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For Me to Live is Christ

"He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing." - John 15:5.

NOT until the personal indwelling presence of Christ has become one of the profoundest facts of our experience as Christians have we begun to realize the real meaning of these words of Jesus. This is evident from the testimony of Jesus respecting His own life on earth. He very emphatically declared that His life was what it was, solely because' of the indwelling Spirit of the Father. "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." (John 14:10.) And thus it is that we are able to appreciate the fact that unless we are abiding in Him, and unless He is abiding within our hearts, enjoying full possession of us, we are utterly incapable of doing or being anything acceptable to God. The bringing forth of much fruit is therefore dependent upon the indwelling Spirit of Christ, and according to these teachings of Jesus we must eventually reach the point where we can say of a truth, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Then we too may say, I am in Christ, and Christ in me, and He that dwelleth in me, He doeth the work.

If Christ be Supreme within

In the many illuminating figures used by the Apostle we have the successive stages of Christian experience set forth. So complete is the identification of the believer with Christ that Paul declares him crucified with Jesus. We are said to be dead with Him, buried with Him, and also raised with Him. The Christian is crucified to sin, with Christ, and through that crucifixion he is said to die unto sin; the old man, representing the fleshly desires, is henceforth to be reckoned as dead, and the "new man" is to live instead and daily to conform to the image of Christ. To accomplish this work in us the indwelling Christ is needed. He was raised for our justification, and in order to accomplish the work of sanctification in us, He must live within us, for this work

is wrought out from within; not superimposed from without.

"More important than questions touching the right directing of religious activities is the question of the hold which Christ has got upon the interior life. More important than questions of method is the question of spirit; more important than questions of form is the question of life. If Christ be supreme within, if He has His own way within the domain of the soul, all questions as to the particular shape that service ought to take are of secondary concern. To one wholly given up to Him it is all the same whether service be active or passive, whether it consists in doing or enduring the Divine will; it is all the same whether the position assigned be to lie in the Divine hand or to be led by the Divine hand; to stand and wait or to run and work. One thing is sure, the life which Christ possesses and directs can not miss the mark.

Those in Whom He Grows

"Let Christ be formed within as a spirit and principle of righteousness, and the mastery of inborn sin is broken. As His power increases, the power of sin will decrease; as He gains ascendancy, the world, the Devil, and the flesh will lose their hold; as the image of the heavenly comes out, the image of the earthly will fade out. The Christian will grow as Christ grows in him. Tender will grow the conscience softened by His grace; pliant will grow the will subdued by His all-conquering love; full of sweet and tender affections will grow the heart into which He increasingly breathes His loving Spirit. Those in whom He is alive are living Christians; those in whom He grows are growing Christians. As Christ expands within, Christian life expands without; as the Christ spirit develops, Christian manhood develops; as the power of Christ increases, Christian activity increases; as the place which Christ fills in the inner life enlarges, the place which He fills in the outer life enlarges. When the Indwelling *Christ* comes to His full strength and stature, the whole life becomes fashioned into the perfect type of a Christ-imagined character."

When We See Jesus Only

Let us, then, strive to be of those into whom the Spirit of God has come and wrought out these great attainments. We stand, the Apostle assures us, surrounded "by a great cloud of witnesses," men and women of a former Age who accomplished much through their faith in God. And God was able to use them in wonderful ways because they were obedient to His will, and because they were subject to the power of the Spirit exercised in their day. And there have been many others in this present Age whose lives stand out like beacon lights pointing us to greater things also. These have been God's faithful witnesses to the power of the indwelling Spirit, and we may catch from them an added inspiration enabling us to reflect the light received from the Sun of Righteousness. It is good to gaze on these resplendent characters, and to admire in them the splendid characteristics they displayed, but it is better far to have our own eyes fixed upon the source from which their triumphs sprang, beholding "the glory of the Lord" and by the power that steals over us when we "see Jesus only" be "changed into the same image from glory to glory." Let us, with willing self-abandonment, ardent devotion, and fervent zeal, follow Christ from day to day. If we do so through praise or blame, through seeming failure, in peaceful circumstances, or in dark valleys where faith is tried as in the fire, we shall one day see Him face to face and share with Him the glory that excelleth. His abiding presence in our hearts in the days of our pilgrimage here below will accomplish this for us, if we will only give Him undisputed control of our lives. Yea, He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think, for the promise is sure, "He that

abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." And a Father glorified by our devotion will exalt us with His beloved Son, and in the unending eternity to come, whithersoever He goeth, we shall never be absent from His side.

Concerning Republishing "The Divine Plan of the Ages"

IN the May 1st issue of this Journal there appeared an article entitled "Value of the Knowledge of the Divine Plan of the Ages," which gave a brief resume of the truth contained in "Scripture Studies," Volume I, written by Brother Russell. Mention was made that the edition of this volume published by our Institute ten years ago was exhausted and that the proposition was before us of getting out another. We placed before our readers the suggestion that had been made by some of publishing "The Divine Plan of the Ages" in magazine form (approximately 96 pages) with the thought that if this were undertaken it might be allowed to take the place of four of the regular issues of the "Herald."

By this time there has been a very general response from friends far and near, and the consensus of opinion is that we should proceed to the publishing of this volume, the preference however being for a cloth bound book rather than for the magazine form. The suggestion has also been made, that if a pocket size edition could be had without reducing the size of the print, same would be still more desirable. The pocket size seems to be preferred for a number of reasons. It is preferred by the brethren for their own use. It is also preferred when passing on a copy to an interested friend, and where Pastoral Work or Colportering is contemplated,, the pocket size does not present so formidable an appearance.

On inquiry we find that by reducing the size of the margin of the page we are still able to secure in a pocket size book the same size print as in our previous large cloth bound edition. After due deliberation of the matter, therefore, it has been decided to publish a pocket size edition in a semi-flexible binding. As this can be made from the plates that are on hand from our previous edition, the expense will be considerably less, and make possible our supplying the book at a much lower price than in the past. The matter of getting out this pocket size edition will proceed at once and we hope to be ready to fill orders by October 1st. The price of the book will be thirty cents (30c) per copy postpaid; or those ordering them in lots of ten (10) copies or more, may, if they will pay carriage charges, have them at twenty cents (20c) per copy.

A considerable number of the friends have stated how many of the books they desired if published in magazine form, and some have sent in a definite order accompanied by remittance. In view of the fact that we will now be issuing the pocket size edition instead of the magazine form, it will be necessary for such to reorder, indicating how many of the pocket size they desire. In the case of those who have accompanied their orders for the magazines by money, we will send, if desired, as many copies of the pocket size edition as will equal such remittance. We will await specific advice, however, as to this. Orders may be sent in to our office at once. May the Lord's rich blessing still attend the spread of the good news of the Gospel, as outlined in the pages of this volume, both to those who assist in its publication and distribution, as well as to those to whom it shall go.

The Goodness and Severity of God

"Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on hem which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, If thou continue in His goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." - Rom. 11:22.

THE value of a complete understanding of all the underlying principles of God's law is truly inestimable. Therefore, to have a good measure of practical knowledge of how all the Divine attributes-wisdom, justice, love, and power-work together in perfect harmony, means much to those who desire to have the law of God operative in their own inner life. Since all creation is governed by fixed laws, and dependent on obedience to those laws for existence, how essential it is that all intelligent creatures-angels and men-should be conversant with the great principles of the Divine government. This is particularly important when it is remembered that God is revealed to us as being "no respecter of persons," and that no creature in heaven or earth, therefore, is exempt from the exercise of His righteous judgments.

The Problem of Sin Must be Dealt with

The goodness of God represented in His acts of grace can never operate contrary to the decree set forth in His Word, namely "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Forgiveness may indeed be extended to the sinner, but the results of sin may linger to the end of life. God cannot be mocked, and the law of "a just recompense of reward" for infractions of His just commands must be forever reckoned with. Surely this is the great lesson being taught in the permission of evil for six thousand years.

In a most impressive and lasting manner, both the Church and the world are to learn that "the wrath of God is revealed against all unrighteousness," and that the way back to the perfection of obedience He demands, is indeed full of painful reminders of the sinfulness of sin, and of its deep, deep roots in the soil of our character. Forgiveness is but a beginning in the process of eliminating sin's defilement, but in order to "cleanse from all unrighteousness," much of scourging, much of the Refiner's fire, must be experienced ere the work is done. Sin must and will be punished. It is this very fact that gives us confidence that once the present experience with sin is over, "affliction shall not rise up the second time." All will have learned to appreciate the fact that in the holy character of God both love and wrath combine to make Him worthy of reverence and devotion.

Lessons Drawn from the Ages

For finite minds to comprehend all the minutia of God's law, would of course be impossible, for as the Apostle has well said, "How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out." (Rom. 11:33.) But our finite minds are capable of understanding the fundamental principles underlying our Creator's righteous government, and this after all, is the important thing for us just now, until that which is perfect is come.

These important principles are so plainly set forth in the Word of God, and they have been so effectively carried out in His dealings with transgressors in the past, that it would be folly to overlook them, or to treat them as though they were not of universal application. Surely this is the

very lesson Paul is seeking to impress on our hearts in rehearsing the manifestations of the goodness and *severity* of God in His dealings with Israel. No amount of favor previously enjoyed by the Jew would exempt from punishment when merited, and the favored Gentile must likewise stand in the fear of removal, if unfaithful. And how terrible has been the punishment meted out to the Jewish nation—a chastisement that has involved generations yet unborn when the sin of rejecting the Son of God was committed. The derisive cry, "His blood be on us, and on our children" has brought upon all succeeding generations a fearful demonstration of the *severity* of God. The fact that death has passed upon all because of Adam's sin, does not absolve from present responsibility, and the Bible speaks plainly of this fact to those who "tremble at His word."

The Retributive Character of God's Law

In support of the foregoing we quote from the pen of Brother Russell as he wrote on "The Retributive Character of Divine Law, some years ago: "The Scriptures, as well as observation, assure us that our justification before God does not remove at once and without our cooperation all *the results* of previous transgressions. The harvest comes like the sowing, but the penitent and forgiven one has promise of grace to help him in the battle with his inherited as well as his cultivated weakness; and so we read (1 John 1:9): God 'is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' It is in this cleansing process, which follows the legal justification, that the justified believer must, of necessity, experience some of the baneful results of a past course of sin—reap the reward of his former sowing. While the Lord will be very merciful in dealing with him, nevertheless, as a wise physician, He will not spare the necessary discipline to eradicate the deep-seated evil propensities of long cultivation in the past.

"Here the retributive character of Divine law is specially noteworthy. Men often make a distinction between the law of nature and the moral laws, calling the one natural and the other Divine. But the fixed principles of both are Divine in their origin, and accomplish the Divine will in their operation. Both operate on the basis of retributive justice. All Divine law, whether of nature or of morals, is but the operation of certain fixed principles of righteousness, having for their object the peace and happiness of all intelligent creatures under its jurisdiction. Obedience to this law brings its reward of happiness, while any interference with it incurs its certain penalty. . .

"The fact that the retribution—the reward or the penalty is often delayed is frequently presumed upon by the foolish, who vainly think that they can sow their crop of wild oats and never realize their harvest. Both individuals and nations have long presumed to act upon this hazardous and vain hypothesis; and well indeed would it be if they would even now hearken to the Apostle's warning: 'Be not deceived: God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth [or has sown], that shall he also reap.' . . .

"Even though such a one be freely forgiven upon repentance and faith in the Redeemer—fully absolved from legal condemnation through Christ, who bore its Divinely pronounced penalty, death, nevertheless, the fruits of his sowing are manifest in his character, and must all be rooted out and a proper character formed at a considerable cost of painful but valuable experience; for God is just, not only to forgive us our sins, but also to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. The eradication of these evil dispositions, propensities, and appetites, deep-rooted and long cultivated, will cause great disturbances of the soil in which they have grown; and pain as well as joy will attend their removal, and their replacement with the graces of the spirit."

The Sword of Judgment in the House of David

The importance of this subject of God's severity will justify a restatement of a part of the foregoing conclusions. The life of David furnishes us with an illustration of how "some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment," and of how this law of punishment works. We cannot question the sincerity of David's confession of his grievous sin, as he pours out his soul in the Fifty-first Psalm. And that God did accept his prayer we are assured. Yet hearken to His word regarding David's after life: "Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised Me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife." (2 Sam. 12:10.) God in His *grace* restored the penitent sinner to favor, but *in His Holiness* He could not set aside the "just recompense of reward" that his crime merited. Truly God is not mocked. The history of David's family life reveals in a striking manner the goodness and *severity* of God. And if confessed sin is so drastically punished, what must be God's attitude toward those who fail to manifest a troubled conscience, or "a broken and contrite spirit"? On another occasion we find the Lord emphasizing the same truth: "Be sure your sin will find you out." This need not necessarily mean that the wrongdoer's sin will be found out by others, but it does mean that his sin will sooner or later find him out and will be reckoned with. How manifest it is then that all of life: subsequent to our consecration will be just so much of an opportunity to demonstrate a supreme love of righteousness, and a corresponding hatred of sin. Should the language of our heart not be such a prayer for purity as this:

"So wash me now, without, within,
And purge with fire if that must be,
No matter how, though hard it be,
If only sin die but in me."

0 How I Love Thy Law

When the Scriptures declare that "God is love," we are happy indeed to find abundant confirmation of that fact in His dealings with ourselves and others. But is our appreciation of His holiness and hatred of sin active, and are we equally pleased, as fallen creatures, wholly dependent upon His grace, to know God as One who hates sin with a consuming intensity? Do we rejoice in a God who cannot look upon sin with any degree of allowance—One whose love is wholly compatible with an intense hatred when occasion requires the exercise of that hatred toward sin without respect of persons? It would seem that such an appreciation of all His attributes must fill our minds and govern our approach to Him. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom we are told, and true reverence for Him will glory not only in His love, but glory also in knowing that "our God is a consuming fire." Any other attitude would be first-class evidence that our deeds are evil, loving darkness rather than light; for all who love righteousness and hate iniquity are hidden in the shelter of the Rock of Ages, and glad to pray, "Search me, O Lord, and know my heart."

Evil to Increase in the Last Days

Careful attention to the whole counsel of God will reveal that "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come," are the integral features of the full Gospel message. Such careful study will also establish the conviction that the neglect of these issues would be disastrous, for "if the

righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" In other words, as another commenting on these evil times has well admonished: "Be on your guard against that tendency of this generation to paste a bit of white paper over all the threatenings of the Bible, and to blot out from our consciousness the grave issues that it holds forth." At various intervals throughout the ages, it seems to have been God's way to raise up a "preacher of righteousness," a man of fearless character, to proclaim the judgments of the Lord. No reformation ever attempted has accomplished anything unless it first of all produced a profound sense of sin and a desire for holiness in the hearts of such as came under its influence. Furthermore, the moment any awakening of this kind ceased to put the emphasis on the reality of sin, and the need of a complete cleansing therefrom, it ceased to be a reformation, and soon followed the well-beaten path into apostasy and ere long became part and parcel of the leavened mass.

To "prepare the way of the Lord" John the Baptist must preach the message of repentance, and to continue "in the way of the Lord" there must be a complete turning of the back on all "the works of the flesh and the Devil." When the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost its first message was a call to repentance, and that message stirred the hearers to inquire, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" And as the Spirit had its way in the ministry of the Apostles, it did not hesitate to warn men of "the terror of the Lord." True, "perfect love casteth out fear, for fear hath torment," but there is a wholesome fear of the Lord, calculated to make us walk carefully before Him, lest we fall into the "great transgression" of presumptuous sin. "No fear of God before their eyes" is one of the evidences of impenitence, and the sure token of an absence of any real sense of sin. It is always necessary to emphasize the fact that God is on His throne, and that the individual who violates His law does so at his peril. The goodness and *severity* of God are most essential to the stability of His government, and happy the man who has learned to glory in both His love and wrath.

Who Shall Ascend into the Hill of *the* Lord?

The Apostle has reminded us that one of the outstanding characteristics of the last days would be that there would be many "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." (2 Tim. 3:5.) This forecast has surely been correct, for is it not one of the chief features of religious life today? Satan's most successful snare is a combination of things apparently Christian and holy with things that are evil and vitiating. For this reason it will require a keen perception in order to detect his subtle methods. When we see any inclination to modify the exacting requirements of life and conduct demanded of saints, as these are set forth in God's imperative commands, we may well experience alarm. When sin's small beginnings are treated lightly, we may know that ere long iniquity will abound, and the love of the many grow cold to the *holy* things of God. To every saint, therefore, the question comes with searching emphasis today: "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place?" And so that we might know, the answer is given, "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation." - Psa. 24:3.5.

The Foundation of God Standeth Sure

If at times we are disposed to marvel at the length of the period set aside in the Plan of God for the gathering of the Church, our wonderment is quickly removed when we turn to the Scriptures for a portrait of what beauty and chastity the Bride of Christ must possess. Indeed, when due consideration is given to the purity she must undoubtedly have, what question could be more

fitting than that of the disciples long ago, "Who then can be saved?" But since the Gospel of grace is most certainly "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," and since God can bring to pass all that He has undertaken to perform, we know that there will be found a sufficient number who will follow on to know His power. Given full sway in the life, He will work out every requirement His righteousness demands. But what jewels they will be who compose that royal diadem in the hand of our God! What a fulness of consecration will have characterized them, and what a life of separation will have been theirs here below. All the exacting conditions of complete devotion to the whole, "good and perfect will of God" must have been deeply impressed upon their minds, as from year to *year* they kept going "on to perfection"- "perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord."

What a sobering thought it is that a very few, comparatively speaking, will make their calling and election sure to a full inheritance above, for many are called, but few chosen. Truly, it is just such sobering meditations that we need to indulge in at the present time. Unto whom much has been given, of them the Lord in the *severity* of His just demands will require the more. If, as all agree, knowledge brings responsibility, then how great is ours, yea, "what manner of persons ought we to be" in view of what we know of truth. It is well that we remember that the *very* arguments we use in support of our right in claiming to be a separated people, will witness against us unless we are better than others. Our claims of holding more correct views of consecration than Christians "who walk not with us," will bring us before the judgment seat of Christ to make good our boast. To charge others with being merely "consecrated to a work," will demand that we ourselves exemplify an unmixed devotion only to the will of God. Can we claim today that we are such a people? Is our "house so with God"?

Face to Face with God

In the conclusion of this our serious consideration of what the Lord our God requires of us, let us recall the forceful lessons taught us in two outstanding incidents recorded in the Scriptures: Going back to the days of the early Church we read the story of God's drastic judgment on Ananias and his wife. What speedy judgment fell upon these two for deception in the matter of claiming to give their all, as did the others. And why was this drastic punishment inflicted, in view of the indisputable fact that perhaps thousands throughout the Age have committed the same offense, and to all appearance gone unpunished? Was there anything vindictive about the blow that fell on Ananias and Sapphira, or was it intended to serve some important purpose? Assuredly it could not have been other than an object lesson of the greatest possible importance to all the succeeding generations of the Church. It must have been intended to demonstrate to one and all that the act of consecration, and a profession of having our all on the altar, brings us face to face with God, and any trifling there is a serious matter. In other words, this incident is surely intended to produce that "fear and trembling" urged upon us by the Apostle. The fact that God dealt thus with a false claim long ago, is all the evidence we need that He views the same offense just the same today. He does not change. Can we come into the presence of the Master and say, "We have left all to follow Thee" and have Him accept our word as true? If not, how can we escape His judgments?

Offerers of Strange Fire

Another incident full of solemn import is found in the record of the destruction of Nadab and Abihu. These two under-priests had presumed to offer a sacrifice to God in some manner contrary to the law of the tabernacle, and true to the warnings previously given, they were severely

punished for their sin. They "offered strange fire before the Lord which He commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord." (Lev. 10:1.3.) "All such workings must, inevitably, call down, sooner or later, the solemn judgment of a righteous God who cannot suffer His claims to be trifled -with. 'I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me, and before all the people I will be glorified.' Men will be dealt with according to their profession. If men are honestly seeking, they will, assuredly, find; but, when men approach as worshipers, they are no longer to be regarded as seekers, but as those who profess to have found; and, then, if their priestly censer smokes with unhallowed fire, if they offer unto God the elements of a spurious worship, if they profess to tread His courts, unwashed, unsanctified, unsubdued, if they place on His altar the workings of their own corrupt will, what must be the result? Judgment! Yes, sooner or later, judgment must come. It may linger; but it will come. It could not be otherwise. And not: only must judgment come, at last; but there is in *every* case, the immediate rejection, on the part of Heaven, of all worship which has not the Father for its object, Christ for its material, and the Holy Spirit for its power. God's holiness is as quick to reject all 'strange fire' as His grace is ready to accept the faintest, feeblest breathings of a true heart. He must pour out His righteous judgment upon all false worship, though He will never 'quench the smoking flax nor break the bruised reed.' The thought of this is most solemnizing, when one calls to mind the thousands of censers smoking with strange fire throughout Christendom. . . . Very much of that which passes among men for the worship of God is but 'strange fire' after all. There is neither the pure fire nor the pure incense, and, therefore, Heaven accepts it not; albeit, the Divine judgment is not seen to fall upon those who present such worship, as it fell upon Nadab and Abihu, of old.

0 for a Thoroughly Truthful Heart

Well, indeed, has the Psalmist written, "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him." (Psa. 89:7.) "May we learn to walk softly in the Divine presence-to tread Jehovah's courts with unshod feet and reverent spirit. May our priestly censer ever bear upon it the one material, the beaten incense of Christ's manifold perfections, and may the power of the Spirit kindle up the hallowed flame. All else is not only worthless, but vile. Everything that springs from nature's energy, everything produced by the actings of the human will, the most fragrant incense of man's devising, the most intense ardor of natural devotion, will all issue in 'strange fire' and evoke the solemn judgment of the Lord God Almighty. O! for a thoroughly truthful heart, and worshiping spirit, in the presence of our God and Father, continually!

"The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

Fellowship with Friends in the British Isles

By *BROTHER P. L. READ*

IT would be difficult for me to describe, in adequate terms, the refreshment of spirit which remains with Sister Read and myself as the result of fellowship recently enjoyed with friends in the British Isles. A trip which at the first was decided on *very* largely for the purpose of visiting our kinsfolk according to the flesh, was graciously overruled and extended in the Lord's providence so as to afford us also opportunities of fellowship with many of our kinsfolk according to the Spirit -- "them that have obtained like precious faith with us."

The fact that previous arrangements had not been possible, and that the duration of our stay was very limited, and to some extent uncertain, did not prevent, but if anything stimulated the fullest cooperation on the part of the friends, with the result that we were enabled to attend and privileged to address eighteen gatherings of the consecrated in various parts of the country, the combined attendance at these meetings being approximately nine hundred.

Our itinerary, which covered perhaps eighteen hundred miles, brought us in touch with friends in the following places: Hunstanton, Newcastle, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Belfast, Wanstead, Birmingham, Nottingham, Rugby, Malvern, Letchworth, East Shean, and Forest Gate, in each of which a very warm welcome was extended us, and the Spirit of Christ markedly manifest.

As with the friends in America so also with the British friends many developments had taken place in the five years that had elapsed since our last visit, and while some were able to refresh our memory with regard to incidents occurring in connection with our visits of 1922 and 1927, we had the additional joy of meeting with others who were not in touch with us on those occasions. A few of these, though not many, had come in touch with Brother Russell's writings for the first time during that period.

In addition to the several occasions of Brother Hoskins' helpful and encouraging ministry, that of last year being still very fresh in their minds, many recalled with a sense of deep gratitude the ministry of our dear Brother Streeter in the difficult yet happy days of 1920 and 1922. It was evident, too, that Brother Blackburn had won for himself a large place in the hearts of the friends, a number of whom expressed the hope that in the Lord's providence the way might open again for a further visit from him. Going back still further to the days prior to the formation of our Institute expressions of heartfelt appreciation of the faithful ministry of our beloved Brother Russell were heard on every side and inquiries were made as to the present welfare of those who were closely associated with him then. Amongst those inquired after was Brother R. R. Hollister whose activities in the newspaper work and in other lines of ministry were by no means forgotten. General satisfaction too, was expressed by those who had known him in the "old days" that Brother Paul E. Thomson had recently consented to share the ministry of the "Herald" as a member of its Editorial Committee.

In our own privileges of service we were led to deal more especially with the practical problems of every-day Christian life-the translation of written truth into Christian experience. Lessons in Trust as exemplified in the life and experiences of the Psalmist, and the Christian's secret of happy, joyous, living, as revealed by our Lord in the parable of the Vine, were among those subjects to which we sought: to give first importance. It was a great encouragement to us to note the ready response to such themes in the hearts and minds of the friends. Another subject was the

difference between a theoretical and an experimental knowledge of God, and how grace and peace is not multiplied except to those who possess the latter; to those who know not only *what* they believe but *whom*. With one- group of friends we were led to consider some of the lines of testimony introduced by the Apostle John to prove to those who have eyes to see and ears to hear that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, such might have life through His Name: Later we learned that this subject had been occupying the attention of those brethren for several previous weeks in their Class studies, and that as a result the message had seemed to them peculiarly appropriate.

From one standpoint it was a matter of regret to us to find in the British Isles as in America that the "free" brethren continued to be separated into little groups, for surely it is the Lord's pleasure that there be no schism in the Body-no splits, no divisions. We believe, however, that Brother Russell's words, although written by him in reference to the Protestant denominations of his day, were never more true than in their application to the "Truth" friends of the present day, He said:

"We will, doubtless, surprise many by saying that instead of having too many divisions or splits of the kind we now see on every hand, the real need of the Church of Christ is still *more* liberty-until each individual member shall stand free and independent of all human bonds, creeds, confessions, etc. With each individual Christian standing fast in the liberty wherewith he was made free by the Lord (Gal. 5:1; John 8:32), and each individual Christian united in loyalty to the Lord and to His Word, very quickly the original unity which the Scriptures inculcated would be discerned, and all true children of God, all members of the New Creation, would find themselves drawn to each other member similarly free, and bound each to the other by the cords of love, far more strongly than are men bound in earthly systems and societies. 'The love of Christ constraineth us' (holds us together.-Young's Concordance)."

Agreeably with these sentiments we endeavored to take full advantage of what we too believe to be a Christian's privilege of fellowship, and thus while fully alive to the importance of a correct understanding of every feature of our Father's Word, we did not permit differences of viewpoint held by some on even such important doctrines as "justification," "covenants," etc., to interfere with the free flow of the Spirit of Christ between us, but we endeavored to enter sympathetically into the experiences of all with whom we came in touch whose "hopes are built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness." Appreciation of this blest "tie that binds our hearts in Christian love" was much in evidence, and found expression not only in tokens of love and kindness and numerous little courtesies shown us personally, which we shall never forget, but also in messages of love and greetings which we were commissioned to carry to others of the "Body" whom we might meet along the way. Frequently these messages were accompanied by comforting words of exhortation and promise taken from our Father's Word. Amongst these were Phil. 1:9-11; James 5:7-8; 2 Thess. 3:1-5; 2 Thess. 1:11,12; Isa. 54:17; 1 Thess. 3:12,13; and 2 Thess. 2:13,17. May the blessing of the Lord "which maketh rich and addeth no sorrow," be the happy portion of our dear fellow-members "across the pond," and may "the peace of God, which transcends all our powers of thought, be a garrison to guard our hearts and minds in union with Christ Jesus." In the words of that hymn we were privileged to sing so many times together: "Grant us Thy peace throughout our earthly life Our balm in sorrow, and our stay in strife; Then, when Thy voice shall bid our conflict cease, Call us, O Lord, to Thine eternal peace."

The Final Examination

(Contributed)

"And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God. If any, then, worshiped not the beast, neither his image, neither received his mark upon their forehead and on their hand, they both lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." - Rev. 20:4. Sinaitic MS.

VARIOUS opinions have been held as to the character of the final and crucial test which shall determine the worthiness or unworthiness of each consecrated child of God to be of that overcoming class whose privilege it will be to reign with the Lord in the Kingdom.

It is unquestionably true that the Church is on trial in this Age, and that the trial is not yet ended: Christians are *daily* passing through many experiences which are in the nature of tests, some great and some apparently small or trivial, tests of faithfulness to God and of loyalty to those principles of righteousness, justice, and truth, which are the habitation of His throne; *yet* the idea of a final and decisive and individual test or examination is also a reasonable one, and is found to be in harmony with Scripture, the outcome of which test, whether of success or failure, will, in each case, depend upon how the individual has deported himself or herself during the period of discipleship in the School of Christ.

We may with propriety, in this connection, invite attention to the fact that students of the symbology of the Great Pyramid in Egypt, among them our beloved Pastor Russell, have noted the remarkable manner in which this "Witness to Jehovah" in Egypt symbolizes and forecasts this final test, to which reference has been made.

In that monument the beautifully constructed but steeply inclined passage known as the Grand Gallery, is understood to represent the course of the Church as a whole during the Gospel dispensation, and also the individual walk of each spiritually begotten child of God in the "narrow way" that leadeth unto life. The great Step, somewhat difficult and dangerous to surmount, and near the upper end of this Grand Gallery, well illustrates that judgment which the returned and present Lord must pass upon the nominal Church which has claimed to represent Him, and it also represents that final examination which each individual Christian must pass before being counted worthy to enter into the glory of the Kingdom, here symbolized by the King's Chamber.

Some Important Tests

It might, with a degree of reasonableness, be suggested that the final examination will be in the nature of a test of obedience, and this position is taken, we know, by some who' stress outward "works" or "service" as the means of obtaining the Divine approval.

Undoubtedly, each of the Lord's people must learn obedience as our Head learned it, "through the things which He suffered"; but this signifies true *heart* obedience, and is very different, indeed, from that sort of obedience which bows in submission and servility to human authority, which obeys and serves human task-masters. The quality of our obedience, whether to man or to God, whether of the hand or of the heart, will truly have a very important bearing upon the question of

whether or not we shall be able to pass final inspection.

It has also been supposed that the final examination would be a test of humility. We can readily concede that the acquirement of this grace is necessary to those who will be counted as overcomers, as well as the related graces of meekness, gentleness, kindness, etc. Christians are daily being given lessons in these graces by the great Schoolmaster, and the attentive pupil will most certainly pay earnest heed to these; yet we know of nothing in Scripture which indicates that the final or deciding issue will come along these lines, yet the more nearly each Christian attains to the likeness of our great Pattern in these and all other respects, the better will he be able to stand and to endure, in the hour of temptation. However, a kind of humility, if it may be so termed, has been observed in some of the Lord's people, which, if allowed to overbalance reason and the spirit of a sound mind, will certainly bar them from that entrance to the kingdom joys and honors which shall be ministered abundantly to the truly faithful. Reference is made to that so-called humility which deters some, in deference to human authority, scholarship or wisdom, from the maintenance of Christian freedom or "free moral agency"; which keeps them back from the use of their God-given reason and individual judgment in spiritual matters.

Love and Faith as Factors

Our Heavenly Father in His wisdom is not calling into membership with Christ any who do not possess the *ability* to "do their own thinking"; and He has given explicit instructions in His Word that such should exercise this faculty of reason; that each should become fully persuaded in his *own* mind, not in the mind of another, concerning the Scripturalness or propriety of every matter pertaining to his faith and calling. This, of course, implies that some individual study and application will be required of each one who has devoted his life to God and His service.

Again, it has often been said that the final test will be in the nature of an examination in Love. Since God is love, and, since we know that the attainment of His character-likeness is the ultimate object of all Christian experience while here in the flesh, without which nothing could avail us anything toward obtaining a place in the Kingdom, it is evident that none can obtain His final approval who do not come up to the Divine requirements along this line.

It might be said that John places faith above love and every other quality, in its relation to final victory, when he says, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." (1 John 5:4.) The relationship of faith to character is fundamental. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him." Without faith we should have no foundation upon which to build. Yet faith, we understand, is only a means to an end, and that end is the attainment of the likeness of our Head. "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." (Rom. 8:29.) Those, therefore, who actually undergo this transformation, who, by Divine grace and assistance vouchsafed them through faith in Christ and His redemptive merit, come up to this predestinated requirement of being conformed to His image and likeness, will be of the overcoming class.

The Temptation to Idolatry Through the Ages

A distinction must be made, however, between the divinely predestinated requirements in character attainment, and the divinely permitted test, or temptation, whose object is to determine whether or not these requirements have been met. In considering the subject before us, let us

remember that in the School of Christ, as in every school, there is the course of study, the curriculum. The student in that School who faithfully and diligently applies himself to the daily lessons as they come, will have no occasion to fear the final examination at or near the end of the course.

Many have erroneously supposed that the decisive moment would be reached in times of stress, or under circumstances calling for great courage in the face of physical danger, when loyalty to the Lord and the truth would bring one face to face, perhaps, with the "firing squad," or the executioner's block. Christians have endured physical persecutions in the past, and similar conditions may come again; but the Scriptures seem to indicate in our text and elsewhere, that the *decisive* test, in the experience of every consecrated follower of Christ, will consist of a temptation to engage in a form of sin against which we are most explicitly warned in Scripture, namely, the sin of idolatry.

Some may say that while: idolatry was the great sin of Israel in the past, and that while it is still practised in Pagan countries, yet Christendom is not given to the worship of idols. With this thought, however, the Scriptures are not in agreement. As idolatry was the besetting sin of fleshly Israel, so it is also the besetting sin of spiritual Israel.

In the symbolism of the Revelation of John, having to do mainly with events that must transpire during the period of the Church's trial, the subject of spiritual Israel's apostasy from the true faith occupies a most prominent position. Indeed, the greater part of the subject matter of that Book consists of the portrayal under various symbols, of that apostasy; the evident intent and purpose of which portrayal is that the truly consecrated and faithful in Christ might be forewarned of the forms that the besetting sin of Christendom would take, and so be prepared to avoid them. These, as our text intimates, are all forms of idol worship, and are, (1) worship of the Beast, (2) worship of the Image of the Beast, and (3) receiving the mark or number of the Beast.

The Test of Loyalty to God

The contention is not here being made that the mere refusal to engage in some sin will assure any one of the Crown of Life. The High Calling in Christ is a call to activity, to consecrated service of the true God. But the great Adversary has been very active in all past ages, and is particularly so at the present moment, in the devising of forms of deception which may cause those who are worshipers of the true God, who are devoted to Him and His service, to transfer that devotion to some false deity, or to some false conception of God which He cannot recognize. The temptations of this character are therefore, according to the text, brought to bear upon those who were "beheaded for [the sake of] the witness of Jesus, and for [the sake of] the Word of God."

This, in common with nearly all of the expressions in the Revelation of John, is symbolic language, and has no reference to a literal beheading. Our Lord Himself was not literally beheaded, and very few of His faithful footstep followers have suffered death in this way, yet the allusion here is to the entire company of the faithful. A symbolic beheading is therefore to be understood, the cutting off of the mind and will of the flesh, and the adoption instead, of the will of God in Christ.

The expression, "Beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God," we therefore understand to include all of those who have entered into a covenant with the Lord by sacrifice. Yet this symbolic beheading does not, of itself, place any in the overcoming class: something

further is necessary, as indicated in the words which follow, "If any, then, worshiped not the beast, neither his image, neither received his mark upon their forehead and on their hand, they both lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." (The reading of the Sinaitic MS., although having the same meaning as that of the Common Version, is here quoted because of its clearer meaning.)

The Strong Delusion

We believe that to every one who makes a true consecration to God in this Age, will be given a reasonable time with favorable opportunities, to become established in faith and character-to put on the whole armor of God, by which he may be able to stand in the day of trial. During this period of comparative quiet, there will doubtless be many temptations to depart from the "beheaded" condition. These will be in the nature of appeals to the fleshly appetites and desires.

Failing in such attacks on the individual's consecration, the Adversary will eventually be permitted to bring in the "strong delusion," namely, the temptation to worship, serve, and obey another than the true God, in the mistaken belief that such is God's earthly "Vicar" or special representative.

Experience and God's Word attest that this temptation must come to *every one* who will continue in the consecrated or "beheaded" condition, and that each one who will be of the class that shall reign with the Lord, must at some time in his or her Christian experience, definitely overcome this temptation, this urge to engage in one or more of the forms of spiritual idolatry enumerated in the text, all of which are the same in substance and in principle.

The sin of idolatry has, in every Age, been essentially the same, and is that of allowing something earthly, something visible, something tangible to occupy that place in the mind and in the heart, which rightfully belongs only to the Lord God. Specifically, as applied to Gospel Age conditions, it is the sinful practice, on the part of Christian men and women, of taking their instructions, laws, usages and teachings from some earthly source, channel, agency, or human instrumentality, whether good or bad, instead of from the Lord and His inspired Apostles and Prophets.

The Lord, in His wisdom has graciously provided for His Church "some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." (Eph. 4:11, 12.) Those teachers and leaders who are of the Lord's appointing, will humbly direct the attention of all to the Lord and His Word and not to themselves. They will not set themselves up as lords, authorities, or dignitaries over God's heritage.

Satan's Masterpiece of False Worship

Early in the Gospel dispensation this test came upon the Church by Divine permission, as foretold by the Apostle, and for the reason stated, "because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." (2 Thess. 2:10.) History reveals . that the bishop of the Roman ecclesia, having by degrees ascended to the position of a great dignitary in that: portion of the world, gradually gained ascendancy over the other bishops or dignitaries of the Church visible;; and. the result was the "beast," the strong delusion of that time; so strong, in fact, that all but the very elect bowed in adoration of the beast, according him Divine honor and worship, because of his "great

swelling words," in which he claimed to be the head over God's organization visible, and to sit as the personal representative of the Son of God.

Regarding the strength of this delusion, and the extent of the Papal influence of that time, the following words of Mr. H. G. Guinness are significant: "The world can smile now at the puerility of the proud and preposterous pretensions of the poor old man who occupies the chair of St. Peter in his Vatican prison in Rome. It listens to his loud claim to infallibility with a laugh of contempt. . . . But of yore it was quite another thing. Every utterance of the tiara-crowned monarch was heard with awe, every command was implicitly obeyed. Men trembled under his curse, and gloried in his benediction, as if they had been those of Deity."

A brief explanation will here be helpful, in view of some confusion which we believe exists in the minds of some on the point, relative to that which is pictured by A he beast of Rev. 13, which John describes as resembling a leopard, and having feet "as the feet of a bear and his mouth as the mouth of a lion." These distinguishing marks, as well as the description of his actions and subsequent history, seem quite clearly to identify him with Papal Rome.

Symbolic Photographs in the Apocalypse

Other aspects of the: beast with seven heads and ten horns, appearing in chapters 12 and 17, have reference to phases of the Roman Empire quite distinct from the Papacy, yet these should not be confused with the symbols of chapter 13, which have to do principally with ecclesiastical affairs. The careful student of the Word will also note that the "image," "mark," and "number" of the beast, have reference only to the leopard-like beast of Rev. 13. An accurate understanding of the text in Rev. 20:4, now under consideration, is, we believe, impossible apart from an understanding of the foregoing distinctions.

It may, with profit, be noted additionally, that this Scripture and that of Rev. 15:2, quoted in a succeeding paragraph, may be taken as conclusive evidence in favor of the historical, and as opposed to all "futurist" interpretations, in so far as they relate to the ten-horned beast of Revelation 13. The clear and positive inferences to be drawn from these verses of Scripture, are to the effect that the principal trial upon the victorious "little flock" while in the flesh, must come from this beast, his image, etc. Few, indeed, would hold that the call, trial and selection of this class is wholly future.

We understand, then, that the beast of our text is Ecclesiastical Rome, and that the "strong delusion" which first came upon the "beheading for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God," consisted in the pretentious claims of this system to be "God's organization visible," and of its hierarchy to rule in Christ's stead.

Solemn Lessons for the Consecrated

Since that period of darkness and superstition, conditions in the world have greatly changed. Time came when the original beast-like system no longer had power to deceive those "beheaded for the witness of Jesus," yet the deception must continue, did continue, and still continues-by the Lord's permission-that the trial might prove who had received the love of the truth, the love of God the Author of the truth, into their hearts, that they might be saved, and that they might be delivered from the sin of idolatry and its evil effects.

As Christians, it is most essential that we maintain that purity of heart toward God and all His intelligent creatures, which shall not fear to stand in the presence of the King; that we cultivate that close and real personal relationship with the Lord in prayer, and in the daily walks of life, which shall feel no need of an earthly go-between.

So, we shall be enabled, by the Lord's strength and favor, to be of that happy company described by the Revelator in chapter 15, verses 2 and 3, who had come off victorious over all these forms of deceptions; whose religion was unsullied by the fear of man; who had maintained the fullness of their devotion unto Him to whom alone, through His beloved Son our Advocate and Redeemer, all worship, praise, and adoration is due:

"And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast [neither were deceived nor defiled by ecclesiastical Rome and its claims] and over his image [were not injuriously affected by the identical claims, teachings and practices of organized Protestantism] and over his mark [the stamp of submission and subserviency to human authority in spiritual matters] and over the number of his name [the error that Christ, during the Gospel dispensation, the Age of sacrifice, and of faith-justification, has an earthly Vicar or Vice-regent], stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

The Ministry of Sorrow

"Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord!" "When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?" - Psalm 130:1; Job 34:29.

THE life of every human being has its lights and shadows, its heights of joy and its depths of sorrow. These make up a large part -of the warp and the woof of experience; and the web of character which flows from the active loom of life, will be fine and beautiful or coarse and homely, according to the skill and carefulness with which the individual weaves into it the threads of experience. In every life, in the present reign of sin and evil the sombre shades predominate; and to such an extent is this true that the Word of God aptly describes the human family in their present condition as a groaning creation. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together until now," says the Apostle. The children of God are no exception to this universal rule; we also "groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the deliverance of our Body"-our company, the Body of Christ. - Romans 8:22, 23.

But while we are waiting for our deliverance, the daily experiences of life have a most important mission to us, and the manner in which we receive them should be a matter of deepest concern; for according to the use we make of them, each day's prosperity or its adversity and trial bear to us a blessing or a curse. Those experiences which we are accustomed to regard as prosperous often have in them subtle dangers. If wealth increases or friends multiply or a large measure of earthly joy comes to us, how almost imperceptibly the heart finds its satisfaction in the things of earth! But when the keen edge of sorrow and disappointment is felt; when riches or health fail, when friends forsake, and enemies take up a reproach against us, the natural tendency is to despondency and despair.

Just here is a very important part of the great warfare of the Christian's life. He must fight the tendencies of his old nature and must confidently claim and expect the victory, in the strength of the great Captain of his salvation. He must not yield to the alluring influences of favorable outward conditions, neither must he sink beneath the weight of trials and adversity. He must not permit any experience in life, however hard and painful, to sour and harden him or make him bitter, morose or unloving. Nor may he allow pride or love of show, or self-righteousness, to feed upon the temporal blessings which the Lord in His loving providence has given him to prove his faithfulness as a steward.

Depths of Sorrow Lead to Heights of Joy

Sorrow and griefs may, and perhaps often will, come in like a flood, but the Lord will be our Stay and Strength in every experience which He permits. The soul that has never known the discipline of sorrow and trouble has never yet learned the joy and preciousness of the Lord's love and helpfulness. It is in seasons of overwhelming sorrow and grief, when we draw near to the Lord, that He draws especially near *to us*. So the Psalmist found it, when in his deep affliction he cried to God, saying, "Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord! Lord, hear my voice; let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!" (Vs. 1, 2.) Feeling his own weaknesses and shortcomings, longing for full deliverance from every imperfection, and prophesying of the bountiful provisions of the Divine Plan of Salvation through Christ, he adds, "If Thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities [imputing them to us], O Lord, who shall stand? But there is

forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared [reverenced]."-Vs. 3, 4.

How precious are such assurances when the soul is painfully conscious of its infirmities, of its utter inability to fully measure up to the perfect law of righteousness! How blessed it is to know that when our hearts are loyal and true, our God does not mark against us the unavoidable blemishes of our earthen vessel! If we come daily to Him for cleansing, through the merits of our Redeemer, our failures are not imputed to us, but freely forgiven and washed away. The perfect righteousness of our Savior is our glorious dress, arrayed in which, we may come to God with humble boldness, courage-even into the presence of the great Jehovah, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

If thus God ignores the infirmities of our flesh, and fully receives us and communes with us as His dear children, we should so regard one another, considering not and charging not against one another the infirmities of the flesh, which each humbly confesses, and which they, like us, are earnestly endeavoring *to* overcome by the grace of God, to the best. of their ability. To each one of the Lord's true children the words of the Apostle apply: "If God be for us, who can be against us? . . . Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect? Shall that God that justifieth? Who is he that condemneth? Shall Christ that died?" (Romans 8:31, 33, 34-Diaglott) The case is different, however, when the infirmities of the flesh are *cultivated*, indulged in without proper effort to correct them, and are justified, in order that the faults may be continued. Then, indeed, they are charged against us, and if we do not speedily "judge ourselves," and take decisive measures to correct them, the Lord will Himself judge and chasten us. - 1 Cor. 11:31,32.

In the midst of the cares, perplexities and difficulties that come to the children of the Lord, we are *to* trust Him fully, and to possess our souls in peace and patience! We are to *wait* patiently for the Lord to outwork the issues of our experiences in His own good way. How *necessary* is the patient waiting on the Lord! The Psalmist says, "I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in His Word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning." (Psalm 130:5, 6.) In every experience of sorrow and distress, and when the strain of the jarring discords and the stinging vexations, and wounds that make the heart bleed, threaten to 'overwhelm the spirit, let the child of God remember that "He *knows*, and *loves*, and *cares*," and that His ministering angel is ever near us, and that no trial will be permitted to be too *severe*.

The dear Master is standing by the crucible, and the furnace heat will never be permitted to grow so intense that the precious gold of our characters shall be destroyed, or even injured. Ah, no! If by His grace the experiences may not work .for our good, they will be turned aside. He loves us too well to permit any needless sorrow, any needless suffering.

The Reward of Patient Waiting

"Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. And He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the: light, and thy judgment as the noonday. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him." (Psalm 37:5-7.) We must not be disappointed and allow our faith to falter when the test of patient endurance is applied, while the outward peace and quietness which we crave tarry long. Our Father has not forgotten us when the answer to our prayers seems to be delayed. Outward peace and calm are not always the conditions best suited to our needs as New Creatures; and we would not desire conditions in which the precious fruits of the Spirit would not grow and develop in us. Therefore, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try

you, as though some strange thing happened unto you, but rejoice." (1 Peter 4:12,, 13.) He who numbers the very hairs of our heads is never indifferent to the sufferings and needs of His weakest and humblest child. Oh, how sweet is the realization of such loving, abiding care! "When *He* giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?"

The saints have indeed in every sorrow and grief a blessed consolation of which the world is wholly in ignorance. None but the true child of God can know it. What is this consolation.? Oh, you who have never enlisted under the banner of the Cross, who have never put yourselves wholly into the hands of the Lord to be moulded and fashioned into His glorious likeness, who have never made an earnest effort to stem the tide of the tendencies of your own fallen nature, who have never contended earnestly for Truth and righteousness in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, what can you know of the sweets of this Divine consolation? It is the precious balm of Gilead for wounded spirits on the battlefield of life, it is the stimulating, refreshing draught for fainting souls, hard pressed by the relentless foe. It is the soothing caress of a loving hand upon the fevered brow of the noble contender for Truth and godliness. It is the gentle whisper of hope and love and courage when heart and flesh are almost failing. This is Divine consolation, the only consolation that has in it any virtue of healing or refreshment. It is reserved alone for those noble souls who are faithfully bearing the burden and heat of the day in the service of the King of kings; while those who listlessly drift with the current of the world and the downward tendencies of the carnal nature can never have an intimation of its sweetness.

How loving and tender is our God, and how wise and strong! His promises have never failed those who have put their trust in Him. We may feel that our efforts to be good and to do good are very unproductive, that the opposition from without and within is very strong. But it is when we are weak, wizen we realize our own helplessness and incompetency, that we may be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. It is then that we may realize that His strength is made perfect in our weakness. The fact that we are weak and lame does not separate us from the love and power of our God, while we are striving to do His will; for "He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust." Then let us more and more lay hold of this strength of the Lord, that we may courageously pursue our course in the narrow way of difficulty and trial. Precious indeed to the saint of God is the ministry of pain and sorrow!

"Ye Have Seen the Patience of Job"

The saints of every Age have learned the blessing of afflictions and sorrows. The Psalmist David says, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Thy statutes"; and again, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now have I kept Thy Word." (Psalm 119:67, 71.) God's faithful servant Job suffered almost overwhelming troubles, but the Lord brought him out into a large place when his testings had accomplished their designed effect. He was proven and strengthened by his sore experiences. Few if any of us could suffer more. He suffered the loss of all his property, then of all his children, whom he loved, then of the love and loyalty of his wife; and finally, he was smitten with sore disease-boils, from head to foot. To crown all, three of his friends came to see him on hearing of his great trials; and instead of being true comforters, they added to his sorrows by insisting that his own sins must have been the cause of all these disasters; that his experiences must surely be punishments from the Lord because of unfaithfulness on his part. Surely poor Job was afflicted!

But did he lose his faith in God? Hear him: "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the Lord!" (Job 1:21.) "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." (Job

13:15.) Job was indeed much cast down, but he maintained his integrity of character and his faith in the Lord through all. He did not charge God with injustice, and God did not desert His faithful servant. He reproved his accusers and required them to offer sacrifice, and instructed Job to pray for them, that their trespasses might be overlooked. In the end he was blessed more abundantly than ever before. God made him a great type of the human family, of the troubles of their fallen condition and of their final restoration to all that was lost in Adam, with the blessings of added experiences to make them wise. How faithful is the Lord in all His dealings! Truly His children should never doubt His love: for "**Faith can firmly trust Him Come what may.**"

Preciousness of Intimate Fellowship With God

It is when continued trust in the Lord and His many responsive providences in our lives have ripened into precious personal acquaintance and intimacy that we learn to delight in Him. Yes, it is when heart answers to heart, when pleading prayer brings recognized answers of peace, when the Divine love and care have been clearly seen in the guidance of our way, that we can recognize the abiding presence with us of the Father and the Son. Then, however dark may be our way, however severe may be the storm that rages about us, the thought of Divine protection is ever with us, so that as the children of the Lord we are never in despair; though cast down, we are not destroyed; though persecuted, we are never forsaken. We know our Father's hand is ever at the helm, that His love and care are sure and unailing.

Those who have come into real heart sympathy with God have learned to see Him as the Fountain of all goodness and Truth and blessing. To them He is the one altogether lovely. His Law is their delight. His friendship and love are their very life. When the heart has become thus centered in God, it is the most natural impulse to commit its way unto Him. These can truly sing with the poet:

"So on I go, not knowing,
I would not if I might;
I'd rather walk in the dark with God
Than go alone in the light;
I'd rather walk 'by faith with Him
Than go alone by sight."

Surely these have the desires of their heart, and no good thing shall be withheld from them. Their fervent prayers avail much, and in the Lord's good time their righteousness, however much it may now be misunderstood, misrepresented and evil-spoken of, shall be brought forth as the light clear, cloudless and widely manifest; and their judgment, the justice and righteousness of their course and of their hearts, shall be brought forth as the noonday. Even while we remain here as aliens and foreigners in the enemy's land, we shall be fed, nourished, temporally and spiritually, and shall rejoice and be glad in the "house of our pilgrimage." Precious indeed are the promises of God; and to the praise of His abounding grace, His saints of the past and of the present all bear ample testimony to their fulfillment.

"Who need faint while such a river
Ever flows their thirst to assuage?
Grace, which like the Lord, the Giver,
Never fails from Age to Age!"

Expansion of Our Pilgrim Service

"Herald" to be published monthly

SINCE the formation of our Institute some fourteen years ago, one of the branches of ministry that has seemed to enjoy the Lord's special favor is that of our Pilgrim service. Friends far and near repeatedly assure us that the ministry of our traveling brethren is much in demand and greatly appreciated.

As with other branches of our ministry, so with the Pilgrim Service, the extensiveness of this branch of the ministry must be determined very largely by the amount of resources, financial or otherwise, which are placed in the hands of the brethren in charge, while at the same time the number of brethren who are qualified and have the opportunity of engaging in this branch must also be taken into consideration. As with every other feature of the Lord's work, we look to Him for guidance, well, knowing that He is able to encourage or withhold His hand as in His unerring wisdom He sees best.

While waiting on the Lord we have become deeply impressed with the need for expanding, if possible, without delay this branch of the ministry. After all, there is nothing that can quite take the place of the *personal* ministry, and this seems to be especially true today, when many are being freed from the confusion and bondage in which they have found themselves, and in view also of the stress which both Church and world are now passing through. "A word fitly spoken how good it is" - and perhaps especially so when spoken face to face and heart to heart.

It will be recalled that on the second page of each issue of this journal we carry a standing notice which reads as follows:

"The brethren having this ministry in charge desire it to be fully understood that the cooperation of their consecrated brethren everywhere is at all times most welcome. Suggestions designed for the promotion of Zion's welfare are not only cordially invited, but may be sent in, in the full assurance that they will receive very sympathetic consideration."

While we were earnestly pondering the matter of expanding the Pilgrim service, a suggestion "designed," we believe, "for the promotion of Zion's welfare," came from a dear brother with whom we have been closely associated in the fellowship and service of Christ for many years. It was to the effect that we might strengthen the Pilgrim service greatly by weakening the "Herald" slightly. To be more explicit his suggestion was that we might change the "Herald" from a semi-monthly to a monthly journal and use the cash thus saved in expanding the Pilgrim service.

At first the thought of friends receiving the "Herald" only once a month instead of twice a month did not appeal to us, but an expansion of the Pilgrim service at the present time (when it seems to be so greatly needed) can, in view of our slender resources, be accomplished only by sacrifice in another direction such as that here suggested. After further prayerful consideration of the matter, we have decided to adopt the brother's suggestion for the balance of the present fiscal year, and the "Herald" will therefore be published monthly instead of semi-monthly until next June inclusive.

Should the present economic pressure not reduce our current operating revenue further it will be our purpose to use the money thus saved in expanding the Pilgrim work. By next June the friends everywhere will have had an opportunity of seeing how the new plan works, and we shall be guided thereafter by the advices we receive from them.

Encouraging Letters

Dear Brethren:

It seems difficult for me to write much of a letter and I expect I am not so prompt as I should be, but I will try now to do so. I want you to know I appreciate very much the ministries of the "Herald." It seems to me my heart's attitude toward you is like that of the poor Samaritan whose leprosy was healed, who when he saw it, turned back and with a loud voice glorified God and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. So in these lines I am trying to heartily thank God for such faithful ministry and such nourishing spiritual food. We wish you to know that you are remembered at the Throne of Grace that you may be upheld and kept steadfast. . . . The ability to serve we believe comes from the heart attitude expressed in the following lines

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

"I want to touch lightly the things of this earth, Esteeming them, only of trifling worth; From sin
and its bondage I And live, my dear Savior if only for Thee."

Your brother in Him,

Dear Brethren:

I am enclosing what I know is a very little contribution, but it is all I can give at present, for .my life has been full of trouble, especially for the last year. I have been left a widow, losing my husband this last fall; my son is home sick with consumption, and my funds very low. However, the Lord has been my strength and comfort many times in my lonely hours-and how much comfort and help the "Herald" has been to me also. I sometimes feel that I can't go on-everything looks so dark before me. An invalid I am for nine years now, and no means of providing for myself; but then the "Lord will provide" and I can lean and depend upon :Him.

Praying God's blessing upon you all and upon your work for Him and His through the "Herald" and all the other literature,

Humbly, your sister in Him,

Mrs. T. W.-Conn.

Dear Brethren:

I received two copies of the "Herald of Christ's Kingdom" sent by some unknown brother, to whom I am grateful. I came into the Truth in 1913; received a copy of "Light after Darkness" at the time of the great trial upon the Church. At that time I decided against you and our Elder and the Class here. . . . About four years ago I began to see my mistake and again met with the Class. About three years ago our Elder was killed and the Class was broken up. Since then my wife and I have been much alone in the: Truth, except for our Bibles and "Studies in the Scriptures."

I have studied over the two copies of the "Herald," especially of May 15, 1926, and in view of the present outlook of affairs in the world, it seems apparent that your deductions are correct. I am writing this letter that it might encourage you, as the two "Heralds" have me, to press on.

Thanking you for your interest in me, and asking for your prayers, . . . I am,

Your brother in the one hope of our calling,
W. F. K.-III.

Dear Brethren in Christ:

I notice from the date of my last letter to you that my subscription to the "Herald" is nearly due. In asking for a renewal I feel that I must take a moment of your time to tell you what a great help and blessing it has been to me in the past year. It is indeed as if the Lord had sent an angel to bear me up and comfort me in my time of need, its messages were so timely and its warnings so lovingly given.

I am so alone here in a city of 17,000 people, among whom I have failed to find a single one who was deeply interested in present truth. I was encouraged to try again though by the last "Herald" report of the dear brother who said some interest is being shown among the Advent and Baptist people. I do so regret the time I lost wandering in despair, overcharged with the cares of this world instead of pressing on patiently toward the mark. I ask your prayers that I may remain steadfast from now on, and to this end I wish to order the two books on Revelation and the one on Daniel's prophecy; also the "Desolations of the Sanctuary," . . . I am enclosing \$ for the same and to cover postage.

Thanking you again for your faithful ministry in His name, I remain,
Your sister by His Grace,
Mrs. F. E. W.-Vt.

Dear Brethren: Loving Greetings!

Just a few lines to express my thanks and appreciation of your loving ministry as used in the "Herald." The last edition, May 1, is of particular blessedness to me. I've just reveled in the article "Living Water" and I perceive to my joy it is not finished with yet. I could hardly constrain myself as I went through it, Bible in hand. Oh, brethren, what a joy is ours, possessing His Truth! What a comfort and strength to know of Him. Brethren, I cannot adequately express my appreciation of this article, also the study on "Romans."

The Lord has led me through various experiences this last twelve months, and on looking back I perceive more clearly His loving kindness. - Jer. 32:18; 31:3.

Like all His sheep, I've strayed from the path, yet, as in Bunyon's dream, He has sent His "Shining One" with a whip to rescue me and reset my feet on the "Old Paths" and turn my face Zionward. What a God! What a Savior! "Praise ye the Lord" is my heart's cry. I want to be more faithful, more zealous, loyal and loving. So help me, God, to be.

As one sees the awful rounding up as it were of the forces of evil, we cry more sincerely than ever, "Thy Kingdom come." As I write, the glorious May 1st sun (so typical of the Sun of Righteousness) is shining into my room, and my heart is singing because of His love for me and all His saints. So let us be joyful, let all His saints rejoice and look up, for He rejoices and is looking down on us.

God bless and keep you as ye keep His commandments and bless His people. - Psa. 12:2.

Your loving brother,
A. E.-Eng.

Dear Friends:

I have finished reading the second volume of "The Revelation of Jesus Christ," and want to assure you that I enjoyed every chapter. I am so glad to know and understand at least some of the highly symbolic teaching in the Book of Revelation. I have studied it without comprehending the meaning till I read the two books just finished.

May the Lord bless the Institute for the help they extend to friends unable to, buy the literature they need so much. I am so thankful for the timely visits of the "Herald."

With thankfulness to our Lord and to you for the favors received.
Mrs. J. L. A.-Okla.