

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

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The Present Work and Ministry of the Saints

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready." -- Rev. 19:7.

DIRECTING OUR attention and earnest inquiries to the only source of information on this subject of what is the work and mission of the Church at the present hour, we find it clearly stated in the Divine Word that first, it is the "perfecting of the saints" for the future work of service. This is the primary object of the Christian era -- the development of Christlikeness in the Lord's people. This is the will of God, "even your sanctification"; and to sanctify means not only to set apart to the Divine service, the dedication of one's life to the Lord's service, but also to make holy, to purify from sin and all the defilements of the flesh. The Lord's people are not merely to attain to standards of morality and maintain these, but additionally are to be developed as new creatures, attaining to conditions of spirituality, and this can be reached only through the sacrifice of all earthly, fleshly desires and ambitions -- the transformation of the mind and heart from a human consideration to those which are heavenly, as expressed by the Apostle, "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." The knowledge of the gracious arrangements of the Creator has an ennobling influence, and those who have the invitation to be joint-heirs with Christ, are sanctified and purified by the hope placed before them in the Gospel -- "And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as He is pure."

Anointed for Future Work

Another has very wisely remarked: "It is of the utmost importance that the servant knows what is expected to him before proceeding far in rendering service; otherwise he will be more than likely to waste his energies in wrong directions -- leaving undone those things which ought to be done, and giving attention to matters which would better be attended to otherwise, according to the plans and arrangements of the great supervisor of the Plan of Salvation -- our Lord."

The Scriptures distinctly teach that in the commencement of the Age, there was a special and Divine anointing first of all upon Jesus, the great Head of the Church; and from Him as the great High Priest, we are taught that the anointing extended to the under-priesthood or members of His Body, the members of the Christ, the Anointed. And so the Apostle John says that "The anointing which we have received of Him abideth in us." And the Scriptures tell us further that we were begotten and anointed of God.

The anointing of the Church in this present Age is for a work **yet future**. The work of Christ and the Church will not be accomplished in the present Age, but; God gives those whom He has accepted opportunities to use in His service in the present life, certain talents and abilities which He has entrusted to them. They are, as far as they are able, to bind up broken hearts and to

give "the oil of joy for mourning," and thus to help to allay the sufferings of others, especially of the Lord's household, though they are to assist any as they have suitable opportunity. But their special work in blessing and comforting the world will be in the Kingdom. All mankind will be brought back from the tomb and will have all the blessed assistances of Messiah's reign. Everything evil will be uprooted and everything good will be fostered and blessed.

To Him that hath an Ear to Hear

Earnestly desiring to call before the attention of the brethren today in as impressive a manner as possible, what is the chief mission and work of the Church, we can do no better than quote the following statements from the pen of our dear Brother Russell bearing upon this question. He says:

"Her Chief mission is toward herself. She is to lift up the light in the world -- the True Light -- not with the expectation of enlightening the world, not with the thought that her feeble lamp shall scatter earth's night of sin and darkness of superstition, for that can be accomplished only by the coming of the Morning -- the Millennial Morning -- when the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in: His beams. She holds up the light of the Truth, the light of the Gospel, during this night, to attract **some** -- 'a peculiar people' -- not, to attract and gather all, but even as many as the Lord our God shall **call.**' (Acts 2:39.) Her message respecting the love of God and the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, as it rings out into the world, is not expected to awaken the **world** and to lead the world to the Lord. No; she is merely bearing 'witness' -- a witness which will have to do also with a future knowledge and opportunity to be granted to the **world** during the Millennium.

"She is instructed by the Word of the Lord not to expect that any but a comparatively small number will appreciate her light or her message: as the Prophet foretold, so she has found it. 'Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?' (Isa. 53:1; John 12:38.) As the Scriptures declare, so she finds it, that the vast majority of mankind are blind, so that they cannot see the light; some are stone blind, so as to see nothing; while others are partially blind and can get a little glimmer of it by which they can discern some things indistinctly. In hearing, likewise, the world's ears are dull of hearing -- 'deaf,' say the Scriptures. Some hear nothing, others hear very imperfectly, few hear the message of Divine love and mercy clearly and distinctly. The Church is to realize that her mission is not to these, the blind and deaf, but to him 'that hath an ear [to hear], let him hear!' -- Rev. 2:7; 3:6, 13, 22.

"As our Lord did not expect many to respond to His preaching, and particularly implied that only a small number would be able to do so, saying, 'No man can come unto Me except the Father which sent Me draw him,' so His Church throughout this Age is to realize that when she lifts up the light and lifts up her voice, no man will come in response except as the Father draws him. And as the Father drew only a comparatively small remnant of the Jewish nation to our Lord, so the Church should not be surprised that He has drawn only a comparatively small proportion of Gentiles throughout this Age.

Church now Bearing Fruit of Spirit

"It is another part of the mission of the Church to care for those who do see the light which she holds up, and who are attracted by that light, and who come unto the Lord. She is to teach and instruct such, and to introduce them to the full fellowship of the high calling by making clear to them, as the Lord's mouthpiece, 'what is the hope of our calling,' present and future -- now to suffer with Christ for righteousness' sake, to cultivate His Spirit, His disposition, to bear much fruit of the Spirit in our own hearts and lives, and thus, under Divine supervision, to be fitted, polished, and prepared for a place in the glorious Temple of the future, for a share in the glorious work of the incoming Age -- the blessing of the world. -- 1 Cor. 1:26 ; Eph. 1:18.; 2 Thess. 1:11.

"The Church is supplied by her glorious Head, Jesus Christ, with certain gifts of the Spirit, amongst her members of the earth; and these co-working together in their various offices are to strengthen, establish, upbuild, develop, one another, growing in grace and in the knowledge and spirit of the Head, until the whole Church shall eventually, by the close of this Age, be brought to the stature of the fullness of perfection as the Body of Christ, under the Lord Jesus as the Head. (Eph. 4:13.) But she is not to expect that all, even of those who see her light, and who hear her proclamation, and who draw near in harmony with her message, will eventually come into full membership in this glorious Body of Christ. On the contrary, she is assured of the Lord in advance that, while only a few, comparatively, will hear her message, the call, a still smaller number will accept the call -- for many are called, proportionately, to the few who are chosen -- who make their calling and election sure by faithfulness to the conditions imposed. -- 2 Pet. 1:10."

Is there a Special Message to the World Now?

Notwithstanding the fact that the Church's mission and what she is to expect in the next Age, have been clearly defined and marked out in the Scriptures, the question has again and again been raised, Has not the Church some special message to give to the world at the present time? And the trend of popular thought in the professing Church has ever been in the direction of some large and impressive movement affecting the world, some great work attracting the attention of multitudes.

The history of various activities and movements in the Church throughout the Age discloses the fact that oftentimes God's professing people have yielded to the temptation to undertake to do a work in the world, to the neglect of their real mission, that of the development and adornment of their characters in preparation for the glorious change. Nor have the Lord's people in these modern times been immune from this temptation to feel that they have been anointed to do some little wonder-working amongst men in the way of making a proclamation especially to appeal to the world. Thus today the question is before us, Is there not now a special message for the world? And have we not now reached the time when a special announcement or proclamation is due humanity that should appeal to them? We must find our answer in hearkening to the voice of the Spirit -- in other words, "Hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." We hear no voice of the Spirit instructing that there is a special message to humanity in general now above the past, nor that we should expect the world to be appealed to now any more than in the past. Darkness is still upon the earth and gross darkness upon the people, and it is still true that the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not.

That there is a message of truth and grace for all the world in God's due time, we most heartily acknowledge, but this is not yet the due time to undertake to impress humanity nor to expect a response from the world. It is still "to him that hath an ear to hear." The evidence is overwhelming that few have ears to hear. Accordingly, those who are a devoutly hearkening to the voice of the Spirit will not endeavor to enter upon any work that they have not been strictly commissioned to do. They know of no other commission than that which Jesus fulfilled and gave to His disciples as He was about to be parted from them, of meekly and quietly presenting the Divine Message of truth and grace. Harkening to His words they recognize their chief commission is to let their light shine by word and by example and to so apply the truth daily that they will grow into the character of their heavenly Pattern. Such are content to wait the Lord's due time for entering upon the great work that He has planned for the world.

Beautiful upon the Mountains

True, in accordance with the prophetic forecast, God's true people as the "feet of Him," are seen to be "beautiful upon the mountains," announcing glad tidings to the meek, that the Kingdom of Heaven is near; and the reign of Christ is at hand. They will also include in this announcement that a severe rebuke from Jehovah will accompany the change of dispensation or the change from the empire of Satan to the Kingdom of Christ, otherwise designated the Day of Vengeance of our God; and in this connection the wise ambassador for Christ will counsel men everywhere, saying, Seek righteousness, seek meekness, it may be that ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger. In this connection Brother Russell has very wisely remarked:

"The troubles of this Day of Jehovah will give opportunity for preaching the good tidings of coming good, such as is seldom afforded, and blessed are they who will follow the footsteps of the Master and be the Good Samaritan, binding up the wounds and pouring in the oil and wine of comfort and 'cheer. The assurance given such is that their labor is not in vain ; for when the judgments of the Lord are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. -- Isa. 26:9."

The conclusion of this whole matter then is that the chief and vital concern of all true disciples of Christ at this solemn hour, is primarily that of giving attention to their own spiritual needs, of daily applying the light of the divinely provided lamp of God's revelation, so that they may be hourly undergoing the processes of sanctification, of transformation into the likeness of the image. of God's dear Son. This spiritual work going on in the brethren today, while it is an individual work, yet they are carrying it on not independent of one another, but co-working together, helping one another, counseling and admonishing one another, and so much the more as they see the day drawing on, thus building up one another in the most holy faith. Thus the Bride to be is adding the finishing touches to her character. She is adjusting her bridal robes in preparation for that hour of transplendent glory, and this work can be none other work than that referred to by the Revelator, in the proclamation, "Let us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb is come and His Bride hath made herself ready.

"THE MASTER'S TOUCH"

'He touched her hand, and the fever left her,'
O blessed touch of the Man Divine!
So beautiful to arise and serve Him
When the fever is gone from your life and mine.
It may be the fever of restless serving,
With the heart all thirsty for love and praise,
And eyes all aching and strained with yearning
Toward self-set goals in the future days;
Or it may be a fever of spirit-anguish,
Some tempest of sorrow that dies not down,
Till the cross at last is in meekness lifted;
And the head stoops low for the thorny crown;
Or it may be a fever of pain and anger,
When the wounded spirit is hard to bear,

And only the Lord can draw forth the arrows
Left carelessly, cruelly, rankling there.
Whatever the fever, His touch can heal it,
Whatever the tempest, His voice can still;
There is only joy as we seek His pleasure,
There is only a rest as we choose His will.
And some day, after life's fitful fever,
I think we shall say, in the home on high,
If the hands that He touched but did His bidding,
How little it matters what else went by:
Ah, Lord! Thou knowest us altogether,
Each heart's sore sickness, whatever it be;
Touch Thou our hands! Let the fever leave us,
And so shall we minister unto Thee!"

Jesus in Death's Dark Vale

"He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" -- Rom. 8:32; Luke 23:33-46

ONLY THOSE who have come to appreciate the office and work of our dear Redeemer can properly grasp the meaning of the awful tragedy of Calvary-.that it was necessary for the Just to die for the unjust in order to open up the way to life. Various are the theories more or less in conflict relating to the death of Christ, some of them indeed acknowledging that the work which our Lord finished in His death on Calvary is the basis of all human hopes respecting life everlasting and at-one-ment with the Heavenly Father; others persistently denying this and claiming that Christ's work for humanity was solely that of a great teacher and in no sense that of a redeemer and purchaser. In fulfillment of the testimony of the Prophets, false theories which ignore the true work of Christ are becoming more and more numerous and more seductive day by day to those who are not well rooted and grounded in the Divine work and Plan of the Ages.

The arguments of the great Apostle Paul are perhaps amongst the most convincing in the inspired record, for he so clearly announces the fact of sin's existence and of death as a result of sin; of the fact that Christ died for our

sins according to the Scriptures, in the sense that His death was for or as a means of our recovery from sin. And it is this that constitutes the inspired "faith once delivered to the saints."

"Weep not for Me"

The journey to Calvary was a sorrowful spectacle. It is to their credit that some of those who followed in the procession were weeping, and this credit for tenderness, and sympathy falls to the women, to whom Jesus turning said, "Weep not for Me, but for yourselves and for your children." Apparently the Savior's thought was not centered wholly upon Himself; He was thinking rather of how this injustice would shortly react upon this nation, whose representatives had said before God and men, "His blood be upon us and upon our children." No doubt our Lord had in mind the descriptions of the trouble that would come upon Jerusalem, as given particularly in the prophecies of Daniel and Jeremiah. -- Dan. 9:24-27; Jer. 6.

On their arrival at Calvary the crucifixion took place. It is probable that the victim was nailed to the cross while it was lying on the ground, and that then the four sturdy soldiers lifted it and set it into a socket in the earth, the pain from the wound being intensified by the jolting occasioned by putting the cross into an upright position, and then terribly augmented by the hanging weight of the body. Crucifixion is probably the, most cruel form of death, and even by the Romans, as we understand it, was practiced only upon culprits -- usually outlaws, brigands, and seditionists. Thus our Lord was, in harmony with the statement of the Prophet, "numbered with the transgressors." -- Isa. 53 :12.

Times when Our Hopes seem to Fail

The records show that Jesus' mother was there, and her sister, and John the disciple, and his mother, and Mary Magdalene, and Mary the wife of Cleophas. (John 19:25; Matt. 27:56.) They were all sorrowful; many of them weeping. They could not deny the assertion of the rulers and the multitude, that apparently the claims of our Lord had been fraudulent; they could not understand how He who had such power, and in whom they had such confidence, could be so helpless in the hands of His enemies. It was incomprehensible when they remembered how even the winds and the waves of Galilee obeyed Him, and how many unclean spirits, being unable to resist the command of His word, had been cast out of the afflicted. But although they could not make any reply, under the circumstances, to the jibes of those who railed at the Lord, they nevertheless loved Him; for they knew, that regardless of His power and His titles, and whether or not He had overstated His relationship to the Heavenly Father, nevertheless, "never man spoke like this man," and never had they known any who could compare with Him amongst the sons of men for purity and nobility of soul. They could do naught else but love Him and trust Him, and wait for some indication of the seeming inconsistencies which they then beheld. And so it is at times with the Lord's followers since. Occasionally things occur in respect to the Lord's Word and what He permits His people to suffer, and the power He permits their adversaries to exercise, which are incomprehensible, and His followers may at such times be obliged simply to hold their peace; but those who know the Lord through intimate communion and fellowship of heart, who have fed upon "the deep things of God," who have drunk of His Spirit -- although

unable to explain the difficulties, are fully able to trust in Him and to hope and to wait for such expressions as are sure to come, in vindication of His every, act and word and providence, in due time.

The Dying Thief Comforts Jesus

Whilst the others were reviling our Lord, and calling upon Him to manifest His Messiahship and to come down from the cross, one of the thieves joined in the ribald assault; but the other, realizing that death was near, and admitting his own guilt, seemed to recognize in Jesus a person of an entirely different order and character from that of himself. He alone, so far as we are informed, raised his voice in protest against the slurs, and in defense of the meek and lowly one, who said nothing in His own defense, and who thus set us a most wonderful example in patient endurance and suffering for well-doing. Had He demonstrated His power, as they "dared" Him to do, He would have been wrecking the hopes, not only of those who maligned Him, crucified Him, but also the hopes of the whole world of mankind. O, how we rejoice in His faithfulness unto death—even the death of the cross!

How we praise Him that He did not exercise His power, and "call for more than twelve legions of angels" to deliver Him, but on the contrary sacrificed Himself, laying down His own life as a ransom for Adam and his race! The darkness which came over the scene of the crucifixion at noon, and lasted until three o'clock, after our Lord's death, was evidently a very remarkable one, and made a deep impression. A newly found version of the Gospel, known as "The Gospel by Peter," is represented to say of this darkness, "Many went about with lamps, supposing it was night," and that the darkness lasted until Jesus was taken from the cross, when the earthquake took place. "Then the sun shone out, and it was found to be the ninth hour."

Opened up New and Living Way

The residing of the temple veil apparently took place at the same time as this earthquake -- the moment of our Lord's death. This was not the trifling matter it might appear from the word "veil," for this veil was an extremely large and extremely heavy curtain, the tearing of which would be no small matter, but would have required superhuman strength. Edersheim describes this curtain as being sixty feet long and thirty feet wide, and five inches thick; made of seventy-two squares joined together. This veil was symbolical; it represented the completion of our Lord's sacrifice by which He opened up for us a new way of life beyond the veil, through the sacrifice of His flesh. In a figure, therefore, the Lord God, by the rending of the veil, declared that the death of Jesus made possible the way into the Most Holy, even heaven itself, and the fact that the veil was rent from the top to the bottom implied that the work was God's and not one having its start and accomplishment in human design and effort.

"Father, into Thy Hands I Commit My Spirit"

Our Lord's words commending His spirit, His life, to the Father, remind us of the words of Stephen. (Acts 7:59.) Stephen, however, like all of us, had little to surrender; his Adamic life, the spirit of life, received from Adam, was already forfeited, and the only life which Stephen, therefore, could commend to God was the reckoned life received by faith through Jesus, the Life-giver.

In the case of our Lord the matter was different. He had life rights which had never been forfeited through sin, and was committing these to the Father as the ransom price for Adam and his forfeited spirit of life; nevertheless, our Lord was firmly trusting in the Father's promise to raise Him up from the dead by His own power, and His trust was in God that the restoration of life which He had promised, He was abundantly able and willing to perform, and raise Him from the state of death perfect, in the Divine nature, with its glory, honor, and immortality. Thus our Lord gave up the "ghost" (an old English tern) -- gave up His spirit of life -- He died, and remained dead until the Father raised Him from the dead on the third day by His own power.

The closing scenes of the drama evidently were very awe-inspiring, not only to our Lord's friends, but also to his enemies, and a general hush and feeling of grief spread about. The taunts of His enemies ceased as the darkness came down, and many were willing at the last to admit that the occurrences were remarkable, and corroborated to some extent the Master's claims, saying, "Truly, this man was the Son of God." -- Mark 15:39. The solemnity of our Lord's dying moments seems to have given greater courage to some of His friends, two of whom, Joseph and Nicodemus, were members of the Sanhedrin, which had condemned Him, these two being either absent or voting against the condemnation. They had been too careful of their reputations to avow their interest in Jesus previously, "for fear of the Jews," but now they had the courage to own the Lord as their friend, and to arrange the details of His burial. (John 19:39.) The dilatory acknowledgment of Jesus on the part of these wealthy and influential men reminds us of the peculiar difficulties which hinder all persons of wealth and influence in connection with a proper acknowledgment of the way, the truth, and the life. True, there are many rich men today, and many of influence, who, because of popularity of churchianity, take a prominent part in its service; but churchianity must not be confounded with "the Body of Christ," the true Church, which, like the Lord, is comparatively without influence, power or wealth, as viewed from a worldly standpoint. When the great drama of this Atonement Day is completed, and the last member of the Body of Christ has finished his sacrifice, there will doubtless be many of the rich and influential to come forward then, to honor the humble ones and to garnish their sepulchers. Much more to their credit and to their advantage and assistance in making their own calling and election sure would it be for these to come boldly forward in the time of sacrifice and bind their own sacrifices to the horns of the altar. -- Psa. 118:27.

My Lord and I

"Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me." -- John 16:32, R. V.

DURING THE days of our Lord's earthly life, when He was alone in the world as the only one yet begotten of the Spirit, there were doubtless many hours when He experienced a sense of extreme isolation and loneliness. Being "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners," the sordid conditions of earth must have been most painful to His pure and perfect nature. Surely He must have continually realized a very great in harmony between Himself and all His surroundings. As He, "the Light of the world," moved about in the midst of the darkness that not only failed to comprehend

Him, but additionally hated Him, how sensitive He must have been to the incongruity of the situation! And when it is further remembered that even among His immediate disciples He was very imperfectly understood, we have additional grounds for concluding that He often realized Himself very much alone. In these clear disciples He had found a love and response that was real enough in itself, but because the Spirit had not yet been given, and they were therefore unenlightened by its influence, there was necessarily a great gulf fixed between His viewpoint and theirs, that in the very nature of things left Him, without a companionship that He could have so fully enjoyed. Recognizing their limitations and very wisely refraining from attempting the impossible, He said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." (John 16:12.) Furthermore, much of the deeper meaning of many things He did say must remain shrouded -- in more or less of mystery; the clear understanding of the character of His Kingdom and other important matters must remain for the present beyond the limits of their vision, and He Himself must be content to live with them for those three and a half years only very partially understood, and at the close to ask His pathetic question "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me?" (John 14:9.) Verily the prophetic statement "of the people there was none with Me" was a faithful forecast of the lonely way He must walk from Jordan to Calvary -- a prolonged experience that would reach its culmination when even these, His closest friends, would all forsake Him.

Made Like unto His Brethren

Aside from what the Scriptures themselves plainly teach, we would seem to have an indisputable assurance within ourselves that supports what we have just considered regarding the experience of Jesus. Being made like unto His brethren, in order that He might be a faithful and merciful High Priest in things pertaining to God and to His brethren, He must needs feel with them in their experiences, and what has been more general with His brethren than the sense of loneliness and separation inevitable in a truly consecrated life? It would be impossible to believe that He was a stranger to the longings for spiritual companionship, the unutterable realizations of a void that none but God can fill, which have made up so large a part of the experience of many of His devoted followers. Rather it would seem that the situation must have been intensified in His life because of His greater ability to revel in the highest spiritual things.

If we, His brethren, begotten of the same Holy Spirit, feeding upon the same precious hopes, and cultivating the same spiritual mind, have our seasons of loneliness, when we yearn for congenial intercourse with kindred minds, and for the intimate companionship of some understanding soul who can interpret our heart hunger correctly, and say the word, or express the sympathy we crave, then, much more the One who has been touched with a feeling of our infirmities and our longings.

What desire there must have been in the heart of Jesus for some one with whom He could converse on the sublime meditations of His own heart, some one who could enter with Him into the delights of His oneness with the Father, and share with Him the meat on which He feasted, and of which even His dear disciples knew nothing! Ah, yes, when such experiences come to us, let us not forget that Jesus knows what it means -- He knows, and loves, and cares. When the vicissitudes of life, the changing friendships, the disappointed hopes, the constant misunderstandings, the limited vision of

those about us, constantly aggravate the sense of separation, then know, that our blessed Lord knows all about it, for He too could say, "And shall leave Me alone."

And yet I am not Alone

The foregoing conclusions are substantiated by several statements contained in the Gospels wherein it is revealed that a very real part of our Lord's sufferings while in the world, was this experience of being separated from the atmosphere to which He properly belonged. But to make our examination brief we will use but one statement which is illustrative of the meaning of all others bearing on the point. We turn then to His significant remark made on the eve of His arrest and crucifixion: "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is come, that ye shall leave Me alone, and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me." (John 16:32, R. V.) Note the undertone of pathos. Here we have a statement that can be fully understood only when we have in mind the circumstances under which it was uttered. "Coming events," we are told, "cast their shadow beforehand," and these words of Jesus reveal that the shadow of His most lonely hour was already before His vision. A little later, the experience in its full force would be upon Him, and in that dark hour He must come the third time to His closest, dearest, most intimate confidants and friends, only to find them asleep, and ask the touching question: "What, could ye not watch with Me one hour?" (Matt. 26:40.) Like those who in after days would become His followers, He desired and longed for sympathy and companionship in both His joys and His sorrows. Truly, "He suffered much for me, more than I now can know"; and how it draws our hearts to Him, and His heart to us, in this similarity of experience.

My Father is with Me

But it is to the other side of our dear Lord's life that we would now direct our attention. We want to very particularly note the triumph of His last words as they are given to us in our text: "And yet I am not alone." Admitting that He would be like unto His brethren in the way we have described, we must not, however, forget that in His perfect and uninterrupted communion with the Father, Jesus found a peace and joy that satisfied as nothing else could do. In all the vicissitudes of His life, the rejection, the misunderstandings, the limitations of discernment on the part of His disciples, in His mission and message, His sacrifice and its outcome, there was a bond between Himself and the Father that never failed to give strength and victory. He could always say, "My Father and I." He knew the place "where spirits blend, and friend holds fellowship with friend," and so it is that He meets this overshadowing loneliness with the brave and triumphant assurance, "And yet I am not alone, because My Father is with Me."

In considering the significance of this latter phrase, so full of pathos from the human standpoint, but so full of deep joy and satisfaction on the spiritual side, we feel constrained to employ the words of one who has very beautifully commented on this statement, particularly on the two important words. "and yet."

"They are words of wondrous, pathetic eloquence. More properly we should speak of them as one word. In the Greek there is but one word, the simple conjunction, 'and.' But it is invested, by reason of the emotion in the speaker's heart, with a special significance, which is described in the

technical language of Greek syntax as the force of 'rhetorical emphasis.' Instead of being a mere ordinary conjunction, connecting two clauses of speech without reflecting the substance of those clauses, there is injected into it, from the burning heart of the speaker, the fire, the passion of a contrast, an affecting contrast, which the speaker realizes with deep emotion: '**And yet** I am not alone.'

"Christ, when on earth, seems to have been impressed with the fact that life is a tissue of contrasts, and the special use of the conjunction, of which an example is afforded in our text, is very, frequently found in those of His sayings recorded by St. John, such for example as these: 'I told you, **and yet** ye believed not.' 'I honor My Father, **and yet** ye do dishonor Me.' 'We speak that we do know and testify that we have seen, **and yet** ye receive not our witness.' 'Have not I chosen you twelve, **and yet** one of you is a devil?' 'Did not Moses give you the Law, **and yet** none of you keepeth the Law?' (John 10:25; 3:11; 7:19; 8:49; 6:70.) Generally, as these quotations indicate, He is remarking that life does not come up to the level of its possibilities, and constantly contradicts its antecedent probabilities. But our text is a great, a joyous exception to the prevailing sadness of the utterances just quoted. He is speaking of the loneliness of His personal experience -- a loneliness shortly to be intensified by the desertion of His followers. He has drawn a dark picture of that approaching, that impending desertion: 'Behold, the hour cometh, yea is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone'; when suddenly, like a broad bar of golden sunshine thrust out through the purple folds of an impending cloud, He utters that wondrous 'conjunction of rhetorical emphasis,' that symbol of contrast between the darkness of that which might be expected, and the brightness, the peace, the comfort of that which actually is: 'Ye shall leave Me alone; **and yet I am not alone**; for the Father is with Me.'"

As He was, so are We in this World

With a frequency that cannot be passed unnoticed, we find Jesus reminding His followers that the path over which He walked would be the only pathway for their feet also, if they would be His disciples. It therefore becomes one of the best witnesses of the Spirit to us, if we find our experiences in the Christian way becoming more and more like those of our Lord and Savior. If we have realized with the passing of time that the individual who follows most closely in His footsteps has chosen for himself an increasingly lonely way, we have made a very important, and a very blessed discovery. There are, in the Christian life, certain experiences and emotions that are peculiar to comparatively few. As every earnest seeker after the Spirit-filled life can testify, the number of really congenial, heart to heart companions, grows steadily less as he enters into the higher realms of communion and fellowship with God. Many there will be who are occupied with the posts and cords and pegs of the outer court, but few indeed who desire to dwell within the golden glow and the profounder secrets of the Holies. True indeed,

"Of all we meet in life's great stream,
There's but one here and there
Who treasures most the better things."

And hence it must often be the consolation of that "one here and there" to say with Jesus, "**and yet I am** not alone," for My Lord is with me. Continuing, the same writer goes on to say:

"Happy is he who can speak thus concerning the presence of Christ amidst: the loneliness of spiritual desire. Sooner or later, he who truly leads the life of spiritual desire will find it in some things a lonely life. If any one who believes Christ with all his heart gives himself up to the longing for likeness to Christ, which is holiness; for oneness with Christ, which is power; for the vision of Christ, which is knowledge, he must expect to be often in loneliness as far as human companionship goes. This loneliness he will sometimes realize most keenly when all around him are the gay and laughing faces of his friends; when human voices are sounding in his ears like the sound of many waters; when people are jostling and thronging him in the crowded path; . . . The life of spiritual desire is not the life of the world [and so often not the life of many of those closer to us in the light of truth]; to prefer it is to prefer what few count desirable; to live that life is to think as the majority do not think. The price of living it is loneliness; it is to know that many think you different, that some think you foolish; it is to realize that your sentiments are the sentiments of the minority; and that if you are lonely you cannot expect much sympathy from your friends. It is a fair question: 'Is the life worth the loneliness?' I do not profess to answer the question; but some could answer it who, knowing to its full extent that form of loneliness, have also known all that can come in that loneliness to make one cry out with a joy that is like no other joy, 'and yet I am not alone!'"

Your Sorrow Shall be Turned into joy

Another commenting on this same question has said:

"There is an experience which becomes more and more familiar to every one who is trying to follow Christ -- a feeling of the growing loneliness of his Christian life. It comes from a sense of the peculiarly personal interest which Christ takes in him, which sometimes seems so strong as almost to make him feel that his life is being detached from all other lives around him, that it is being drawn out of the crowd of humanity as if an unseen arm linked in his were taking him aside for a nearer intimacy and a deeper and more private fellowship. It is not, indeed, that the great family of God are to be left in the shade for him, or that he is in any way the favorite of heaven; but the sanctifying and, in the true sense, humbling realization that God makes Himself as real to each poor unit as if he were the whole; so that even as in coming to Christ at first he felt himself the only lost, so now in staying with Christ he feels himself the only found. And it is, perhaps, true, that without any loss in the feeling of saintly communion with all those through out the world who say 'Our Father' with him in their prayers, the more he feels that Christ has all of him to Himself, the more he feels that he has Christ all to himself. Christ has died for other men, but in a peculiar sense for him. God has a love for all the world, but a peculiar love for him. God has an interest in all the world, but a peculiar interest in him. This is always the instinct of a near fellowship, and it is true of the universal fellowship of God with His own people."

How precious is that full assurance of faith which, knowing no life divided, or apart, from the life that is hid with Christ in God, can appropriate from the Word the verities of our sonship. How inspiring is the faith that can step out with the blessed confidence that "I am His and He is mine, forever and forever." And how priceless that sense of the power of the Holy Spirit indwelling our hearts and exercising an influence that destroys all the bridges back to the old self-life, and while it thus works its destructive power on the

things of the flesh, it is constantly constructing higher elevations of both knowledge and grace, and promoting us into more sublime realizations of fellowship with God. Then, even if it is so, that the price of this advancement in spiritual discernment and appreciation is a measurable isolation. and loneliness, we may have the consolation, the comfort, and the sweetness experienced by Jesus when He walked so much alone. Our compensation will be in the inexpressible joy that comes with the words so sweet, so comprehensive, so victorious: "My Lord and I."

My Heart crieth out for the Living God

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness," said Jesus, "for they shall be filled." Was it not for the comfort of such exceptional souls, that the spirit of inspiration supplied language so expressive of their desires? Is it not they who say, "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house." (Psa. 84:2, 4.) To the one who can sing with the heart, and with the understanding, "I'm a pilgrim, and I'm a stranger," it is unnecessary to explain these texts, or to describe the longing here expressed. The interpretation is written too deeply into their desires, and so often the "groanings of the Spirit which cannot be uttered" have made the meaning clear to such. Theirs is the hunger that cannot be satisfied except in the blessed realization of full communion with God through His indwelling Spirit.

But hand in hand with such longings after God, there comes the consciousness of unworthiness, and the feeling that however gracious our God may be, the privilege of such intimate fellowship with Him is not for us. Well do we recognize that He is holy, and that to dwell with Him means holiness, yea, perfect holiness, for He cannot look upon sin with any degree of allowance, and **all unrighteousness** is sin in His sight. Then, knowing so well that we in ourselves are imperfect and thereby disqualified, surely we must crush out these desires to dwell with Him. But not so. It is s He who has fostered these longings in our hearts -- He knew our thoughts afar off, and in His love provided an answer to His own holiness, and to these consuming aspirations of ours. He gave His only begotten Son for us, and through faith in His blood we may enter into full communion and fellowship. He imparts the spirit of adoption whereby we may cry, "Abba Father," and, praise be to His grace, He the kinship owns. Now, "there is therefore no condemnation." "The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us," because we live in Christ, and have been "made the righteousness of God in Him." We have "passed from death unto life" and so, in the holy presence of God, in all the freedom and joy of that "no condemnation," we dwell together in God -- "My Lord and I."

She hath done what She could

Meditating on these manifestations of God's goodness, must constrain the receptive heart to say, "Oh for such love, I would make some return," and while it is recognized that we are indebted beyond any possibility of adequate response, yet how eagerly we want to say:

"Take my life and may it be,
Lord, acceptable to Thee.

Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love."

But no sooner do we undertake the simple, or the more important tasks He graciously commits to us, than we become painfully aware of our incompetent, imperfect abilities, and oh, how often we must bring to Him a medley of "mending and patchwork combined," and bemoan the fact that we have not done better. And though in the earlier days of our Christian life, we may have consoled ourselves with the thought that in later days our service would be more perfect, and with a buoyant hope we visualized that wondrous day of more perfect works before us, ere we passed beyond, now we know it was but a mirage after all. The passing years have brought us many lessons, and our perspective has widened, God's perfections have grown more distinct, and with the clearer vision of Him has come the realization of the futility of putting the emphasis on our imperfect works.

Must we then crush out the desire to devote ourselves to His service? Must we view our efforts as fruitless, and, because imperfect, unnecessary? No indeed! Crush out this cry "What shall I render unto the Lord," I must, if I remain alone, but I am not alone. There is One so perfect, so dear, so intimately nigh, who has so fully received me into Himself, that my work is made perfect because He has made it His. Then the effort by which love yearned to express its devotions has not fallen short, for "Thou, O Christ, the perfect One, hast accomplished its completeness for me," and so we work together, "My Lord and I"

Face to Face, What shall it be

Some glad sweet day, ere long we trust, the last feeble step will have been taken, the days of separation from the One we love, will be over, and then, the tasks of earth completed, we shall enter in, beyond the veil, to go out no more forever. What then shall be the joy that will stand pre-eminent? Will it be in the fact that we have won a place in the completed Bride? Will it be in the thought *or* the great undertakings of our reign of a thousand years with Christ? Will it be in the wonderful possibilities of countless ages, during which God will show through us the exceeding riches of His grace? All of these we shall surely revel in with a joy far beyond our present powers to comprehend, but if we read aright the tokens of love that are now exchanged between Jesus and His betrothed one, we know of a certainty that a supreme joy, exceeding all others, will be the joy of perpetual union with Himself in the glory realms above. Ah yes, on His part it is now blessedly true:

"He comes, for O! His yearning heart
No more can bear delay,
To scenes of full unmingled joy
To call His Bride away."

And what of us? What is the response that rings in our hearts? Surely as He thrills us with these revelations of His desire, we too rejoice His heart with the refrain of blessed impatience that must sing:

"A little while'; with patience, Lord,
I fain would ask, 'How long?'
For how can I, with such a hope
Of glory and of home,
With such a joy awaiting me,

Not wish the hour were come?
How can I keep the longing back,
And how suppress the groan?"

Surely, beloved brethren, heaven is occupied just now with blessed anticipations as that great event, "the Marriage of the Lamb" draws nigh. The angels sent forth to be ministers of the heirs of salvation, are surely rejoicing in the near approach of that gladsome day. The Son, who has thrilled to every feature of God's great purposes, we know, is rejoiced at the nearness of this happy consummation. God, who has planned all from eternity past, could not be all that a father must be, if He does not experience a supreme delight in this fulfillment of His grand designs. But He does rejoice now, and when the Bride is brought into His holy presence, leaning on the arm of her Beloved, then God, the source of all perfect joy and holy exuberance, will have, because of what He is, a profounder joy, a more exceeding happiness than can any other.

Daughter of a King

How feeble and limited are the phrases of human language to depict the experience that awaits us. "Face to face, what shall it be !" Perhaps the words of Rotherham in Iris treatment of the 45th Psalm are as nearly perfect as we could find any where "In deference to the severe 'beauty of holiness' demanded in the Messiah's Ecclesia, we may Well expect that the first exclamation on the occasion of her unveiling will be -- **All glorious!** and that the discovery of the Divine Fatherhood of the Ecclesia will occasion a second acclaim -- **Daughter of a King!** After which it will be fitting that the Hallelujahs of heaven should burst upon the World's astonished ear, and that earth should respond with a loud 'Amen.'"

Then let each redeemed one now say, O, hail happy day, when I can speak my trials ended, when the long vigil will be over, and I am taken into the presence of Almighty God, and there, before His face, that shines with a light that no man can approach unto, and in the presence of assembled angels, cherubim, and seraphim, I am joined forever in that indissoluble union with One, whom, though, having not seen, I have loved, and believing have rejoiced with a joy unspeakable and full of glory. Oh that blessed, eternal union that makes us one forever -- my Lord and I.

"My Beloved Is Mine and I am His"

"Who is this that comes to meet me
On the desert-way;
As the morning star foretelling
God's unclouded day?
He it is who came to win me
On the cross of shame;
In His glory; well I know Him,
Evermore the same.

"There amidst the songs of heaven,
Sweeter to His ear,
Is the footfall through the desert,
Ever drawing near.
There, made ready are the mansions,

Glorious, bright and fair;
But the Bride the Father gave Him,
Still is wanting there.

"Long the blessed Guide has led me,
By the desert road;
Now I see the golden towers,
City of my God.
There amidst the love and glory,
He is waiting yet;
On His hands a name is graven,
He can ne'er forget.

"Oh, the blessed joy of meeting,
All the desert passed;
Oh, the wondrous words of greeting,
He shall speak at last.
He and I together entering,
Those bright courts above;
He and I together sharing,
All the Father's love.

"Where no stain of sin can enter,
Or the gold bedim;
In that holiness unsullied,
I shall walk with Him.
Meet companion then for Jesus,
From Him, for Him made
The glory of God, grace forever,
There, in me displayed.

"He who in the hour of sorrow,
Bore the cross alone;
I who through the lonely desert,
Trode where He had gone.
He and I in that bright glory,
One deep joy shall share;
Mine to be forever with Him,
His that I am there."

Another Convention in Great Britain

Again brethren in Great Britain advise that the date of their Annual General Convention this year is at Whitsuntide, extending from mid-day Saturday, May 23, to the following Monday night. We quote their message as follows:

"The meeting will be held in the Co-operative Hall, Upper Parliament Street, Nottingham, when representative brethren will give the discourses.

"A season of rich spiritual refreshment is being looked forward to: a foretaste of the blessedness that awaits the saints of God in the approaching day. The united prayers of the brethren are invited, that the occasion may provide for all attending, a means of strength and comfort; just that spiritual stimulus which the conditions prevailing at the present time demand. The Lord knows the needs of His people and He will surely use this opportunity to bless as He alone can.

"Friends requiring accommodations should apply to Mr. George Absalom, 'Halcyon,' High Grove, Chilwell, Nottingham, Eng.

"Any further information can be obtained from the Bible Students Committee, 204 Broadway Chambers, Letchworth, Herts., Eng."

Adding a word in this connection, Whitsuntide is a very opportune time for the friends to assemble in general conference. There are precious and sacred memories that logically cluster around this season; it is the occasion that commemorates the great and important event in the Church of Christ -- the descent of the Holy Spirit and the full recognition and acknowledgment of the waiting disciples, into membership in the mystical Body of Christ. A convention at Whitsuntide therefore is particularly appropriate, and it is

hoped that the gathering at Nottingham may mean truly a realization afresh of that holy unction from above, for the blessing of many of God's people. Brother Hoskins, who will be attending the Convention in London over Eastertide, and meeting a number of Classes in Great Britain in that connection, expects to remain over to attend the Convention at Nottingham, May 23-25.

"The First Fruits of Them that Slept"

"He is risen, even as He said." -- Matt. 28:6.

IT IS CAUSE for the most profound thankfulness, that indisputable proof of our Lord's resurrection was given to His disciples for themselves and for all the members of the Church coming after them. The great resurrection hope must be well established for all believers. The necessity for this lay in the fact that in the Divine Plan this Gospel Age was marked out to be a Faith Age--for the selection of a specially chosen and favored class, able, like Father Abraham, to walk by faith and not by sight. But faith in order to be faith and not merely credulity must have some reasonable foundation on which to build its superstructure. And it was to provide this foundation for faith that our Lord remained with His followers for forty days after His resurrection, before ascending to the Father--as the Evangelist declared "He showed Himself alive after His passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God." -- Acts 1:3.

Obviously, in order to rightfully value and appraise this marvelous and sublime doctrine of the resurrection, it is necessary to recognize the reality of death--that death signifies the absence of life, and that those who go into death are entirely shorn of the power of living, as; the Scriptures repeatedly affirm, "the dead know not anything," and there is neither wisdom nor knowledge nor device in the grave -- sheol, hades -- into which all go, on departing the scenes of this life. It is because of the mixture of heathen philosophy with the Christian religion, that many adherents to the Christian faith have assumed, contrary to the Scriptures, contrary to reason, contrary to facts, contrary to all the evidences of the senses, that the dead are not dead, but more alive than they were before death.

St. Paul's great chapter on the resurrection explains the subject more lucidly than does any other portion of the Bible. He assures us that Christ was dead and that He is risen from the dead. In this, his words agree with our Lord's own statement (Rev. 1:18), "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." How plain, how forceful are these words when given their proper weight, their true signification! Thus life and death are here referred to as opposites -- He is not dead now, but is alive; when He was dead, He was not alive.

Further, we have the Apostle's affirmation that our Lord in His resurrection became the "firstfruits of them that slept." And of what does this speak? Surely it means what the Apostle states in other language, saying that "He should be the first that should rise from the dead." And again, He was the "firstborn from the dead." (Acts 26:23 ; Col. 1:18.) None before Him was ever resurrected, though a few were temporarily awakened, as for instance, Lazarus, the daughter of Jairus, and the son of the widow of Nain. Jesus was the first to be raised completely out of death's power -- to perfection of life,

of being on any plane of existence, and the word firstfruit carries with it the thought that there are to be others who similarly will pass completely out of death conditions into perfect life conditions.

St. Paul Refutes Greek Philosophies

St. Paul wrote at a time when the Greek philosophies were invading all parts of the civilized world, and when many imbued with the Platonic theory that the dead are alive, had become interested in Christ and were more or less associating the Platonic view that there is no death, with the Christian view that death is the penalty for sin, but that Christ paid that penalty, and that as a result the resurrection from the dead is made possible for every member of Adam's race. Because of the prevalence of the error the Apostle was constrained to state the truth in the most positive form. He says, "If Christ hath been preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is not resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, neither hath Christ been raised; and if Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ: whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."

The words of the Apostle can have but one meaning : If Jesus remained dead, if He was-not raised up from death to life, He did not complete the work He undertook, He did not become the Savior, the Deliverer. True, indeed, His death was necessary as the redemption price, but it was also a part of the Divine Plan that if He accomplished the sacrifice in a manner satisfactory to the Father, He would be raised from death to a higher plane of existence, to a higher than human nature, to the Divine nature, and that thus raised He would have the opportunity of presenting the merit of His sacrifice on behalf of the Church first and subsequently for the sins of the whole world.

If He remained in death, was not resurrected, it would be a proof that He had failed to come up to the Divine requirements. If He remained in death, was not resurrected, then He could not present His sacrifice on our behalf, could never appear as our Advocate now and the world's Mediator in the future, could never secure our release from the sentence of death, and could never be our Helper to bring us back into accord with the Father. Hence, as the Apostle says, If Christ be not risen, the teachings of the Apostles are all false, for they are all built on this central fact that "Jesus rose on the third day." Again, as he states it, it proves that our hope of forgiveness of sin through the merit of His sacrifice is a vain one -- then He did not appear on our behalf, He did not offer the merit of His sacrifice in atonement for our sins, we are not reconciled to the Father, we are yet in our sins, yet under condemnation, without hope.

All shall be made Alive

How truly the Apostle reassures us that it is no fable that Christ rose from the dead, that it was not only necessary to our salvation, but that it is a fact well attested. He proceeds in his argument to show that thus by the resurrection of Christ is ultimately to come the resurrection of the Church to full harmony with God, ultimately to be completely delivered from the power of sin and

death – “As all in Adam die, so all in Christ shall be made alive” -- a full release from death, which is the great enemy. He proceeds to say that ultimately, at His Second Advent, "Christ must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death."

With this view of the importance of the resurrection of Jesus we cannot wonder that the Scriptures lay great stress upon that fact, and deduce various proofs and demonstrations intended to establish our faith in it. All four of the Evangelists, with great particularity, give details respecting our Lord's resurrection and His manifestations to His Apostles.

When the Apostle would outline the great Plan of God, He shows the importance of the resurrection, not only for Jesus but also for all who shall be blessed through Him as the Savior. He begins his dissertation on the subject by saying, "I delivered to you first of all that which I also received [first of all]; how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried and that He rose: again the third day according to the Scriptures: and that He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, and after that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of but some of James, then of all the Apostles, and last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."

When we have the proper conception of death we recognize that it is the being or soul that has the promise of a resurrection; and some beings or souls are to be resurrected to one plane of existence and others to another plane. For instance, the promise to the Church of Christ is a resurrection in a spirit body. The Apostle describes "the" resurrection of "the" dead as the resurrection of the Church, born again to a new nature, a spiritual, a heavenly nature. He says of the being or soul of such, "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body."

Firstfruits in First Resurrection

Although not discussing particularly the resurrection for the remainder of the world, the Apostle intimates that not all will be raised celestial bodies, heavenly bodies, and he explains that there is a glory for the celestial and a glory also for the terrestrial. He proceeds to contrast the First Adam, of the earth earthy, with the Second Adam, the heavenly Lord, saying, "The first was made a living soul [an animal being], the last was made a life-giving spirit." But it was not until our Lord's resurrection that He became a life-giving spirit, for as the Apostle Peter declares elsewhere, "He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit." These two Adams are samples or patterns of what mankind may attain to in the resurrection: the Church is to attain to the likeness of the Second Adam, the world to the likeness of the First Adam --- "as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are a heavenly."

Only the Church of this Gospel Age has been granted the opportunity of becoming spiritual children of God, joint-heirs with Christ their Lord. There is the great blessing, the privilege of the First Resurrection, concerning which the Scriptures declare, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the First Resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." It is this wonderful hope that God has set before us in the Gospel, the hope of

participation with our Redeemer in the sufferings of this present time and also in the glories that shall follow, and our hope is attainable in and through and by the First Resurrection, of which the Lord was the firstfruits.

If Ye then be Risen with Christ

Nor do the processes of sanctification of the Spirit, the begetting of the Spirit, the quickening of the Spirit, represent any small phase of the Church's resurrection. Indeed the final attainment of the glory and life beyond, and the ultimate awakening in His likeness, all depend upon the present phase of the resurrection, the present walking in newness of life, that the Church experiences in the present life. The inspired Apostle lays great emphasis in this connection, when he says, "If ye then be risen with Christ etc. In his further exposition of the life of the Spirit, this Apostle points out that this raising up, this making alive, this quickening of the Spirit, goes on and progresses in proportion as the old man or the old life is put to death, kept in subjection; one must die and give place to the other. Thus the Apostle speaks of his own experience as that of one who is "dying daily." He says, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live." He refers to how the "outward man is perishing," and how the "inward man is being renewed day by day." Thus the two phases of the Christian's experience, clearly in evidence at the same time, are most surely set forth in the inspired Word.

How firmly too, the great Apostle brings out the truth upon this important subject again when he declares that we are buried with Christ by baptism into death, that is, by an immersion of our wills (by consecration) into the will of God; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. The Apostle is surely associating the "walking in newness of life," with the risen state or the resurrection life. In other words, it is because we have by a solemn covenant become joined to Christ in His sacrificial experience, His death, that we have been given to share in the spiritual existence by being begotten of the Spirit and thus figuratively raised from the dead, risen with Him to: live and walk according to all the rules and requirements and in harmony with the various proprieties of the new life. This is the Apostle's thought as set forth: "If ye then for since you are then] risen with Christ, seek those things which are above," etc. "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." "The poet catching the inspiration of these words;, has written

"They rise to walk in heaven's light,
Forever free from sin,
With hearts made pure and garments white,
And Christ enthroned within."

A Spirit hath not Flesh

Our Lord illustrated in His own person the very lesson He had given His disciples on the occasion of the visit of Nicodemus. He then said that those -born of the Spirit could go and come like the wind, and that none would know whence they came or whither they went. How appropriate that he should illustrate this and thus give them their first lessons in spiritual things, which, however, they would not 'be fully able to appreciate until after Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit would be poured out.

But it may be asked, Did not Jesus contradict the thought that He was a spirit when He used the words, A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have? The two thoughts are quite in harmony: they were not seeing the spirit Jesus, they were merely seeing the flesh and bones which the spirit Jesus assumed for the purpose of conversing with them, just as the angels assumed flesh-and-bone bodies when they made certain communications as recorded in the old Testament Scriptures. He did not say, "A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see I am," but "as ye see Me **have.**" The spirit, Jesus, manifested Himself through the flesh and bones and clothing. He saw that if they could but realize that they were looking at flesh and bones, their fear would depart, and as they would be thus calmed, Jesus would be the better able to explain to them the fact of His resurrection and to give them the initiatory lessons connected with their future work as His representatives in the world when He should be gone. This was the object of His various manifestations during those forty days, about eleven in all, and very brief in every case.

"In the Arms of His Tenderness"

Concerning our Lord's last or farewell manifestation to His disciples, another has commented in the following interesting manner: "The time had now come when His earthly presence should be taken away from them forever, until He returned in glory to judge the world. He met them in Jerusalem, and as He led them with Him towards Bethany, He bade them wait in the Holy City until they had received the promise of the Spirit. He checked their eager inquiry about the times and seasons, and bade them be His witnesses in all the world. These last farewells must have been uttered in some of the wild secluded upland country that surrounds the little village; and when they were over, He lifted up His hands and blessed them, and, even as He blessed them, was parted from them, and as He passed from before their yearning eyes `a cloud received Him out of their sight.'

"Between us and His visible presence -- between us and that glorified Redeemer who now sitteth at the right hand of God -- that cloud still rolls. But the eye of faith can pierce it; the incense of true prayer can rise above it; through it the dew of blessing can descend. And if He is gone away, yet He has given us in His Holy Spirit a nearer sense of His presence, a closer enfolding in the arms of His tenderness, than we could have enjoyed even if we had lived with Him of old in the home of Nazareth, or, sailed with Him in the little boat over the crystal waters of Gennesareth. We may be as near to Him at all times-and more than all when we kneel, down to pray-as the beloved disciple was when he laid his head upon His breast. The Word of God is very nigh us, even in our mouths and in our hearts The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant. To all who will listen He still .speaks. He promised to be with us always, even to the end of the world, and we have not found His promise fail. It was but for thirty-three short years of a short lifetime that He lived on earth; it was but for three broken and troubled years that He preached the Gospel of the Kingdom ; but forever, even until all the Aeons have been closed, and the earth itself, with the heavens that now are, have passed away, shall every one of His true and faithful children find peace and hope and forgiveness in His name, and that name shall be called Emmanuel, which is, being interpreted, `God with us.'"

Confirming the Souls of the Salts

BY BROTHER B. BOULTER

In submitting a short report of my recent pilgrimage among the friends, I do so with thankfulness to the Lord, and to the Institute for having made this service possible. First of all, I want to make very special mention of my gratitude for the many acts of kindness I experienced at the hands of the brethren all along the way. My visits in their homes, and the happy hours spent in their fellowship, were made particularly pleasant by the sincerity and fullness of their hospitality. It is therefore a matter of special delight to express my appreciation of this opportunity of serving so many of the Lord's dear people. As I recall the various visits and the warm fellowship, I am happy to believe that under His blessing, our imperfect labors have resulted in encouragement to many of them.

We left home on Sunday, November 9th, making our first call at Allentown, Pa., and from there our journey took us through the States of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, New York, and two calls in the Province of Ontario, Canada. At some points we were privileged to meet with what may be "considered in these days quite large numbers of brethren, while at other points the numbers were quite small, and at several points our visits were with the ones and twos. But whether in the larger centers or in the more isolated places, we found the majority of the friends very happy in the realization, of their favored place in God's loving care. The oneness of the Church in her joys and sorrows and blessed expectations, seemed to be well illustrated in the fact that whether our meetings were with the many or the few, with the English, Polish, Swedish, or others, the same spirit of hope and joyful expectation was manifest.

There were of course many pleasing incidents experienced along the way that would be of interest if space permitted a detailed report, but we will content ourselves at present with, some general observations. It was something of a special joy to my own heart, to observe the very general desire on the part of the friends to dwell together in unity on the great fundamentals of our faith. There seems to be a very marked and growing desire on the part of the majority to put the emphasis on the things, that really matter, and to exercise the spirit of tolerance on non-essentials. To me it has been made very manifest that those individuals or classes who are still disposed to make controversial questions a special feature of their meetings, are making a very great mistake. Such disputes are so often over matters that do not involve any really vital issue, and usually result in discord and division. It was therefore particularly gratifying to find the spirit of harmony and Christian fellowship so generally manifest. Everywhere we heard expressions of warm appreciation of the regular visits of the "Herald" and the spirit of true fellowship it inculcates. In a very general way I would therefore say there is much to encourage us in the belief that the friends are displaying more of the healthy desire for spiritual food, and manifesting more of the evidence that they have passed from death unto life, because they love the brethren. These observations made my heart glad, and I trust will be equally encouraging to others. May the Lord in His wondrous grace enable us to clearly visualize the present situation and give us wisdom to hold forth the great Word of Life in this day of special need.

Encouraging Words

Dear Brethren:

Please send me a few tracts for free distribution -- just a few of each kind. I certainly enjoyed the January 15th "Herald." Some object now to the thought of character building, but call it what one may, there will have to be a great cleansing of the flesh and of the spirit, a purifying work, a cutting off, a crucifying of the flesh altogether with the passions and lusts. One will have to take a positive stand against these gross outward sins called the body of sin, and not continue in them, pleading the weakness of the flesh as an excuse for committing them, for no murderer or adulterer or unclean person can inherit the Kingdom of God. Since it is possible for us to, increase in justice, wisdom, love, and power as we grow in grace and in knowledge, it does look like this would be a development, or the building up of character, the transforming of our characters into the likeness or image of His glorious character. The work of cleansing the flesh and spirit (mind), perfecting holiness, and the, adding to our faith the graces of the Spirit, also the increasing in wisdom, justice, love, and power is what seemed to me was development of character, and though we, could not complete this work in ourselves, yet it seemed to be a Divine requirement of us, striving to that end, trusting in His righteousness as a sufficiency or covering wherein we came short of it -- doing this not of constraint but because we love righteousness and want to be pure even as He is pure, and because we want to always do that which pleases Him: We must be as diligent in this work of cleansing and increasing in His attributes of character as we are or should be in witnessing to the Truth, or in ministering to the necessities of the saints. I am rejoicing in the liberty whereby He hath made me free and also in the glorious privilege of proving all things by the Law and the Testimony, and holding fast to that which is good.

I like the "Herald's" explanation of the channel, namely the Lord, the Apostles, and Prophets. But let me add to these the Holy Spirit operating through all the members of His Body, according to the measure given to each. Some seem not to distinguish between the true channel and those organizations or societies which the Lord has used as channels for dispensing or promulgating the truth which the Church has received through the true channel. No errors or mistakes ever come forth from the true channel, but other channels make both, and have to revise their sayings or their books. I am happy, dear brethren, and rejoicing with all the saints in the hope of obtaining the glory of God.. My prayer is for all those Whose longings are to please God and to serve the brethren.

Yours waiting for the blessed hope,

H. B. M. – Ala.

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

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About Our Father's Business

"It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save some." -- 1 Cor. 1:21.

INSPIRING indeed is the account of the early Church going forth in the power of the Holy Spirit, following the Pentecostal benediction. We read that they went everywhere preaching Jesus and the resurrection. The anointing they had received was refreshing, illuminating, and powerful. The message was a glorious one -- Jesus and the resurrection, the Redeemer and His work. True to the prophetic forecast the early disciples felt the power of the anointing to preach the Glad Tidings, to bind up the broken-hearted, to comfort all who mourn, and to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. It was to them a blessed and sublime message; and herein lay the source of their inspiration and zeal. As children of God they had learned the true source of comfort, and were the only ones properly qualified to be real comforters in the Scriptural sense. They had their own hearts bound up and healed by the Great Physician; hence they knew where to direct longing hearts who needed the balm which only God can give. As the Apostle says "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." -- 2 Cor. 1:3, 4.

To Comfort Them that Mourn

The primitive Church, therefore, under the influence of the Holy Spirit and the Apostolic teachings, set an example for all consecrated followers of Christ for the entire Age; and all who throughout the centuries since that time have properly caught the inspiration of that Spirit of anointing, have been true comforters, and have realized the force of the commission to lift up those who are oppressed with sorrow and care, to bring to them the oil of joy, the message of truth and grace.

And still the great commission continues with all those who would be true exponents of the Christlife. We are to be comforters at this particular time of "them that mourn in Zion." This is a work that the saints of today who have been enlightened and blessed by the message, of grace and truth, are eminently qualified to do.

But it has also been true that there has been the tendency all along, even from the beginning of the Age, to grow weary in well doing, to become tired and discouraged in letting the light of truth shine out. This is largely because the darkness hateth the light; the scorn and frown of the world and of worldly-minded Christians heaped upon the faithful would tend to depress their spirit and make them weary unless they are well filled with the spirit of faith and loving trust, in their Divine Master. In the days when the Gospel first began to be preached, the hand of persecution was very active in laying hold of the disciples, and often inflicted literal and physical pain through stripes and imprisonments, etc. Such experiences have oftentimes been repeated throughout the Age. And while we are living in a time of greater enlightenment and to some extent greater refinement, yet there is the spirit of persecution, and the disposition to oppress and discourage those who are the real spiritual luminaries in this dark world. In fact, we realize that our day is one peculiarly fraught with many perils to the consecrated. The Adversary would not only hinder the true disciples from bearing testimony to the truth and from assisting one another to walk in the Narrow Way, by the scorn and frown of the world, but he would use various devices and influences to divert their attention from the one great theme, the one great commission, of proclaiming the Gospel: Thus in summing up the characteristics of the last

stage of the Church, styled the Laodicean period, we find that spiritual--coldness and lukewarmness and a loss of spiritual zeal amongst the points that are sharply criticized by Him who has eyes as a flame of fire and who walketh in the midst of the candlesticks.

The question is, In the midst of the confusion and turmoil of our time, in the midst of much disputation and conflicting voices, and surrounded by influences of lukewarmness and apostasy, what is the remedy for this situation? and how may the brethren be assisted to keep the fires of their love and zeal brightly burning while the circumstances tend to depress their spirits and make them weary in their work? Shall we make our special appeal to their knowledge of the prophecies and their understanding that these are the last days, and that now since the time is so short and they are so near the fruition of their hopes, they should therefore endeavor to holster up their courage and strength by constantly thinking on .the possible shortness of the time?

The Gospel Message Our Inspiration

Such methods of obtaining inspiration are often expressed, and we would not say that such reasoning is improper and unscriptural; but while agreeing that considerable significance should be attached to the solemn importance or the days in which we live, yet we believe there are even higher and more substantial causes or sources of inspiration than appeals that are made from the standpoint above mentioned. It will be recalled that at times the Apostles appealed to consecrated believers in their day, to be mindful of God's appointed' time, urging them to renewed zeal, because the night was far spent, and the day at hand; but the early Church was not constantly urged to persevere in the service ice of the Master largely because the end might be near; rather it was the truth itself, the kernel of the Gospel Message in all its simplicity, that was presented as the inspiring power and motive. The Gospel theme represented in the expression, "Jesus and .the resurrection," was held up to view in all its sweetness and grandeur; they said, "The goodness of God leadeth men to repentance, and the love of Christ constraineth us." In other words, the revelation of the Father and the Son as contained in the Gospel was intended to be sufficient to arouse the zeal and energy of the Christian in the beginning of the Age and to inspire with zeal and courage to go forth and lay down time and strength and life in the Divine service.

The great appeal made to consecrated believers in the beginning of the Age was that they should exercise faith in God, that they should take Him at His word, that they should cast their lot in with the Lord Jesus, and recognize that their consecration was unto death, whether that came sooner or later. The matter of when their trials and sufferings would all be over, and when they should enter into the reward of the faithful,. was to be left entirely in the hands of the Lord, while their zeal continued to burn just as fervently even if the time seemed long. Similarly today in the midst of these confusing scenes and at a time such as this when there is the tendency to grow cold and lukewarm and to admit of a slackening of zeal and fervency in spiritual things, the real appeal should be made to the brethren to reconsider the things that aroused their love and appreciation of the Lord in the beginning; to lay hold afresh of the grace of God, to seek by earnest prayer and by communion and fellowship with other saints, to take a fresh hold upon the Christian life and to embrace more firmly if possible, by faith, the great hope and promise of immortality and joint-heirship with our dear Redeemer. In this we would

not be misunderstood as treating with indifference that vast array of prophecies that describe the closing days of the Age and which unmistakably present to us a clear view of the very times and circumstances and conditions in which we are now living. Nor can there be any doubt that these prophecies have been given for the purpose of strengthening the faith of the Lord's people and enabling them to derive a measure of encouragement, strength, and stimulation to their faith, as they are passing through the very troublous scenes which mark the close of the age. Nevertheless it seems most important that we very carefully analyze our reactions toward these very prophecies and expectations, and note prayerfully what motives exercise the greatest influences in our lives.

As we have repeatedly stated in these columns, the various lines of prophecy before us were not intended specially to enable the Lord's people to set some particular day or even year, when they should reach the consummation of their hope, or when the present order of things would pass away; rather, these prophetic foreviews were given to enable the Lord's people to approximate the time and to realize in some measure where they are on the stream of time, and thus be in a position to enlist their services, time, and strength in harmony with the Divine purpose and with what God is working out in this particular period. Perhaps one of the lessons that the Lord has been teaching His people in these recent years is that of relying more especially upon the definite and emphatic statements of His Word, rather than upon speculative inferences and guesses respecting the time features; He would have us still go on by faith and be willing to trust Him where we cannot trace Him, leaving with Him the matter of the exact day or year for the finishing of the earthly pilgrimage.

None of the Lord's people should be unmindful of these sacred admonitions given by the Apostles, setting forth what our reactions should be toward the great privileges of light and knowledge that we now enjoy. The Apostle Peter we remember uses these very conditions as a basis for his very solemn question: "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and basting unto the coming of the day of God." (2 Pet. 3:11, 12.) And the Apostle Paul likewise offers his faithful warning when he says, "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." -- Heb. 10:24-26.

Occupied with a Service of Encouragement

By these very Scriptures the Lord is teaching us that we should be more than ordinarily concerned about two things: First, we should be, fervently occupied with a service of encouragement that will provoke a spirit of love and helpfulness among the brethren; second, we should all remember that our knowledge of impending events makes it fitting and even obligatory, that we should thus assemble ourselves with others of the brethren. Obviously, to disregard these warnings of Scripture must sooner or later work to our disadvantage.

Looking back a few years to the time of the ministry of our dear Brother Russell, it is recalled that there was a very alert missionary spirit prevailing

amongst the brethren generally. In those days when we heard of the ones, twos, and threes here and there who were being separated from false teachings and coming into the light of the Truth, how zealous we were, yea, how anxious to give them .the helping hand. By various concerted efforts and methods, the numerous groups throughout the country were active in their respective communities, assisting such interested friends to get together for regular fellowship, and study. Today, a somewhat similar condition of service should prevail. For again there are the ones, twos, and threes coming to a realization of where false teachings and human leadership have led them, and are now so circumstanced as to appreciate the assistance and counsel of others. What opportunity therefore and privilege of service is open to all of zealous heart and mind!

From time to time we are receiving inquiries from brethren in various parts, asking what more or further method may be employed to assist more of the brethren, .to help them out of confusion, and to unite them in the bonds of love and in the Lord's service. On the part of some who write us regarding these matters there is manifest much of the commendable zeal of the missionary type we have just referred to, and they offer suggestions that would encourage a concerted action on the part of those generally sympathetic toward the ministry of the Institute. We have endeavored to point out to such that we are using every means at our disposal and pursuing those methods of ministry and helpfulness toward the brethren everywhere that we have thought would minister to their spiritual upbuilding and edification.

For very special and proper reasons we have desired to leave the brethren, individually and collectively; free to undertake such work as they might believe worthy of their effort, and *to* avoid anything that might appear to be a desire to assume leadership in directing ;such general activity. The passing years seem to have shown that this attitude has been the wisest and best. In every way we have. sought to guard against the idea of building up another human system or organization, and against the encouraging of any one joining anything that could have the slightest semblance of abridging the liberties of the brethren or of bringing them into any kind of bondage; and we shall continue to exercise the same cautiousness with regard to future proceedings and undertakings. As we have time and again stated our position, we do not find in the Scriptures that any brother or board of directors or committee of brethren are authorized to consider themselves constituted as any kind of a ruling or governing body or authority or channel in the Church, and we would admonish the brethren everywhere to be very courageous and heroic in resenting the intrusion or encroachment of any such influence or disposition on the part of any one. It is in keeping with this thought and principle that the brethren of this association have carefully avoided intruding themselves or any of their suggestions into any Class or Ecclesia of brethren by way of meddling in its affairs, and we have to the contrary urged the brethren and Classes of friends everywhere to maintain their own independence and identity and freedom of thought by deciding all questions and issues for themselves and looking after their own affairs apart from the interference of any outside company or body of brethren.

Only the Faithful Rewarded

This association authorized by the brethren at large in various parts of the country, is conducting a ministry and service on behalf of the Lord's people such as they themselves desire and authorize. The brethren who are given

schedules and appointments as Pilgrim brethren, are such and such only as are already duly authorized and ordained as Elders of one Ecclesia or another; they are brethren who are already well known to be sound in the faith, men of deep religious fervency and conviction, as well as of some measure of the development of Christian character, and at the same time have also the abilities and qualifications of teaching and imparting spiritual truth to fellow-members of the Body. The services of these brethren are not imposed upon any, but are offered freely to those Classes who request or express a desire for their ministry as they are passing through the country.

In the capacity in which we are associated together in this arrangement, we are always pleased to give information to any of the Classes of brethren regarding capable brethren, able to minister in holy things, who may not be located far distant, and who would be pleased to offer their services to minister to nearby Classes over week-ends. These suggestions we make merely and solely in the spirit and desire to encourage loving consideration and helpfulness everywhere in this time of general stress and sore need.

We are doubtful if God has revealed to any one the full significance of the present, conditions in the and it is quite unnecessary for any of us to concern ourselves about how He will finally gather His elect out of the diversified groups. It is sufficient for us to realize that every member of the Body has need of the sympathy and helpful cooperation of fellow-members. And if we are to comfort the brethren and preach the Glad Tidings to the world, we must recognize that the real test of our zeal and love centers in the singleness of mind with which we grasp the exceptional opportunities of the present hour. So let us remember that it is the active, watchful, faithful servant, found diligently occupied when the Master comes, who will receive His sweet "Well done." Love cannot rest while there are lonely hearts to cheer, discouraged Full Assurance souls to comfort, and fellow-pilgrims looking for a faithful Barnabas to lend a helping hand.

Let us, dear brethren, everywhere seek a closer and more abiding fellowship with the Father, a larger measure of the Holy Spirit, whereby the disposition and spirit of lukewarmness and indifference may be put away; that holy zeal and fervency of spirit may possess us in such measure as will cause us to be diligent and active in laying down time and strength that others may be refreshed and blessed. By so doing; we shall truly be giving heed to the Master's admonition: "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

Full Assurance of Faith

*"Mordecai rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes . . .
and came even before the king's gate: for none might enter
into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth." -- Esther 4:1, 2.*

IT ADDS much to the significance of many of the statements of Scripture to have a knowledge of the customs that prevailed at the time the records were written. It is because of this that one who has familiarized himself with the habits and customs of Eastern countries, can see a beauty in many texts of the Bible that would not be seen by a reader who is unacquainted with these things. This is illustrated in the above text, and the lessons that are hidden behind the prohibition of entering the king's gate clothed with sackcloth.

The circumstances directly related to this text, we recall, had to do with the hatred and jealousy of the wicked Haman against the faithful Mordecai and his brethren. By a gross misrepresentation this evilly minded man had induced the king to sign a decree that would mean the death of Mordecai and all the Jews throughout the land. But the results, in the providence of God, were greatly to the disadvantage of Haman, and very much to the advantage of the subjects of his hatred. They hanged Haman on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai, and thus the instigator of death was himself destroyed, and deliverance accomplished for those who had been destined to destruction.

It was therefore while this decree of death rested upon himself and his brethren that Mordecai appeared before the gate of the king with his entreaty for deliverance. But since, according to the custom of that time, he could not come into the presence of the king clothed as he was, he must remain outside the gate. The dignity of the king was held to be such, that to permit: one so clothed to appear in his presence would be entirely improper. Indeed, if at any time the king desired to display a spirit of generosity toward any of his needy subjects, he must employ some subordinate officer, or menial to perform the service. Under all circumstances he must remain aloof from direct and personal touch with the poor arid distressed of his realm.

No Beauty that They should desire Him

This apparently was the conception of a king, held even by the Jews themselves. Was this not one of their reasons for rejecting Jesus? Had He appeared with great dignity, and held Himself aloof from the needy and afflicted, and assumed an attitude that forbade the approach of such, no doubt He would have been received with pride and approval by the leaders of that nation. But when He came to them through humble birth, wearing the sackcloth of humiliation Himself, and showing a special desire for contact with the sin-sick and heavy laden, He was rejected and set at naught. How could one who "receiveth sinners and eateth with them" be considered worthy of being honored as their king?

Strange indeed has been the perversity of the human mind-choosing disobedience and death, when God desired to bless with life and happiness, and preferring to endure the autocratic and crushing weight of a king like other nations, when God desired to reign over them in a personal leadership that guaranteed perpetual peace, liberty, and prosperity. And so it continues to be under the blinding influences of the Adversary, whose special purpose is to deceive, misrepresent, and enslave, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of liberty and life should shine into the hearts of those he would deceive, while he exults meantime in what seems to him the success of his great deception.

He Loved a World of Sinners Lost

But Jesus came, not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance -- those who like Mordecai and his brethren are tinder the sentence of death, and as a result, wearing the sackcloth of sorrow, groaning under their burdens, and longing for deliverance from the power of sin and death. For the sake of such He became poor, taking upon Himself a bondman's form, sharing with such their low estate, and finally taking their place under the sentence of death itself. In all of this He was portraying God's attitude toward the needs 'of

men. He came to bind up the broken-hearted; hence He said, "Blessed are they that mourn." He came to liberate the captives, to comfort such with the oil of joy, to give beauty for ashes, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, and so He said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28.) Now, as King, He remains the same yesterday, today, and forever, and those clothed in sackcloth need no longer be shut out from His presence, but are invited to come and receive deliverance from their burdens, and go free, to enjoy the multiplied blessings of His kingship.

Before we proceed to draw the one special lesson that we believe may be derived from this incident in Jewish history, let us examine two texts forming a part of the narrative, which are very important as a background to that lesson. We have just seen that there was great distress and sorrow while the sentence of death remained; for so the record reads: "And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes." (Esther 4:3.) But how different the attitude of these distressed people when deliverance had been accomplished for them: "And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple: and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad. The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honor. And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day. And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them." -- Esther 8:15-17.

Here we have a picture of condemnation and deliverance, of the distress experienced under the decree of death, and the exuberance and joy resulting from the nullification of that decree; of a petitioner, once circumscribed outside the gate, clothed in sackcloth, but now enjoying all the rights of free access into the presence of the king, clothed in royal apparel.

There is therefore Now no Condemnation

Perhaps it would be safe to say that the most difficult feature of the Christian faith for the average believer to grasp is that which has to do with a full assurance of faith. The phrase itself has become commonplace to multitudes, but familiarity with the words has not meant: a general understanding of their inspirational, liberating import. It has been so much easier for many to cling to the sackcloth of Romans 7 than to put on the royal garments of Romans 8. Paul, the representative Jew, under the condemnation of the law, bemoaning his limitations, has, sad to say; had more imitators than Paul, the new creature under grace, rejoicing in his complete release from the domination of sin and death. Or, as others prefer to interpret these Scriptures, the contrast would be, Paul, representing those believers who in all good conscience are endeavoring still to obtain deliverance and victory by personal efforts to perfectly control the flesh and its desires, yet constantly distressed over the manifest failure of even their most faithful intentions and struggles, crying out for deliverance from the hindrances to the life of freedom they so fervently desire to attain; then on the other hand, as pictured in chapter 8, Paul, personally and representatively, catching a vision of the great truth, that "When I had ceased from my struggles, His peace, Jesus gave unto me," which is a vision of complete deliverance through faith in Christ; hence "no

condemnation, no not a whit." Free from the law of sin and death, he could rejoice in the fact that as a new creature, walking after the Spirit, all the perfect righteousness of the law was fulfilled in him. In any event his words represent one of those "series of impulses" that characterize the life of the maturing Christian as he grows in grace and knowledge, and learns how and when to say, "Thanks be unto God who causeth us always to triumph through our Lord Jesus Christ."

This lack of faith is equally unbecoming and inconsistent on the part of a child of God, as it would have been for Mordecai and his brethren to have shown a preference for their sackcloth and ashes after their deliverance had been accomplished for them. What would the king have done, if, notwithstanding his plan of deliverance for them, the Jews had refused to accept his arrangement, or only half-heartedly, and more or less skeptically believed what he had told, them, and if instead of feasting and rejoicing and giving thanks for victory, they had continued fasting and sighing over what they once were when the sentence of death was over them? Under such conditions, we doubt not, that the king would have been sorely disappointed and grieved. What then, must be the emotions of our Heavenly Father, when in the most gracious terms, and by the blood of His own Son He has signed and sealed the decree for our full release, and we "of little faith," refuse to accept our full discharge, and show a preference for the garb of a "wretched miserable sinner," when we ought to be jubilant in the fact, that "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." O that we all would, in this sense also, forget our father Adam's house, and in faith, in thought, in prayer, in discourse, and in conversation, with the holy boldness of John, affirm, "Now are we the sons of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be but **we know** that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." (1 John 3:2.) Surely this is an affirmation consistent with **our sonship** under grace, for even one of the house of servants was equally bold to say, "I **know** that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: . . . **Whom I shall see for myself**, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." -- Job 19:25, 27.

No Confidence in the Flesh

It has been well said by one who knew whereof he spoke : "We cannot have too many rejoicing Christians, nor can they rejoice too much, if they rejoice in the Lord The only ones who can rejoice always **are those who are living very near to the Lord, and who can feel always their oneness with Him.**" Is this not just another way of repeating Paul's basis of confidence: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of. the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through, the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; **that the righteousness of the law** might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." -- Gal. 2:20; Col. 3:3; Rom. 8:4.

What comfort and consolation are in these assurances! These are wonderful words of life indeed! They inspire us with hope. If God will accept heart intentions, instead of absolute perfection of the flesh, then indeed we have hope of attaining to the standard which He has marked for us -- the standard

of perfection, "received by faith appropriating its birthright of completeness in Christ, who of God, is made unto us justification."

No properly instructed individual of the Church can entertain the hope of perfecting his flesh, for its degenerate condition of deadness is too plainly taught in the Scriptures; and it is because of this fact that Paul lifts us right out of that condition by his emphatic statement, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit; if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." (Rom. 8:9.) To make a claim of attaining perfection in the flesh, would be to advertise the fact that we had lost the realization of the depth of our depravity, and the vision of God's holiness. The most devout and godly characters of this Age of Grace have been those who were most painfully conscious of the limits and imperfections of their flesh. Such have always recognized that in their flesh dwelt no perfect thing, and therefore they rejoiced, not in their own attainments, but in the life hidden in Christ, the all-sufficient One. Their good intentions did not justify them nor gain for them deliverance from condemnation, neither did those good intentions become to them the criterion of their acceptance as members of Christ, as so many others have seemingly been in danger of believing. Good intentions, when accompanied by a faithful, determined eagerness for righteousness, are at best but an evidence that we love righteousness, that we desire to live to please God, and that if we were capable of perfect righteousness we would delight to walk therein. This demonstration of love and sincerity, God graciously accepts as an evidence of the fact that we love Him, because, while we were yet sinners and entirely helpless, He provided for our redemption through Christ. If, then, we keep the thought clearly in mind, that we are accepted in the Beloved One, **and in Him alone**, regardless of how energetic we may be in good works, all of which are so imperfect as to be rejected at once aside from Christ, and then remember that our every need is met in Christ, and we are doing our best by a holy walk and service to express our gratitude for what He has been for us, and continues still to be, would we not be living far below our privileges if we did not realize a definite "full assurance of faith"? Would we not be doing great dishonor to the love that redeemed and adopted us, if, under this marvelous grace, we continued to cling to the sackcloth of doubt and fear, when we ought to be rejoicing in a full release, and a confident hope?

What more can He Say

With what tenderness and patience our Heavenly Father leads us to this desired condition of assured faith! Some there are, who, because possessed of a strong and ready faith are able to emulate Abraham, of whom it is written, "Abraham believed God," staggering not at the tremendous things embraced in the promise. But there are others who, through more or less of unbelief, fail to lay claim to all their sonship privileges. To these the words of Scripture are precious indeed: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear [reverence] Him." "A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench." But it should not be concluded that He is delighted to have the broken reed and smoldering flax remain in that condition. His desire is that this tender care and assurance of His love, should in time produce strength in the weakened reed, and call forth a burning flame from the well-nigh extinguished flax. Loving patience was glad to show the wounded hands and side to doubting Thomas, but how delighted the Savior must have been, when all doubt vanished and faith

exclaimed, "My Lord, and my God." Is that same evidence not sufficient for us also? It would be if we fully appreciated what those wounds meant as a satisfaction to justice, as a guarantee of forgiveness, and as an assurance of deliverance from all present condemnation. O for the faith more simple that will take Him at His word, and just believe God. Pilgrim had his conflict with Giant Despair, and so have we in times past, and how we seem to have wanted to linger near that castle and engage in frequent combats with this giant, while all the time we have had ringing in our ears the words we have known to be so true:

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!
What more can He say than to you He hath said?
You; who unto Jesus for refuge have fled."

It is well indeed that we look to our feet, that we may not step aside from the path of life, but let us also remember to say, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help." Danger is from beneath, but deliverance is from on high, and that is where our faith and hope are fixed. Foes without and weaknesses within are ever present. We are dismayed at our own infirmity, and if faith does not hold, we are discouraged with our attainments: Then let us look up, as did the Psalmist, and realize reinforcement in claiming help from above. Thus looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith, we may be assured that our anchor will hold, and, praise His name, **He is able to make us stand**, His strength made perfect in our weakness.

"The Love Everlasting of Sonship a Seal"

The foregoing review of this subject of full assurance will, we trust, be profitable to all who may read, but we are thinking more particularly now of some whose peculiar trials are made known to us through the mail from time to time, and to whom we would offer a word of encouragement. With the deepest sympathy toward all who realize those fluctuating experiences of hope and fear, we would offer such help as, in the Lord's grace, we may be able. The condition of such trembling souls has been well expressed in the lines familiar no doubt to many of us:

"Once I thought if walked with Jesus,
Yet such changeful feelings had;
Sometimes trusting, sometimes doubting,
Sometimes joyful, sometimes sad."

This, of course, does not represent a life of vision or victory, but rather, a serious and most unhappy lack of understanding and faith. It indicates that there has been a failure. to look up to those hills of strength, to remain hidden in Christ, and to remember that we have been translated out of the kingdom of darkness; into the rulership of Christ, out of the flesh, and into the Spirit.

Going back, then, to that splendid statement already used, "How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in His excellent Word," let us see how true it is. Perhaps those of whom we are thinking just now have difficulty in apprehending Paul's exhaustive treatment of this question, and the repeated "we know" that John introduces with such assurance may seem too overconfident for them to receive as their own. If so, the Lord may help us in other ways as we search His Word for the evidence of our

relationship to Himself. Let us turn to those wonderful poetical books of the Bible -- Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles -- where our hearts have been so often strengthened and refreshed, where we find language seemingly coined just to suit our own particular needs. It has been stated by some one, that these five books are so arranged as to very beautifully represent the progressive stages of Christian experience. In any event the lesson we want to present is well illustrated in these wonderful portions of God's inspired Word, by which the man of God may be fully equipped with knowledge.

The End of the old Self-Life

In the Book of Job we have the story of God's dealings with a heart, where, notwithstanding the measure of faith and integrity possessed, there is as yet much of confidence in the flesh. True, there is no disposition to rebel against God's ways, even though He choose to slay in the process, but there is much of questioning, and a decided tendency to enlarge upon his own upright, personal character. If God must deal with him thus, well and good, but why, in view of **my integrity?** "Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compassed me with His net. Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, .but there is no judgment. Oh that I knew where I might find Him that I might come even to His seat! I would order my cause before Him, and fill my mouth with arguments." -- Job19.:6,7; 23:2,3.

But by and by God speaks, He unfolds the wisdom of His ways, reveals His care over all details, even of the brute creation, and His unlimited power to order all things according to His benevolent and righteous will. Then the old self-life dies, and Job freely confesses that his arguments were merely words beclouding the issue, that God is not only vindicated, but worthy of adoration and praise, and that only His doings were worthy of consideration. "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." -- Job 42:5, 6.

Have we not passed through this experience? Surely we have realized the wisdom of God's way, and have gratefully acknowledged our love for that will. We have surely ceased to magnify our own righteousness, our own doings, and instead of reiterating the statements of "my integrity," "my uprightness," we have learned to rejoice in His righteousness. The patience of God has been great, as He has waited for us to learn this lesson, but how glad we are now to know that the old self-life is destroyed, and the life we now live, we are living by the faith of the Son of God. "None of self and all of Thee" -- can we not affirm that this is true?

The New Life in Christ

The Psalms will then beautifully represent the new relationships and new vision made possible to those who have been made alive through Christ Jesus. In almost numberless ways these Psalms set forth the experiences of Jesus and His Church, outlining much that is prophetic, and containing much that is expressive of the love and devotion that fills the hearts of saints. Would we then find that which will strengthen our faith and be a real witness of the Spirit to us that we are a definitely related to Christ? If so, let us learn to appropriate by faith, our inheritance herein, and remember that we dishonor God by our failures to take Him at His word. When self-will is dead, and God's will has brought us where we are "satisfied and still" the

heart's first cry will be, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation [His gift to me], and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now, in the presence of all His people." By progressive stages, as we grow in grace and knowledge, we will find that the Holy Spirit had anticipated our experiences, and framed the words so expressive of our reactions toward God's favor and love : "Oh how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day." "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God: in Him will I trust." "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." (Psa. 116:12-14; 119:97; 91:2; 23:1; 27:10; 91:1; 23:6.) And in answer to that question that gratitude inspired, "What shall I render unto the Lord?" -- oh let it be known that nothing will please Him more than for you, trembling soul, to accept these statements as wholly yours.

"The language of faith begets faith." Therefore let us note these and many other similar texts, and as we read them over and over, let the emphasis be put on those little personal pronouns, "I," "my," and "me." "O how I love." "He is **my** refuge." He is "**my** shepherd." "The Lord will take **me** up." "**I will dwell** in the house of the Lord forever." Let expression deepen impression, until in a full assurance of faith, and because we are hidden in Christ, we can say confidently, rejoicingly, "He holds me in His own right hand, and will not let me go." When faith has been strong, we have felt the power of these affirmations. Then let us trust Him where we cannot trace Him, and His song shall be with us, even in the night.

He is made unto Us Wisdom

Passing over into Proverbs, we are reminded that growth in grace means growth in knowledge, and that the wisdom that cometh down from above should be expected according to promise. Every true child of God delights in the wisdom imparted through a knowledge of the truth. They delight in knowing God's will as it has to do with all the acts of life, and more and more they seek to take God's viewpoint of every matter. In their dealings with all men, they are controlled by a desire to glorify God and to conform to His righteous requirements. If we are conscious of such enlightenment, and we rejoice in the measure of the Spirit of a sound mind imparted to us by reason of the light that has shone into our hearts, then once more we have the evidence that we have been taught of God, and we may have the further evidence that we are His, for "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

"How Vain is all beneath the Skies"

Progressing on in the Christian way must bring us an increasing sense of the vanity of all earthly things. And this is what Ecclesiastes may well represent to us. Here we have clearly revealed the utter unprofitableness of everything under the sun, that all is vanity and vexation of spirit without God, and wretched indeed is the one who would find pleasure in the transitory things of time. Have we made this discovery, not by having suffered reverses in our lives that have revealed that wealth and position are illusive bubbles, but has this knowledge come to us even though prosperity and health and earthly

friendships have been ours in great measure? If so, we have a blessed witness of a relationship to God, and of treasures laid up in heaven, that makes us sing,

"All that my soul has tried
Left but an aching void;
Jesus has satisfied,
Jesus is mine!"

Ah then, discouraged one, take courage. If the old self-life is gone, and the faith that begets faith is working in your heart in the affirmations we have just reviewed, and you have discovered yourself weaned completely from all earthly things, do not hesitate to say, "Father," for He that kinship delights to own, and He loves to hear you claim it.

How can I keep from Singing

We come now to the last of these poetical books, Canticles -- "The Song of Songs." It is a lover's song, not as of one lover, but of two. It is an interchange of sweet assurances between the Lover of lovers -- "Jesus lover of my soul" -- and His betrothed and waiting Bride. Here we have special attention given to the preciousness of this relationship. It is not specially a book of doctrines, nor of precepts, commands, warnings or exhortations, though all of these may be extracted from its contents. Its purpose is to present a song of admiration, confidence, and anticipation. Let us note its opening words:

"Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth." (Chap. 1:2.) This is what the book is intended to illustrate. And what could the kisses of His mouth be, if not those expressions, of endearment contained in His Word. Turn to the Gospel of John where an illustration of such kisses abound. "I will not leave you comfortless : I will come to you." "As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you." "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you." "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." "All Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine, and I am glorified in them." "Father I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am." "Neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father which gave them Me, is greater than all: and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand." -- John 14:18; 15:9, 16; 16:33; 17:10, 24; 10:28, 29.

Are these not the definite tokens of His love for us? Has He not scattered these kisses throughout the New Testament, in His own words and those of His Apostles? This is so, in order that we might have a strong consolation and assurance that He is constant in His love. Are we weak? Then let us, note His words of encouragement, and His assurances that to Him, we are as "the lily among thorns" -- "As the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun"; and be not faithless but believing. Let us not doubt His love, but affirm it, and rejoice His heart by the joy of our full assurance of faith, whereof we sing:

"If I ask Him to receive me,
Will He say me nay?
Not till earth and not till heaven
Pass away!"

This then is our confidence, that the God who has justified us, and the Christ who has died for us, are on our side, the highest tribunal in the universe has

acquitted us, and pronounced us free. The blood of Jesus has full atonement made, the penalty of death is lifted and we enter into life through faith in His finished work. Our imperfections are fully provided for in His completeness, and, loving Him with all our hearts, all our strength of mind and body, we will glory in our blessed inheritance of "no condemnation," because we are in Him. No longer need we linger outside the gate clothed in sackcloth, for our King has taken on the sackcloth for us, abolished the sentence, and now we may enter His courts with praise, clothed in the garments of salvation, and with a new song in our mouths, even praise unto our God. Hallelujah What a Savior!

"How Thou canst think so well of me
And be the God Thou art
Is darkness to my intellect
But sunshine to my heart:"

A Precious Season of Fellowship With Brethren in the South

By BROTHER I. I. MARGESON

LOVING Christian greetings to all the dear brethren.

"Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."

Leaving Boston on January 25 on my Southern Pilgrim trip, which lasted fifty-seven days, and traveling over six thousand miles, some fifteen States were visited. Over two hundred meetings, including calls, were held, with an attendance of over twelve hundred friends. Much joy and blessing came to my heart as I thus met in fellowship with these dear ones, and my continuous prayer was that the dear Lord would give mutual comfort and help. Our longing desire was to honor our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus, and to encourage all to continue steadfast, remembering the Scripture, "Let us not grow weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

On Sunday, January 25, I was with the dear ones in, Providence, R. I. From here, as well as from Boston (my home Class) and other Massachusetts Classes, warm love and Christian greetings were sent to all the Southern friends with whom I might have the privilege of Christian fellowship. These Classes also gave me the assurance of their prayers as I engaged in such a blessed mission. This assurance continued with me as a real blessing throughout my whole journey. A little season of sweet parting fellowship and prayer at midnight on January 26, with dear friends of Brooklyn and New York was an added joy and blessing to me.

The voyage of four days to Jacksonville by the Clyde Line Steamship Seminole, was most pleasant, and afforded quiet for sweet and precious fellowship with our Lord. Prayer for heavenly wisdom and Divine guidance was earnestly sought. The inspired Word was a new joy, as some of its riches of grace in the great redemptive Plan were again reviewed.

Our ministry in the South began with three days of fellowship with the dear friends in Jacksonville, where we found kind receptive hearts, to whom we endeavored to speak words of comfort. The visit here gave encouragement to my own heart, as well as deepened the impression that the special need of the hour was the reiteration of the simple Gospel of abounding grace, where all believers in the shed blood may find fellowship and mutual helpfulness. As I journeyed onward through the State of Florida, meeting with the little groups, or with the isolated ones, I was more and more convinced that there is no factor in Christian experience more conducive to real spirituality than the cry of the heart that has fixed its gaze on the Divine Word, which says, "This is the will of God concerning you, even your sanctification." Here, as everywhere, I observed the diversified theories of the day well represented, some holding to their views with considerable positiveness, and others quite faithfully trying to exercise becoming Christian liberty, and very willing to receive me, even showing me many kindnesses, all of which were greatly appreciated. But as I go back in mind now over the territory covered on this trip, my happiest recollections are associated with those whom I found emulating Paul in "this one thing I do," concentrating mind and heart on the sure foundation of simple faith in Christ, and full consecration to the will of God.

A feature of my experiences that made a lasting impression on my mind was my contact with some dear saints absolutely alone in so far as having fellowship with others of like precious faith. Traveling by automobile as we did, I had the opportunity of going into sections that otherwise must have been passed by, and I am fully convinced that when the Lord has finally gathered all His jewels from the earth, some of the dear ones I found in the isolations of the southern States will be numbered amongst them.

Many delightful seasons of fellowship characterized by special incidents occurred at different points visited. At St. Petersburg a very blessed season of happy association in a one-day convention was enjoyed. At this gathering the wholesome truths were rehearsed, and the minds of the assembled friends were directed to the things that unite the hearts of God's children to Himself and to one another. All present we feel sure were greatly helped by this day of feasting at the Lord's table.

At Lakeland another delightful experience was enjoyed. We think of this as a sort of reunion gathering, as the States of New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Minnesota, Massachusetts, and Florida, were represented without any prearranged plan for thus meeting together. This gathering was a real blessing to all present.

Our return trip covered the States of Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Virginia, and through these States I found much the same conditions, and enjoyed repetitions of the same blessed experiences.

God has some truly consecrated saints in these widely scattered districts, deeply perplexed in mind, and grieved in their hearts over the sad departures from the old paths that have characterized brethren and organizations in which they once had fullest confidence. These dear brethren are listening today, ready to hear the voice of the true Shepherd, ready to embrace with joy the blessed message of the Truth in its purity, and to send it forth. My heart was often lifted up in prayer to God on their behalf, that He from whose hand no man may pluck His sheep, would send forth more real comforters of the brethren, to reassure them that God's precious truth has not

changed, that its power to rejoice and sanctify the heart and life remains as potent as ever, that the earnest seeker, after holiness may still find the blessed companionship of kindred minds, and that where the Spirit Of the Lord is, there is liberty.

I would greatly appreciate the privilege of making special mention of the many acts of kindness shown me, if space permitted, and to return thanks to the dear ones who in various ways ministered to my. physical comfort and refreshed my heart by precious words of encouragement that greatly strengthened me in my labors. I feel sure that all the kindness extended to me by the dear brothers and sisters throughout my entire trip was done as "unto the Lord." May He reward them "according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

On our arrival in Brooklyn about forty of the friends gathered in the Institute parlors to welcome us home. A meeting of fellowship followed, and as best I could I introduced to them the dear ones I had met .and had Christian fellowship with while on my Southern trip. Our love and prayers were united as we thanked the Lord for the fellowship of kindred minds so like to that above.

It was good to be again with my home Class at Boston, Sunday, March 22, where I was warmly welcomed. Here too the dear friends enjoyed hearing from the Lord's people I had visited. Thus we believe our pilgrimage has united the dear ones North and South in closer bonds of loving Christian fellowship.

"For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

"This do in Remembrance of Me"

Once more it has been the privilege of the saints throughout the world, to commemorate the death of our dear Lord Jesus, as the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. On the evening of March 31st, the 14th. of Nisan according to the ancient Hebrew method of reckoning their Passover date, approximately one hundred of the friends of Brooklyn and New York met together to "keep the feast" which symbolizes their faith and participation in "Christ our Passover sacrificed for us."

This simple Memorial, so expressive of the Savior's love, devotion, and humility, must always be a precious occasion to those who have been privileged to know its deep significance. Its simplicity, beautifully illustrative of our Lord's meek and lowly character, has a special appeal to all possessed of that love which delights in His way; and such find from year to year a special joy in keeping this Memorial "till He come."

Such occasions afford opportunity for refreshing our minds respecting the great facts of the redemptive sacrifice of our Lord, for meditating deeply upon the marvelous love of the Father and the Son in providing for our deliverance at so great a cost, and for calling to mind the special favors now extended to those who have become joint-sacrificers with Jesus Christ, their Lord and Head. As God encouraged a constant looking back on the part of His typical people, to the great deliverance He had wrought for them at the

time of their first Passover and the subsequent departure from the land of their slavery, so the Lord desires that we shall keep fresh in memory the greater deliverance, and the more wonderful passing over of the antitypical Firstborn of this Age, of which the Jewish observances were but types and shadows.

These meditations at this time were well calculated to deepen our appreciation of the privileges we enjoy, and we feel confident that all who approached this Memorial occasion with hearts thus informed, and correspondingly grateful, were richly blessed and encouraged.

And would the Master not desire that an increasing measure of joy should now be ours, as with each passing Memorial season we remember that the time is drawing nearer when we shall drink the cup of joy with Him in the Kingdom. Would He not have us constantly rejoiced in heart with the privilege of still sharing in His cup of suffering, finishing up those "sufferings left behind for His Body's sake," which will soon be over and past. Surely He would. "Then may we not, in the days before us, experience a greater joy in our share in His cup, giving thanks daily to Him for the love that still holds us in so great a privilege, thereby realizing in a blessed experience the joy and love that consumed our dear Redeemer as He drank the cup poured for Him. May we all, in the coming days, value more highly our privileges in grace, and enjoy a perpetual feast on the Bread broken for us, and find ourselves being wholly consumed by a loving devotion to Him who thus loved us and gave Himself for us.

Half Hour Meditations on Romans

No. 15

*"He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation;
He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." -- Isa. 61:10.*

HAVING IN our previous "meditations" reviewed in a general way what St. Paul means by righteousness (or justification) by faith, more particularly as opposed to righteousness (or justification) by works of the law, we are in a position to consider a number of questions vitally related to his Gospel theme, questions which have not only been of great influence in the history of the Church, but which have lost none of their interest to us who have remained to these closing days of her career. For example, when the Apostle says that in the Gospel there is revealed a gift of righteousness, which righteousness has its origin in faith, and that this gift is of God (Rom. 1:17), does he mean (1) that righteousness is communicated to us or merely imputed to us? In other words, are we made righteous or merely reckoned righteous, and if only the latter, (2) how can God reckon us as being what as a matter of fact we are not? Again, (3) what is the relationship which justification bears to sanctification? Are these two stages, of which the first is over before the second can begin?

Regular readers of this journal will bear us witness that it has been our constant endeavor to avoid foolish and unlearned questions, knowing that they do gender strife. (2 Tim. 2:23.) When, however, in the course of orderly, consecutive, examination of an epistle we are confronted with certain doctrines or teachings, on the interpretation of which controversy may arise, we do not feel that this fact should deter us from presenting as best we may, our understanding of the subjects thus brought before us by the

Apostolic writer. To shrink from the discussion of certain doctrines merely because they have been subjects of controversy in the past, or may be in the future, and to allow such considerations to weigh with us beyond their proper limits, would, we believe, render us negligent in our duty, and quite unlike our faithful Apostle, who shunned not to declare all the counsel of God. (Acts 20:27.) In what we trust is a proper spirit of humility, therefore, and in a spirit of loving consideration of the thoughts of others who may differ with us, we propose in this "half-hour" to take up the consideration of these questions; May we not do so in the full confidence that the nearer we approach the truth in their solution, and their practical application to the affairs of every-day life, the closer shall we be drawn to our Lord who is Himself the Truth, who prayed the Father that by the truth we might 1>é sanctified?

Righteousness Imputed

The answers to these questions, then, appear to us to be all connected with one another. To begin with, justification "is a judicial, or as it is called, 'forensic' word [that is to say, it is a word derived from processes of law]. It expresses the verdict of acquittal. The use of the word in the Bible made this quite indisputable. Thus God justifies whenever He refuses to condemn -- when, whatever may have been our sins, He ignores them And He declares His willingness to do this simply because a man believes in Jesus Christ. Let a man believe, or take God in Jesus Christ at His gracious word, and the value of this act of trust or allegiance is such that God reckons it for righteousness, and admits a man into . . . [His fellowship], as if he were already fit for such fellowship in his actual habits or character. There is 'imputation' here, but it is the right sort of imputation. It is dealing with us not as we are, nor exactly as we are not, but as we are becoming, in virtue of a new attachment under which our life has passed; and this . . . is the only true and profound way of regarding anything. Not the standard already reached, but the movement [or] direction . . . is the important matter. Faith, then, is 'reckoned for righteousness' because it puts us upon the right basis and in the right relation to God; and therefore is a root out of which, provided it continues to subsist, all righteousness can healthily grow; whereas the most brilliant efforts or 'works' on a wrong basis may have neither sound root nor principle of progress in them. To believe in Jesus is to have the root of the matter in oneself. Therefore, when a man first believes, God can ignore all his previous life, and deal with him simply on the new basis, in hope.

Justification may lapse

"Of course this preliminary acquittal or acceptance [sometimes spoken of as tentative], is provisional. As the servant [Matt. 18:23-35] who had been forgiven his debts found them rolled back upon him when he behaved in a manner utterly inconsistent with the position of a forgiven man, so our preliminary justification may be promptly cancelled by our future conduct if we behave as one who has 'forgotten the cleansing from his old sins.' (2 Pet. 1:9.) The prodigal son, after he has been welcomed home, may go back again to the 'far country.'" "This reckoned justification, or justification by faith, holds good so long as the faith continues and is backed by endeavors to do the Lord's will. If faith and obedience cease, at once the justification ceases to be imputed." "But it remains the fact of such infinite value and fruitfulness is faith in God, as He has shown Himself in Jesus, that when a man first

believes -- aye, whenever, over and over again, he returns to believe -- he is in God's sight on a new basis, however dark be the background of his previous sins ; and he can be dealt with simply on the new basis, according to the movement of the Father's heart of love which his faith has set free.

"Now the justifying faith of the conscience-stricken sinner, whose case St. Paul always has in the foreground of his imagination, means first of all and most obviously that he consciously takes God at His word as being ready to forgive his sins, and accept him for Jesus sake in whom he believes. It is belief in God as forgiving, or in Jesus as he does not stop to inquire how -- obtaining and giving him forgiveness. And St. Paul laid great stress on this simple acceptance of the gift of pardon, as the gate of the new life and the first act of faith, because the readiness to be treated as a sinner and merely forgiven in spite of our sins is, as he knew full well in his own case, the final overthrow of spiritual pride.

Justification Merges into Sanctification

"But this simple 'reliance on the merits of Christ,' and acceptance of forgiveness at His hands and for His sake, is a profound movement of the heart -- of the spring of human actions -- which involves much more than appears [They are] hopelessly wrong and unlike St. Paul . . . [who isolate] this mere reliance on another's merits, and setting it apart from all deeper movement of will or love, have it, and it only, concerned with our justification. To St. Paul even the first movement of faith is a surrender of independence, and a recognition in intellect, and much more in will, of the lordship of Jesus. It is, in other words, a change of allegiance, and this is the important thing about it. And the absolved man, in thanking God for his forgiveness, finds himself, as it were, inevitably and without any fresh act, embarked on a new service. If he does not find this, he is not a man of faith at all" -- and therefore not justified in any sense of the word. With St. Paul the faith which justifies is always inseparable from hope and love. It is the basis of things **hoped for**. (Heb. 11:1.) It is faith **which worketh by love**. (Gal. 5:6.) "Faith is so deep a principle that, though it shows itself first as the mere acceptance of an undeserved boon from the Divine bounty, it involves such hanging upon God as necessarily enlists the **will** to choose and serve Him, the **intellect** to know and worship Him with a growing perception as He is revealed in Jesus, and the **affections** to desire and love Him."

We see therefore that not only by His death on Calvary's cross, did our Lord perform a work **for** us which constitutes the basis of our righteousness or justification, but also in His risen and glorified condition, He is carrying on today a no less important work in us. For, says the Apostle, if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the **death** of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His **life** (His resurrection life, of course). -- Rom. 5:10.

Righteousness Imparted

It is a blessed experience, undoubtedly, to have the peace with God which comes from being justified by faith, but a true lover of righteousness could never be satisfied with an imputed or reckoned righteousness only. His ardent desire is to be saved, not only from the guilt and punishment of sin, but also from its power. The words of the Psalmist express the sentiment of

the true believer's heart: "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness." (Psa. 17:15.) And he will not be satisfied until then.

By faith in Christ's work **for** us, righteousness is **imputed** to us; but as by His Spirit, Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, righteousness begins to be, praise be to God, **imparted** to us. Christ in us therefore, that is to say the Christ-spirit or the Christ-mind in us, is indeed the **hope of glory**. Though therefore our outward man perish, the inward man is renewed. When? is it asked? Daily, replies the Apostle. Though therefore the outward man perish, the inward man is renewed, **day by day**. (2 Cor. 4:16.) Under the gracious influence of the Spirit of Christ, that blessed promise of the Father, we are to be no longer conformed to the spirit of this Age, but we are to be day by day transformed by the renewing of our minds. (Rom. 12:2.) Concerning Christ's work for us, the all-sufficient ground of our acceptance with God, our Lord cried from the cross, "It is finished." In regard to Christ's work **in** us, the Apostle writes, "Being confident of this very thing, that He who hath begun a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ." -- Phil 1:6.

"The life of justification thus proceeds . . . from faith in Christ 'for us' to faith in Christ 'in us.' The justified man, accepted into the 'Body of Christ' by . . . [consecration and spirit-begetting] and [thus] made a participator of the life of Christ, receives the continual gifts of the Divine bounty, . . . and his faith exercising its natural faculty of correspondence [correspondence with God instead of independence from Him], absorbs and appropriates the Divine gifts **intellectually**, so that the eyes of the understanding are opened in increasing knowledge -- practically, so that 'Christ dwells in the heart by faith,' and it is no longer the bare human self which lives, but Christ which lives in the renewed man, **with a continual display of moral power.**"

"The first justification or acceptance is therefore a preliminary step; it is acceptance for admission into the Divine household, or city of God, or life in Christ. It is a means to an end, and that end the fellowship of Christ, and continually developing assimilation to Him. Does this mean, then, that justification and sanctification are [facts or] processes following the one on the other, of which the first is over before the latter begins? Such a statement must be repudiated so far as its latter clause is concerned. You cannot thus logically sever a vital process. At any stage of . . . [the life of faith, even at its very beginning], there must be movement in order to make forgiveness possible. Grant this; however, and it becomes true that justification, as meaning acquittal, is a preliminary to sanctification, that is, the being made like Christ." "Faith-justification does not cease as the sanctification work progresses. It continues with us . . . covering us . . . from all the weaknesses and imperfection of word, thought, and deed which are ours through the weaknesses of the flesh, through heredity (not willful). It continues thus to cover the Lord's people as New Creatures even to the end of their journey-through all the testings and trials necessary to them as candidates for, and probationary members of, the New Creation We will need this justification, and it will continue to be our robe so long as we abide in Christ and are still in the flesh; but it will cease completely when our trial ends in our acceptance as overcomers and we are granted a share in the First Resurrection. As the Apostle explains-it is sown in corruption, dishonor and weakness, but it will be raised in incorruption, in power, in glory, in full likeness to our Lord, the Quickening Spirit, who is the express image of the Father's person. When that perfection shall have been attained there will no

longer be a necessity for an imputed righteousness, because we will then be actually righteous, actually perfect."

Conclusion

In the light of the foregoing discussion, our conclusions on the three questions before us may be briefly summarized as follows:

- (1) When a man is justified by faith, righteousness is not communicated to him, but is imputed to him; he is not made righteous but reckoned righteous.
- (2) In imputing our faith to us for righteousness, God does not thereby declare that we who are not righteous have become righteous, but He thereby undertakes to regard and deal with us, as though we had, extending to us all the privileges that would be ours if we had become righteous. Is it asked: How can He do this justly? We answer He is able to do so because there is in living faith an active principle of love, the tendency of which is ever towards righteousness; it is this tendency or inclination towards righteousness, inherent in living faith, which enables God without violating the principle of justice, to fellowship with imperfect men of faith as though they were perfect (or righteous).
- (3) It seems to us that it conduces to clearness of thought to distinguish justification by faith from Sanctification. The Reformers distinguished between them; so also did our late pastor, Brother Russell. Justification is correctly understood as preliminary to sanctification; justification meaning righteousness instantaneously imputed; sanctification meaning righteousness gradually imparted. On the whole St. Paul does seem to keep the two subjects separate from each other. At the same time we heartily concur in the thought that the matter is "rather one of clearness of thought and convenience of thinking, than anything more material. Although separate, the two subjects run up into each other and are connected by real links. There is an organic unity in the Christian life. Its different parts and functions are no more really separable than the different parts and functions of the human body." As another has well said: "Justification and sanctification may be distinguished by the student, as are the arterial and nervous systems in the human body; but in the living soul they are coincident and inseparable."

If we were asked to answer all three questions in one brief statement, we believe we could not do better than commend our readers to that choice sentence from still another writer, a writer, be it remembered, who did not enjoy the light and privileges of our day, but whose words contain the very pith of the matter: "The righteousness wherewith we shall be clothed in the world to come is both perfect and inherent; that whereby we are justified is perfect but not inherent; that whereby we are sanctified inherent but not perfect."

The Love of Christ Constrainteth Us

"It only remains to make more emphatic what has been already suggested, that the Pauline doctrine of justification is of much more than antiquarian interest No doubt we must admit that St. Paul's doctrine of justification

has not been generally appreciated in the Church -- the fact is strange, but it is indisputable. No doubt also we must admit that those who have chiefly been identified with it have often even disastrously distorted it. No doubt, as a result of this neglect and of this distortion, the . . . [average member of the Church] of the present day is disposed to pass it by as having little meaning for him. Nevertheless it remains true that no revival of religion can ever attain to any ripeness or richness unless this central doctrine of St. Paul's Gospel resumes its central plane with us also. For, as St. Paul preached it, it means this above all else -- personal devotion to Jesus Christ as our Redeemer. This personal devotion begins by accepting from Him the unmerited boon of forgiveness of our sins, and (what is only the other side of such forgiveness) inheritance in the consecrated Body. But the consciousness of what we have received from Christ, and the price it cost Him to put it at our disposal, gives to the whole subsequent life the character of a devotion based on gratitude. This is the Christian life according to St. Paul personal devotion to Christ and personal service based on gratitude for what He has done for us." "For the love of Christ overmasters us, the conclusion at which we have arrived being this -- that One having died for all, His death was, their death, and that He died for all in order that the living may no longer live to themselves, but to Him who died for them and rose again."

Words of Encouragement

Dear Brethren of the Institute:

As I am sending .in a small order, I feel constrained to include also a few words that you may know something of the deep gratitude I feel to you for the regular visits of the "Herald." I study each issue very carefully and most heartily acquiesce in .the. general teachings therein set forth, and find food indeed in such variety as .to meet the necessities of the Lord's people in their various experiences, in the Narrow 'Way.

I thank the Lord for this "meet in due season" for the Household of Faith. As the days go by I seem to appreciate more than ever the great favor of the Lord in having "opened my eyes of understanding" to behold d the great Plan of God-to share with others, a few, in the blessedness that now belongs to the people of God. Truly, He, hath prepared a table before us in the presence of our enemies: our cup runneth over.

I rejoice that notwithstanding all the confusion of our day, when. many are falling, I still see the great Plan of God as I have understood it for many years, and instead of unlearning each year the things we rejoiced in formerly and looking for something new, I am trying to hold fast the things already proved true and would add from day to day the things "new" as they are found in harmony with those truths. How glad we will be when the "Mystery of God is finished," when the saints are gathered home, the Kingdom established, and the world is being delivered out of its groaning condition! May that Kingdom soon come.

Our dear Brother McKeown was with us as scheduled, and his visit was accompanied by marked evidences of the Lord's favor. I must write of one instance: -The same mail that brought, a letter from the Institute informing me of Brother McKeown's coming, also brought a letter from a brother in R_____, about forty miles distance, telling of his experience in getting awakened to the situation existing among "Bible, Students," and saying there

were three in that vicinity who had left the Society. I immediately answered and informed these brethren of our Brother's coming and of the meeting we were arranging for the evening. As a result these three brethren came early in the evening, enjoyed about three hours' visit with Bro. McKeown and later a discourse. To me this was a marked evidence that the angel of the Lord is going before our brother. I am going to add here that Bro. McKeown evidences the spirit of a deeply consecrated brother and seems actuated by a consuming zeal to serve the Lord, the truth, and the brethren. We pray for him, also all the Pilgrim brethren, and you dear ones of the Institute, that the Lord's Word may have free course and be glorified.

With fervent love, I am

Your brother in Christ,

H. H. – Calif.

Dear Brethren:

Find enclosed one dollar money order, for which please renew my subscription to the "Herald." I appreciate your kindness in sending it after my subscription expired. Due to illness, etc., was not able to send it sooner.

There are only two of us here, and we do need spiritual help. I am so thankful to my Heavenly Father for His many blessings which He has bestowed upon me through the "Herald." I would be glad to give out an extra copy, as you offered to send free copies to be placed in the hands of those whom we trust will appreciate and enjoy it, even as we do.

As I said before, there are only two of us here, but would be very glad to have our Pilgrim brethren stop here any time it is convenient for them. We had our dear Brother Boulter here recently, when we had a public meeting in one of our houses, and we had eighteen present, and received much blessing.

I pray God's blessing on your good work, and ask an interest in your prayers, that we may be faithful unto the end, when He shall take us home to be with Him and see Him face to face.

With much love and best wishes in the Lord,

Your sister by His grace,

Mrs. G. F. B. -- Ohio

Radio Service

Some time ago the brethren of Greater New York began making inquiries regarding the possibility of inaugurating a radio service over one of the large broadcasting stations in New York. The negotiations, we are now informed, have met with considerable success and we have been asked to give space to the following letter from the Radio Committee, which we are very glad to do.

March 25, 1931.

Pastoral Bible Institute,

Dear Brethren:

Knowing of your deep interest in the spread of the Gospel of the Kingdom, we are very happy to tell you that the Lord has blessed, the efforts of the

Brooklyn Radio Committee to the point where we are now ready to announce our first program for Sunday, April 12, a 10:15 a. m., over Station WOR of Newark, N. J. The following Sunday we are obliged to omit, but beginning again on Sunday, April 26, at 10:15 or 10:30 a. m., the programs will continue each Sunday at the same hour as long as the necessary financial requirements can be met, and it seems to be the Lord's will.

The dialogue method of presenting the message of truth will be used, and free literature offered to all who write in for it. We would remind the brethren who listen in that it will be their privilege to write the Brooklyn Radio Committee, expressing appreciation of the programs, and urging their friends to do the same.

WOR is one of the most powerful stations in the New York district, operating on a frequency of 710 kilocycles, and it should therefore reach a very large number of listeners on Sunday mornings in this and nearby States. Our hope is that many of the friends will have the privilege of enjoying these programs and sharing in the service by inviting friends and neighbors to listen in.

Your brethren in the service of the Lord,

BROOKLYN RADIO COMMITTEE.

As this undertaking is entirely under the supervision of the Radio Committee appointed by the friends of Greater New York, we suggest that all communications connected with this service be addressed direct to the Brooklyn Radio Committee, P. O. Box 33, Forest Hills, L. I., N. Y.



