wrong, but rather like the trial of father Adam in his perfection, a trial along the lines of obedience and disobedience, and whether love has been permitted to rule and take full possession of the heart, with resultant faithfulness to God and every principle of righteousness which would trust the Lord and follow strictly in His way.

The result will be that all of the world who then will not have the spirit of love properly developed, will be cut off in the Second Death, as unfit for eternal life, or unfit to go beyond the Millennium into the grand conditions, respecting which God has promised us that there shall be no more dying, no more sighing, no more crying, no more pain, there; because all the former things shall have passed away -- all the things of sin, and all who have sympathy or love for sin.

The victory in this race is not because of willing, nor for perfect running, yet it is only to him that willeth and that so runneth -- Christ. Thus mercy rejoiceth against justice, yet he that shows no mercy and who thus shows himself lacking in love shall receive no mercy. He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and for such are all the riches of Divine mercy and grace.

THIS ONE THING I DO

HUMAN experience, as well as the Divine Word, attest the importance of concentrating energy upon some one thing if we would achieve the best results.

It was Jesus who said, "No man can serve two masters." Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." It was James who said, "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."

Today the keenest business men of the world are endorsing this teaching of Scripture by applying the principle in their business. In the various trades as now conducted, one man does a part of the work. In the making of shoes, watches, pianos; in fact in everything it is found expedient to subdivide the

work, so that each man may do a certain part only and thus become more proficient. This one thing he does and thus becomes proficient in it..

The same principle is becoming recognized in the higher walks of life. A successful business man not infrequently fails utterly when he attempts to branch out into politics. Where two prizes are aimed at, neither will, be fully achieved. The man who seeks the top-most round of both wealth and politics will fail of one and most likely of both. No man can serve two masters. Recognizing this, we find the successful men pursuing some one object or aim in life.

If this be true as regards earthly things, how much emphasis it places upon the words of Jesus and the Apostles as relating to spiritual things. And not only their words but their lives attest the principle: The words of St. Paul -- "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" -- have only an empty sound until we thoughtfully consider what things he had left behind, and what was now the aim or prize for which he was running. And since we are exhorted to follow his example in the race, it may be well for each to examine himself to see how like or unlike his course is to that of the Apostle.

The Apostle a Master in Israel

Looking back we find that St. Paul had superior advantages and prospects as a man. He had "much learning," having been educated under one of the best teachers of that day, "Gamaliel." Education was more rare then than now and more costly. Consequently, the opportunities and influence of educated men were proportionately greater.

St. Paul was a Doctor of Divinity, or, as they were then called, "Doctor of the Law" -- a member of the Sanhedrin. Being thus a "Master in Israel," all may see that he occupied a place of great influence and dignity among his fellow countrymen. Add to these honors the fact that by birth he inherited "Roman citizenship," and we find a man with brighter prospects than one in ten thousand of his countrymen for gaining a place of pre-eminent distinction either in the State government or in the Jewish Church.

Whether or not the Apostle also inherited wealth we are not informed, but it is reasonable to suppose so. At all events his "Roman citizenship" was worth "a great sum." -- Acts 22:28.

But, summing up all these possessions, the ambitions which they stimulated and the prizes which they pointed out, St. Paul, turned his back on them all when his eye caught sight of the heavenly prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. He counted them all but as dross when compared to the true jewel. It is when reviewing this course of action that he uses the words of our text.

"Whatever things were gain to me, these I have, on account of the Anointed One, esteemed as, a loss. But then, indeed, I esteem all things to be a loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of the Anointed Jesus my Lord; on whose account I suffered the loss of all things and consider them to be vile refuse, so that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him; o know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship [sharing] of His sufferings, being conformed to His death.

"Not that I have already received it, or have been already perfected, but I pursue, if indeed, I may lay hold. on that for which I was laid hold on by

Christ. Brethren, I do not reckon myself to have attained it, but one thing I do -- even forgetting the things behind and stretching forth towards the things before, I press along the line towards the prize of the high calling of God by Christ Jesus.

"As many, therefore, as are perfect should be of this mind; and if in any [other] thing you think differently, God will also reveal this to you."

The Single Eye and Undivided Heart.

Though the Apostle had sacrificed so much, there is no evidence that he ever regretted it, or desired to have those things back. On the contrary, his ambition seems to have been such that he could have wished that his possessions and hopes had been yet larger in order that his sacrifice might thus have been the greater. In his case there was no "looking back" like Lot's wife, but a forgetting of those things which he had sacrificed. He thus avoided a temptation common to many today; who, though they have left very little, comparatively, continually look back at it and recount to themselves how much they have suffered and lost, thus hindering a completion of the sacrifice and race begun. Let us take a lesson from this, and forget, too, the things behind -- forget our old hopes and earthly aims and ambitions, and fill our minds only with those aims and hopes which are before -- laid up, in reservation for us. But what was the one thing which the Apostle did? We are apt to forget that he and the other Apostles were men much like ourselves. And though the common affairs of life are scarcely mentioned, but only the more public ministrations, nevertheless all of these entered into their life experiences much as with us. Remembering this will enable us the better to appreciate their examples. Hence we answer that the one thing which St. Paul was doing was not preaching, nor writing, nor singing hymns, nor traveling, but the one thing he did was, as Jesus expressed it -- doing the will of God. It was in harmony with this will of God that he traveled, preached, made tents, was persecuted, imprisoned, etc.; and it was necessary to lay aside and forget all the aims and masters in order to render acceptable service to Him who declared, "No man can serve two masters."

The Lord Himself is our great example. He had one thing to do and to that He separated Himself. He had a single eye, an undivided heart. This is manifest in His entire course. "My meat," he said, "is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work:" "He detached Himself from all that which mere human affection might find in association with His own, in order to devote Himself to the one grand object which was ever before His mind."

Need to Live in the Sanctuary of God

And His people are linked with Him. "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." How important that we faithfully examine ourselves in the light of His life and example! It is indeed a serious question to what extent we are really entering into the "meaning and power of this intense separation" from nature and from that which is merely earthly. There are numberless things, harmless in themselves, which have a distracting and weakening influence upon the spirit, and we cannot afford to allow anything pass as harmless which would interfere with that high tone of consecration to God after which our souls are fervently desiring. Nothing is a trifle which "breaks the current of our soul's communion with God and robs us of that holy intimacy which is our privilege to enjoy."

The power of continuance in this path of separation consists in secret communion with God and in meditation and study of His Word. If the communion be interrupted and the Word neglected, the power is gone. There is grave danger of attempting to carry out our consecration vows in the absence of that which constitutes the source of our power. God will have reality and we may rest assured that sooner or later the weakness of our endeavors will be manifest. This accounts for the slow progress which some make in the Divine life. Forgetting the importance of communion with God, neglecting the daily study of His Word, the result is a filling of our mind with other things. We need to grow in the knowledge of God as He is unfolded by the Holy Spirit in His precious Word. "The soul that habitually lives in the sanctuary of God, or in other words, that walks in unbroken communion with God," is the one who will have a deeper and truer sense of what God is. He will **know** God.

Looked at thus, beloved, if we would be acceptable to our Master and win the prize of our high calling, we must determine also -- "This one thing I do." Did you once have an ambition for wealth and luxury? You must forget that, as one of the things that were, but are not. Were you ambitious for fame, worldly honor, or office? Let these all fade away in the light of the greater honor and glories now before you in prospect, for which you are now running and striving -- "A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." This is the one thing to be sought now; and all our doings must be with reference to it if we would win it. To divide our attention would be, to lose it.

The Cares of this Life and the Deceitfulness of Riches

But, does some one say, Alas! then I can never win this great prize? I cannot give all my attention to doing this one thing; I must spend time and strength daily, laboring for the meat that perisheth. Ah, brother, I am glad you mention it. I can encourage you on this point, I hope. Let me remind you that St. Paul made tents for a living -- "labored, working with his hands." Now, I ask you, was he not as truly in the service of God while making tents as while preaching? Was he not as really doing the one thing? The fact that you have less time, and doubtless less talent to spend in declaring the unsearchable riches of Christ, does not change the matter. God knows your circumstances and necessities, and He declares it to be His will that you care for those whom His providence has placed under your care. Hence, in thus caring for them, you are doing His will who declares, that "if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own household, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel."

Let this Mind Be in You

But, on the other hand, let us see that our attention to earthly things is limited by necessity. There is danger that our necessities be too liberally considered, thus tending to cultivate pride and desire, and to hold us back and hinder our race. There is always danger lest the needful affairs of this life develop into matters of aim and object which would interfere and conflict with the one aim before us.

In a word, then, whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, let us do all to the glory of God. If we find certain food to incapacitate us and interfere with this one thing we do -- then we should deny ourselves of it. Can we glorify our Father more by great plainness of dress, or great plainness of speech? Then that alone and not our convenience or will; but His will be done. This is

doing the same one thing and seeking the same prize in the same way exactly as did St. Paul. This, too, is what Jesus meant when He said, "Seek ye first [chiefly] the Kingdom of God."

It will be noticed in the Apostle's argument, as above quoted (Phil. 3:15), that he concludes that as many as are standing complete in Christ, should have "this mind" to seek the one thing -- the prize before and to forget those behind. And when he adds, "And if in any [other] thing you think differently, God will also reveal this unto you," it seems that he meant to have us understand, that wherever this entire consecration to the will of God exists, based on the ransom as expressed in verse 9, such consecrated ones are in the right way; and though they might, perhaps, hold minor errors, it was only a question of time when they would come to appreciate the truth. Beloved, let us who claim to stand complete and perfect in Christ Jesus, be thus minded, and thus in all we do, press along this line, keeping in view only the one aim and prize of our high calling.

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

Dear Brethren:

I am hoping to sail from England in June on a visit to America and Canada, and should very much like to meet as many of the brethren as possible, so if you would kindly let me have the names and addresses of some of the friends in the following cities with any details of classes and meetings you may have, I should be very glad: New York, Buffalo, Hamilton, Toronto, and Montreal.

I am very pleased to be able to take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation (in which my husband also shares) of the articles in the "Herald." They are most helpful and strengthening and we have been greatly blessed by them.

The Lord has been very gracious to us. We came out from the I. B. S. A. last October, and in February this year a Class was formed in which 10 or 11 of us meet for a study on "The Divine Plan," and our fellowship together is very sweet and harmonious.

We have also had a very sweet time of fellowship this Easter at a convention held by the brethren at Forest Gate. Brethren came from all parts of the British Isles and it proved a time of real uplift and encouragement. The Forest Gate Ecclesia is showing a really Christ-like spirit in extending a helping hand to those who are withdrawing from the Society at this time.

I shall be very glad to have particulars of meetings on your side of the Atlantic and shall await news anxiously.

With love in the Lord, I am,

Your sister by His grace, Mrs. D. G. E. --Eng.

Dear Brethren:

In accordance with your suggestion we went to _____ last Sunday. We had two very good meetings, fifteen and sixteen at each meeting. All seemed much interested and encouraged..

At your suggestion several calls have been made on the old brother at the National Soldiers' Home. He is a dear old brother, but quite feeble. We will keep in touch with him, and are glad we can be of some service, though small it may be.

Here at _____ over one half of the friends who attended the I. B. S. A. at the time of the division in 1917 have stopped going to the services, and so we have started to make individual calls on these friends, inquiring why they do not attend meetings, and urging them not to neglect their spiritual welfare by staying away from meetings with the friends somewhere -- not especially inviting them to our meetings, unless we feel it advisable to do so after talking with them for awhile. The result has been that quite a few of these are now attending our services -- I think ten or twelve. I believe there are many that need the help we can give them, and I am urging this work on the friends who are desirous of doing something to serve the Truth.

With much Christian love,

Your brother, S. J. A. -- Ohio.

Dear Brethren:

I did not mean to let my "Herald" subscription lapse. It was simply an oversight on my part and I have been intending each day to renew it.

As you know, Brother Blackburn has been with us; and it has been such a joy, the friends have been richly blessed by his ministry. When he spoke we heard the Holy Spirit, the message that the Heavenly Father had for us. His message was a direct answer to prayer.

Oh, how we all need to be filled with that Holy Spirit that the least of us can be a blessing to all with whom we come in contact "Epistles known and read of all men." And we shall be like the Israelites of old. "Not one feeble person among all the tribes." (Psa. 105:37.) We can call upon the Lord and He will answer us. (Psa. 99:6.) I believe there is an uneasiness among His people, a desire for a greater infilling of the Holy Spirit.

I like a little bit from "Light on Life's Duties," by F. B. Meyer, in which he says, "There is a Christian life which in comparison with that experienced, by the majority of Christians is as summer to winter or as the mature fruitfulness of a golden autumn to the struggling promise of a cold and late spring."

I can see in our Class not so much wrangling over doctrines, but a desire for the simple Gospel and for more love. We can see now that "knowledge [alone]; puffeth up, but love buildeth up."

I am especially asking the Lord to give you wisdom and more of His Holy Spirit, that you may minister to His people at this time when they are so much in need.

Enclosed you will find the money to cover my subscription for another year. Thank you for the last copy.

Your sister in this glorious Hope, Mrs. C. A. H. -- Ill.

Dear Brethren:

Am sending money for renewal of my subscription to "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom." It has been a wonderful comfort to me during the last year, and I thank you and my dear Heavenly Father for the sweet spirit of humility and love that I find therein -- just like the Watch Tower used to be years ago, but

O how different now. I have been a subscriber to the Tower since 1895 . . . my faith has been sorely tried by the many changes and strange teachings that to me seemed presumptuous, and try as I may I cannot endorse them -- hardest of all is that on love, fellowship, and character building.

"I want the pure wisdom that comes from above,
That warns those in danger with tenderest love;
I want the sweet spirit of Jesus, my Lord,
And perfect accordance with His blessed Word."

May our dear Lord's richest blessings rest upon you all.

Yours in the one Hope, Mrs. A. M. H. -- Ohio