

# THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

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## Distress and Perplexity

*"Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity." - Luke 21:25.*

PERPLEXITY--twin sister of fear, and together the bedfellows and daytime companions of pretty nearly every one walking the earth today. Even Christians, those denizens of "heavenly places in Christ Jesus," do not seem to be exempt from their dread companionship. We could not have dreamed that such bewilderment could have overtaken even the elect, as we are experiencing these days. We had grown perhaps, over-confident through long experience, and felt the future could hold nothing more perplexing or baffling than what had already been encountered, but the past held nothing to be compared to today's conditions, as the Word assured us would be the case, "For it is a day of trouble . . . and of perplexity." - Isa. 22:5.

There seems to be today a blurring of lines of demarcation that makes it all but possible to deceive the very elect, even as the Word predicted. Religious movements, for example, exist, so specious that the most conscientious believers hesitate to condemn them and separate themselves from them. Ringing true in many features, should they be condemned for the lack' they betray? We will not dwell upon the many other causes of perplexity--the hopeless business and social conditions existing, that try heart and brain to the utmost. Rather would we speak for a little concerning those inner perplexities which are, of all, the hardest to bear, and which seem to increase as the days go on. We believe that Satan is exerting himself these days to bring believers into a state of spiritual bewilderment, in which issues will be befogged, vision obscured, and the course of action rendered vacillating and uncertain. In our access to God in prayer we find this perplexity obtruding. There seems to be greater difficulty in "praying through"; oftentimes the face of Christ appears veiled, we find "we know not what we should pray for as we ought"; spiritual "dry times" are more frequent and the devotional time which formally was a time of truest refreshing becomes a period of spiritual confusion, in regard, to guidance, confusion in discerning between what is wise and prudent in a line of conduct and what would be the reverse, confusion in regard to diverse interpretations of the Word of God and to what the Holy Spirit Himself would teach us from its pages. Confusion as to God's present will for us, in face of many claims upon

our time, our money, our sympathy-confusion of heart, alas, when we see, being fulfilled before our eyes, the very cataclysmic happenings that the Word of God has so long ago foretold. But oh, the agony of seeing these things accomplished!

Is it possible for me to be delivered from this perplexity of spirit? How shall it be accomplished? Where shall I find direction?

Scripture's answer to question number one is Psalm 25:12: "What man is he that feareth the Lord? Him shall He teach in the way that He shall choose." "What man," any man, in other words, who shall fear the Lord shall be led and instructed in the path of the Divine will. It is just as simple as that and as all-comprehensive. To fear Him, may that not be to desire only His will, seek only His glory, distrust ourselves and yield all to His control? If we are doing that to the best of our knowledge, we can confidently claim deliverance from perplexity, for the promise is to "What man that fears, and we may be included in their number. The promise is ours., therefore, if we have met this condition. But question number two asks: "How shall this be accomplished?" Matt. 6:22 answers the query: "The light of the body is the eye, if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." It is by His Spirit, who is Light, filling our beings. . . And the condition is there attached, and how akin it is to that of the first promise. First, to "Fear the Lord, here to have a "single eye." Full consecration, all upon the altar, the acknowledgment and realization of the Divine declaration, "Ye are not your own."

But supposing these things are true of us, then may we pose the last question, "How to realize this direction and deliverance?" Again the Word of God expressing in two ways the secret of guidance; first, Psalm 119:105: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Secondly, Isa. 30:21: "Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." Illumination of the Spirit through the message of the printed page; . . The Word and prayer-behold the manner of leading. But, some one may object that they knew this already and had not been neglecting either means, and yet perplexity persists. May we humbly suggest that we, too, might have said the same thing a little time back, but with increasing pressure we have entered into a new understanding of our privileges in this respect. Try adding fasting to prayer, set aside double the time for prayer you formally employed, seek out often a kindred prayer spirit, when the battle is too hard for one to win through, and wait before Him until victory comes. For it will come, His Word cannot be broken, therefore, faithfully, persistently, meekly, believingly. "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you." - James 4:8      *-Evangelical Christian.*

## The Marks of the Lord Jesus

*"From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." - Galatians. 6:17.*

THE Epistle to the Galatian Church was written at a time when the air was rife with religious disputes. Rival factions were contending with more of zeal than knowledge, and more of partisan frenzy than devotion to the truth. There was much of the dogmatism present which contends for rites and ceremonies, from which the intolerant spirit of dogmatism inevitably subtracts all virtue. And there were also the ever present extremes of teaching, influences perverting freedom from rites and ceremonies into a gross violation of the believer's true liberty in Christ. These latter influences were more concerned to produce a "fair show in the flesh," than to build up a people rooted and grounded in the true faith. The former were misguided zealots, driving precious truth to a false conclusion, and though loudest in vaunting their religious standing, and thereby claiming for themselves greater devotion, they were, nevertheless, just about as far away as the others from the inner operations of the Gospel's power. In the case of both factions there was a sad misunderstanding of what constituted the real marks of the Lord Jesus.

It was this deplorable state of things that so exercised the mind of the Apostle. These brethren had occupied a very real place in that deep affection of which Paul was so capable. His first visit to them seems to have been at a time when he was suffering an unusual amount of difficulty of a physical kind, for in his letter he writes of his having preached to them previously "through infirmity of the flesh," and he recalls with pleasure their solicitation for him at that time, even to a readiness on their part to pluck out their own eyes if possible, and thereby relieve him of his affliction. Under such circumstances it is not difficult to understand his vehement protest against those Judaizing teachers, who in his absence had so insidiously misrepresented both him and his teachings. It seemed to him as though the bewitching influence of these perverters had held them spellbound; and as the news of their lapse back into energies of the flesh reaches him, there is a strange commingling of contending feelings within his heart. A proper indignation at the troublers, then sorrow, surprise, and displeasure, over the fickle conduct of his old friends. He yearns for their return, deplores their departure from the faith, scorns the accusations brought against himself, and reveals a real anguish of heart over the dishonor they have done to Christ.

### The Apostle's Absorbing Purpose

Out of this tumult of emotions he writes the Epistle to the Galatians. He bids them take note of his affectionate regard for them, as manifested in the fact that he had written to them, not through an amanuensis as usual, but with his own hand, and they could understand therefore how much this effort had cost him, as they saw the large letters he was forced to use because of his affliction. He contrasts the false teachers, whose purpose was to exalt the external ordinances, with his own absorbing purpose to glory only in the cross of Christ. He affirms with convincing logic that the one important thing is not centered in circumcision, but in their being created anew in Christ Jesus. Then calling to mind the well-known custom of that clay whereby the ownership of a slave was proven by the brand burnt into his flesh, Paul declares that he carries upon him the evidence of his apostleship in the scars of persecution with which his *body* was marked. "Henceforth, let no man trouble me," he says, "for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

## **Two Extremes to be Avoided**

The condition of the brethren in the Galatian Church was of course to be nothing unusual among believers throughout the Age. The Lord well knew that such conflicting influences would prevail wherever His people might assemble together; therefore this letter of the Apostle's has been preserved for the instruction of all. Inevitably, religious movements drift, after the first impetus of reform is passed, into an extreme emphasis on external observances, or into an easy form of belief and conduct which represents no contribution to helpful service, and no inner passion for the disciplinary effect of the Word of God in the life. Both of these extremes are avoided in Paul's conception of true Christian life. To him the impossibility of gaining anything through the works of the law had been so definitely experienced, that he could not write too emphatically against any introduction of that doctrine into the Church.

But though he constantly affirms the completeness of a believer's standing in full justification through faith, he by no means sanctions an easy, aimless attitude of mind. He knew by experience that what is worth while in human life can be gained only through determined effort and a willingness to pay the price. His frequent allusions to the contests staged in the arena of his day are intended to teach this very lesson. Thus the discipline and training of the athlete furnished him with a good illustration of the hardships to be expected by the Christian runner. He had little use for a belief which did not bite into the innermost fiber of his being, and arouse his faculties to a vigorous struggle between the lower and higher elements within.

And it was from this standpoint that Paul drew the attention of the Galatian brethren to the marks of his Divine appointment and Spirit-directed service. He was not exhibiting his scars merely as testimony of how much more he had suffered than others, but as a witness of his loyalty to Christ. Had he not taught that even if he gave his body to be burned, that of itself might not mean anything, unless the underlying motive was true love? All his scars might therefore be just as meaningless, and would be, unless they had been caused by love and fidelity to Christ.

## **Devotion to the Person of Christ**

It was therefore the passionate nature of his devotion to the Lord Jesus that stirred him most in his reprimanding and appealing to the subjects of this letter, Let us note his words in chapter 3, verse 1: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?" According to some commentators the thought intended in the last clause of this text really is, "I have placarded Christ crucified before your very eyes." If, therefore, they had once seen the true meaning of that great transaction, how could they forget its far reaching significance? How could they once again take up the fruitless struggle after life through rites and ceremonies? And why, in view of his manifest devotion -to the person of Christ, should he be discredited in their eyes? Consistent questions indeed, but anticipated long before by One who said, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." Nevertheless, strive to enter in, :for "many are called, but few are chosen."

The word used by Paul when he speaks of "marks" might better be translated "stigmata." This "stigmata" was the symbol with which masters indicated their ownership of slaves, and in this relationship to Christ the Apostle delights to classify himself. And while we of today also desire to bear about in our bodies "the marks of the Lord Jesus," we cannot of course exhibit scars such

as Paul's, and yet we may as truthfully claim the privilege of bearing a "stigmata" that is very real indeed. As Jesus was in this world, so are we, regardless of where we live in the present Age. But with Paul it was literally true that his body bore unmistakable witness to his faithfulness to Christ. He carried wounds that stung and burned his flesh, he was branded literally as a mad-man, and disparagingly depicted in various ways by his enemies within the circle of the brotherhood.

What, then, is the inference to be drawn from his reference to these marks? Surely just this, that no man is going to endure all that he had borne unless he is in real earnest about the cause he has espoused and completely convinced that the objective to be gained is worthy of so great a sacrifice. And with Paul this was the sole reason. The note that runs all through his letters reveals that the greatest purpose and joy of his life was to sound the depths of the mystery of godliness in Christ Jesus, to know Him and the power of His resurrection, and to share with Him the sufferings inevitably associated with a walk so contrary to the spirit of the world. He had found something that he valued more than life, something worth giving his life for, and something worth immeasurably more than the cost in beatings which had produced the literal scars he could show as evidence of his faithfulness to the ministry entrusted to him, and as a testimony of devotion to the person of his beloved Master.

### **Completeness of Christ's Ownership**

In the desire to appropriate Paul's statement to ourselves there are many lines of thought that might be followed, from which we could gather incentive and inspiration. We might review the oppositions experienced as we have gone forth with the message of truth, or we might consider the similarity -of our sorrows with those of the Apostle, but for the present study let us confine ourselves to a comparison of the experiences of Paul with those of the Master for whom He willingly suffered the loss of all things, counting all earthly gain as loss and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. By this comparison may we not see how we too may receive those identification marks which will bear testimony to the completeness of Christ's ownership of us.

Let us then consider first that "mark" which stood out so conspicuously in the life of Jesus, and on which His whole course was centered. This mark began to make its appearance at a very early period in His life. At twelve years of age He is so engrossed in learning the Father's will that we find Him answering his mother's gentle reprimand with the inquiry, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" And the bud which appeared at that early date burst into full bloom when the due time came. He goes to Jordan with the prophetic words finding a full echo in His heart, and we hear Him saying, "Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of Me), to do Thy will, O God." "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart." - Heb. 10:5-7; Psa. 40:7, 8.

Included in this will of the Father in which Jesus found such delight, we might properly enumerate His desire to seek and save the lost, to put away and destroy the power of sin, and to purchase a people for Himself, a Bride with whom He would delight to share His coming glory. But all these delights sprang out of an attitude of mind in which we always find Him. When He said, "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me," He was speaking not alone of these previously mentioned features of His purpose in coming into the world, but He embraces in that wonderful statement every minute detail of the Father's will. He delighted so much in the Father's times and seasons, that He would not so much as fill the emptied wine jars

until the hour to act had come. He joyed so much in the Father's will that He would scathingly rebuke a beloved disciple for daring to suggest an avoidance of the Cross. He loved that Divine will so ardently that He could say, "It is My meat and drink."

### **Inner Delight in God's Will**

For three and a half years He willingly, yea, joyfully "went about doing good," well aware of the fact that with many, the objective was not Himself, but the loaves and fishes of material and physical blessing, giving out of His storehouse -of love, though receiving a meager love in return, and keeping on loving notwithstanding all. And doing this as a loving manifestation of the Father's will. Even in the shadow of the ignominy of the Cross, He did not lose that inner delight in God's will. The flesh may be weak to the point of shrinking from the shame, but, "in the volume of the *book* it had been written of Him" that He should die thus, and be made sin for us, and the battle ends with the triumphant note of delight in that will. "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." When faced by the mob whose destruction might have hastily followed had-He summoned waiting legions of angels to His defense, He again revealed His delight in a will He loved better than life. As He stands in the presence of Pilate, in whose hand is held' the power to set Him free, His delight in that: higher will shines out with yet another flash of glory., Pilate's claim to authority, and his part in this transaction, are quickly set aside by the statement, "Thou couldst have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above." Pilate may be an actor in the scene, but the Father's will enters into this event much larger than any puny instrument. And so it ends with a shout of victory,, "It is finished." Finished! Gloriously finished! and in a manner that fulfilled to the utmost limit His own interpretation of God's will, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.... Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." - Mark 12:30, 31.

Did Paul have these "marks of the Lord Jesus" and thereby teach us how we too may have them?

Indeed he did! To him more than to any other Apostle we are eternally indebted *for a* clear elucidation and exemplification of what constitute true consecration to the will of God. His life stands out as one that has in it all that Jesus taught should be found in His followers. His entire ministry reveals a careful study of the *will* and providences of God. He verily believed that the sons of God were led by the Spirit of God; hence, throughout his writings we find the emphasis put upon the leadings and certain guidance of the Spirit. Are we surprised then to find *only* "gold, silver and precious stones" in the character structure he reared, and no "wood, hay, and stubble," which the passing of time would certainly destroy? Are we surprised to find an absence of any useless beating of the air, or of any, hastily devised schemes for anticipating or improving upon the Lord's wise arrangements? No, the record is marvelously free from any of these human characteristics. As we then recall the multiplied advantages which are ours in having so many helps for our guidance in learning God's will, how much may we well regret our failure to seek as carefully the Divine will and guidance as Paul must have done,' so that we too might now have this "mark" more clearly on us, and on our record.

### **Rejoicing in Hope; Patient in Tribulation**

Like Jesus, the Apostle was filled with such a, delight for the will of God that his service was never measured by the appreciative response of those he served. Like his Master, he was willing to be poured out as an offering, even for those who, the more he loved, the less they reciprocated

his love. As Jesus loved *His* own, and *loved* them to the uttermost and to the end, so Paul "travails in birth" for his brethren "until Christ be formed in. them. He too could look away beyond the instruments the Devil might use to buffet him and see the Master's will therein. With him it was a real fact that whatever the immediate cause of his afflictions might be, nevertheless, "it is,, the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good." His life of glorying in tribulation shames our murmuring over the little vexations of our lives, and causes *us* to wonder if we really have any of these "marks" upon us.

And so he followed Christ through life, bearing about in his body and ;conduct "the marks of the Lord Jesus," and "finished his course with joy." As the end of the way appeared, it was not an increasing groan over the hardships and trials apportioned him, but it was with an increasing joy that more and more reduced to nothingness the affliction that never ceased to dog his. steps. 0 may this "mark" be more and more manifest in our reactions to the experiences peculiar to our day May we, as we draw nearer and nearer to, the end of the way, find ourselves catching the habit of song and praise with which the inhabitants of our heavenly home are forever *occupied..* May we indeed learn to be content whatever, lot we see.

*(To be continued)*

## Three Character Studies in the Third Epistle of John

### No. 1. Demetrius

*"Demetrius path good report of all men, and of the truth itself; yea, and we also bear record." - 3 John 12.*

THE elder unto **Gaius** the beloved, whom I love in truth.

"Beloved, I pray that in all things thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. For I rejoiced greatly, when brethren came and bare witness unto thy truth, even as thou walkest in truth. Greater joy have I none than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.

'Beloved, thou doest a faithful work in whatsoever thou doest toward them that are 'brethren and strangers withal; who bare witness to thy love before the Church; whom thou wilt do well to set forward on their journey worthily of God: because that for the sake of the Name they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles. We therefore ought to welcome such, that we may be fellow-workers for the truth.

"I wrote somewhat unto the church; but **Diotrephes**, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not. Therefore, if I come, I will bring to remembrance his works which he doeth, prating against us with wicked words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and them that would he forbiddeth, and casteth them out of the Church. Be loved, imitate not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: he that doeth evil bath not seen God. **Demetrius** bath the witness of all men, and of the truth itself: yea, we also bear witness and thou knowest that our witness is true.



"I had many things to write unto thee, but I am unwilling to write them to thee with ink and pen; but I hope shortly to see thee,- and we shall speak face to face. Peace be unto thee. The friends salute thee. Salute the friends by name." - 3 John, Amer. R. V.

Brief though this Third Epistle of John is, it is full of instruction. In addition to shedding considerable light on the conditions which obtained in the life, and-order of the Church towards the close of the first century, it gives us character sketches of three men-'Demetrius, Diotrefes and, Gaius which we propose to consider in this series.

### **The Early Church Unfettered**

"We are not told to what church this note, or letter, was addressed, though it was evidently a church of some size and importance. But all the indications of time and place which have come down to us imply that it was written from Ephesus, towards the close of St. John's long life and ministry, and addressed to one of the neighboring churches of Asia Minor, which St. Paul had founded some' thirty or forty years before. There were many such churches in the wealthy and prosperous cities of this great province; and in all of them, no doubt, the tradition of St. Paul's teaching and power was carefully preserved; while in some, or in some members of many of them, there may have been a certain indisposition to submit to the authority of another Apostle, even to that of the venerable and beloved John. Diotrefes was probably only one of a class who said, 'I am of Paul' in a tone which made the words mean, 'I am not of John,' and turned the authority of one Apostle against the other. Obviously there was a good deal of independence in the churches when one church in a province could refuse communion with men who were commended to them by another church, could excommunicate those who did commune with them, and an unknown Diotrefes could not only set himself, but persuade the majority of his fellow members to set themselves, against the request and command of one of the Apostles who had seen the Lord, and he the disciple whom Jesus had loved above the rest."

The New Testament, however, makes it quite plain that whatever authority or rule was exercised by the Apostles in the churches was never exercised arbitrarily, but only by and with the consent of the congregations they served. "The entire arrangement of the early Church," as Brother Russell observed (June 1, 1895 Watch Tower), "was based on three things: (1) **Confidence** in the Lord, and in each other, as partakers of His Spirit; (2) Love for the Lord, and for all, who possessed His mind, and (3) **Obedience** to the Lord's will in whatever manner that will might be expressed." The Scriptures were recognized as being that good and holy will, in substance, and because the brethren saw that the Apostles possessed superior discernment in their interpretation, and because they manifested such a large -measure of the Lord's Spirit, their judgment on many matters was adopted, their suggestions as to which of the brethren were best qualified to serve as elders were favorably received. But it is very evident that the Apostles appointed no elders in any church contrary to the will of. the congregation. Sometimes their judgment was rejected, as is seen from the Epistle we now consider. In fact, in the Third Epistle of John we have a better description of church affairs than we might learn from many a long and formal treatise on the subject.

### **A Little Bit of Church History**

Demetrius and his associates, apparently, had been, called to engage in the ministry, and were traveling preachers, devoting themselves more especially to preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles. "St. John knew them, loved them, approved them, gave them letters of commendation to the



Churches of Asia Minor; and, among others, to the Church of which both Gaius and Diotrephes were members. Diotrephes, evidently a man of some mark and gifts, declined to have anything to do with them-perhaps because Demetrius did not come first to him, or did not. make much of and defer to him; perhaps because he preferred St. Paul's doctrinal and argumentative method of teaching, and his demand for faith, to St. John's Divine and deep simplicity, and his eternal insistence on charity, or love. In any case he did not like Demetrius, did not take to him; and doubtless he soon found or imagined abundant reasons for his dislike. Having formed, and uttered, his hasty opinion, Diotrephes was not the man to draw back from it. Nor was he content to have it to himself, to hold it alone. He must impose it on the Church. When others would have 'received' the evangelists, he forbade them. If they paid no heed to his prohibition, he got them 'cast out' of the Church; the motto of this lover of pre-eminence being, apparently, 'Better to reign in a small church than to serve in a large one.'

"Undeterred by his influence and threats, the hospitable Gaius had welcomed the repulsed and disheartened evangelists to his house, and furthered them in their good work. Whether he also was excommunicated by Diotrephes, or whether he was too wealthy and powerful a man to be attacked, we are not told. But, at all risks, he discharged his duty, having, we- suppose, an affectionate reverence for St. John which made the displeasure of a Diotrephes sit lightly upon him. Demetrius was very grateful to him; and, when he returned to Ephesus, reported the fidelity of Gaius both to the Apostle, and to the Church of which John was pastor or bishop. And now the Apostle sends back Demetrius, and writes to Gaius, commending and encouraging him, and promising him a speedy visit, in the course of which he will depose Diotrephes from his pride of place, make him eat his 'wicked words,' and restore those whom he had cast out."

### **Pilgrim Brother Demetrius Bears Witness to the Truth**

Such, briefly told, is the little bit of Church history disclosed in this Epistle, which for our profit we may compare with our own experience. Let -us now, look at the characters of the three brethren the letter sets before us, and learn the lessons each may have to teach.

For the present let us be content with looking at Demetrius, taking him first because lie was the bone of contention between Gaius and Diotrephes. Of him we are told less- than of the other two, but still enough, we think, to lead to a tolerably adequate conception of him.

Demetrius, we have suggested, was a traveling preacher, an evangelist, devoting himself, under the leadership of St. John, to carrying forward the work begun by St. Paul, that of proclaiming the good news of the Gospel to the Gentiles; although we may be sure that, like St. Paul, he missed no opportunity of proving to the Jews, out of their own Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. Doubtless also he combined in himself other functions, and was able to teach, and expound the Word not only to those who had never heard it, but to those in the "way."

"Whatever his gifts, and whether few or many, there can be no doubt of the self-sacrificing and disinterested spirit, in which he used them. Simply to travel was dangerous in those days, since every stranger was then held to be an enemy. But to go into the schools, market-places, and sanctuaries of strange cities, in order to teach a strange religion, was very like courting death. Among the sophists and philosophers of the time, indeed, with ears ever on the itch for some new thing, such a man as Demetrius, with such a message as his, might meet with nothing worse than ridicule and contempt. But the ignorant and cruel mob of those Asian cities (e. g., Acts 19:23-41), each of which was devoted to the service of its own deity, was prompt enough to take fire at

whatever could be construed as an insult to their special shrine, and knew no better sport than tearing a setter forth of strange gods limb from limb.

"It tasked courage, therefore, to venture among them with the simple evangel of Christ, which at once rebuked their vices and dethroned their gods. And to do this, not for gain, or fame, or hire; to go out into a strange, cruel world, not knowing where to look for daily bread, casting oneself wholly on the providence of God and the bounty of unknown brethren, was to make this hard, perilous task still harder and more perilous. But Demetrius did not shrink. He would 'take nothing of the Gentiles.' Like St. Paul, he knew well enough that, if he seemed to make anything by his message, the sharp suspicious traders of the Asian harbors and markets would close their minds and hearts as well as their purses against him. Hence he would take nothing from them.

### **For the Sake of the Name**

"If we ask the motive which inspired this noble and self-sacrificing devotion to the spiritual welfare of men, we are told that it was simply '**for the sake of the Name**' that Demetrius devoted himself to the service of the Gentiles. And this quaint phrase is one of those affectionate abbreviations which are sure to creep into use among the members of a community who are bound together by a common feeling and purpose, and is only one of several such, abbreviation's to be found in the New Testament. . . 'The Name' was the name of the great Savior of men, and stood for all that was known of Him, all that was summed up in Him. At times we read in the New Testament of 'the Name of Jesus' (Phil. 2:10), or 'the Name of Christ' (1 Pet. 4:14), or 'the Name of the Lord' (James 5:14), or 'the Name of our Lord Jesus' (2 Thess. 1:12), or 'the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ' (Rom. 1:5), and we are told that men preached in this Name, or believed in this Name, or asked in this Name, or were gathered together in this Name. But at other times, when everybody would know what was meant, and would instinctively supply the omitted words, 'the Name' was used absolutely and by itself, as it is here, where we are told that 'for the sake of the Name' Demetrius and his companions went forth to bear witness to the truth among the Gentiles. What moved them to this great and perilous work was the love they bore to the Name of Jesus Christ their Lord, and the Lord and Savior of all men." For what "the Name" really covers and implies is that Jesus Christ was the Savior whom God had promised and anointed, and that God was in Him reconciling the world unto Himself. "This was the truth to which Demetrius bore witness, this the Gospel which he preached; and it was because his whole heart was penetrated and informed by love for this great Savior and Lord that he went forth into a strange and hostile world to make Him known to men who were perishing for lack of knowledge."

### **The Truth Bears Witness to Pilgrim Brother Demetrius**

In the performance of his ministry Demetrius won for himself a threefold testimony: "(1) He won 'the witness of all' says St. John; that is to say, the witness of all good men, of all who were capable of appreciating goodness. Even those who rejected his message had nothing to allege against the man, save the sublime folly of a perilous and unprofitable enthusiasm; while those who accepted it from him, or had already accepted it from other lips, could not but admire the fineness of his spirit and the fire of his zeal.

"(2) More and better still, he won 'the testimony of **the** truth itself.' For he who daily sets his life upon the die that he may be true to his convictions. he who, moved by the grace and love of Christ, seeks not his own things but the things of others he who devotes himself with burning zeal

and all enduring courage to the service of truth and the salvation of men-to him the truth itself, which has made him what he is, bears witness. He does not merely 'prate' about the truth, as a Diotrephes may; he embodies it in deeds of love and self-sacrifice of which he would have been incapable but for the truth which animates and sustains him. Men do not despise ease and ,a sure provision for their daily wants, they do not daily affront every form of danger and loss, for truths, or beliefs, which have no real, no vital, hold upon them. 'They who do such things as these declare plainly,' they 'make it manifest,' that they are the servants of a truth Which they love more than they love themselves. It is the truth itself which speaks through them, and bears witness to them.

"(3) Last of all, St. John adds his own testimony to that of the previous witnesses; '**we** also bear witness.' And any man who has devoted himself to the service and spread of a truth which has not met with wide or general recognition will understand the special charm which this testimony would exert on Demetrius. From sheer love of the truth, or conviction, which God has given him, and a strong desire that his fellowmen should share the light and strength and comfort it has brought him, a man may be faithful to it, and go on proclaiming it, Whatever the risk or loss his fidelity may involve. But how unspeakable will be the comfort, how it will nerve his courage and sustain his devotion, if some great teacher, whom he loves and venerates, as far wiser and better than himself, far nearer to the Source of all truth and grace, openly backs him up in his work, and says: 'I love him; I trust him; I commend him to you; it is the truth which he is teaching, and by which he lives; receive him as you would receive **me**.' Many of us, I dare say, have heard such an encouraging voice as this, and know therefore what the generous appreciation of St. John must have been to Demetrius.

### **A Noble Character**

"On the whole, then, we may think of Demetrius as an evangelist, a traveling preacher, who was so moved by his love for Christ, and was animated by a spirit so disinterested and brave, by a zeal so ardent and sustained; who was so- faithful to the Gospel he preached in the daily life which he daily risked that he might be true to it, as to win for himself the testimony of all who were capable of appreciating truth and goodness, nay, of the very truth itself, and of the Apostle John, whom, we have reason to believe, was as close to the heart and mind of Christ as any other among the sons of men.

"A very noble character, surely, was Demetrius. And if the ideal he presents is one to which we feel that we have not yet attained or even one which we think beyond our reach, yet we cannot doubt either that so far as it goes it is a true ideal of the Christian life, or that we ought to and may so far reproduce it as to be bringing our daily life into a closer correspondence with the truths we believe. 'Lives of great men all remind us' that our lives ought to be greater than they are, and should move us to make them greater. If we are not called to be, if we have not the gifts which would fit us for the work of evangelists or traveling preachers, we are still called to be true to our convictions; we are called to live a Christian, i.e., a quiet, sober, and godly life, and so both to discharge the duty of bearing witness to the truth, and to enjoy the happiness of having the truth bear witness to us.'

*(To be continued)*

## The Love of Christ for His Church

*"Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." - Ephesians 5:25-27.*

WELL INDEED has the poet written, "The love of Jesus what it is, none but His loved ones know." If His love for a world of lost sinners staggers the mind of one who tries to fathom its depths, how can we ever hope to comprehend the knowledge surpassing love of Christ for His Church? Surely, "nor tongue nor pen can show" so divinely transcendent a love as that of Jesus for His own. But if our frail and imperfect minds are incapable of comprehending how one so high above us could yet love us so greatly, our hearts have been made capable of realizing the sublime fact of that love, and through the communion of heart with heart we may come to more and more understand His "love Divine all love excelling."

Christ loved the world, of that we are sure, and for that we are glad. For the world there is the love of yearning compassion, a boundless benevolence, longing for the time when the whole groaning creation can be delivered from bondage, and brought out into the freedom purchased for them by His death. But for His Church there is a special love, a love such as the Apostle has endeavored to make plain to us in our text. Let us seek to interpret this love; and even though we find ourselves lost in its unfathomable depths, it is blessed just to learn to rest in that love, fully assured that back of our farthest flung horizon of vision, and in the very heart of all things, is the great unutterable love of Christ, actively operating toward His collective Church, and present with even the humblest member whose love is precious in His sight.

"Christ also **loved** the Church, and gave Himself for it." There is more here than the love of compassion and pity; there is the love of a peculiar possession or treasure; the love of a special delight; the love of the Bridegroom toward His Bride. What marvelous, condescending love it is in which He speaks to us and says, "Thou hast ravished [margin, "taken away"] My heart, My sister, My spouse!" Truly indeed, "The very fountain of His Divine life, and light, and love, the very center of His being, is given to His beloved ones, who are not only set as a seal upon His heart, but taken into His heart, so that our life is hid there, and we dwell there in the very center of all safety, and power, and love, and glory." What manner of love is it? What shall be quoted to prove or describe it? First the whole Bible with its mysteries and marvels of redemption, then the whole book of Providence, and the whole volume of creation. Then add to these the unknown records of eternity past and the unknown glories of eternity to come, and then let the, immeasurable quotation be sung by angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven, with all the harps of God, and still that love will be untold, still it will be "the love of Christ that passeth knowledge."

### How can We Enter this Circle of Love

And who are these favored ones, so greatly loved? Are they not chosen from among the holy and pure where sin has left no stain? No, not from those untarnished characters does He select His Church, for "He gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and **cleanse** it." Surely then, the choice will be from among those who are "wise" and "noble" among men, the best that earth can furnish. No, not from these, but "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty," and these He must "wash by the water of the Word," and perfect through Christ, "Who

of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Cor. 1:27, 30.) And these include all who have come to Him as the way, the truth, and the life.- All who have given themselves to Him, to love, honor, and obey Him, are owned by Him. Forms, creeds, methods of operation, rites and distinctive names, do not determine the personnel of the Church of Christ. It is love between the heart of Christ -and the -believer's heart that constitutes the basis of this relationship, a personal relationship with Him, open to all who come by the only door into the fold. The way, then, into this wonderful circle of love is made clear-"we love Him because He first loved us, and by listening to Him, believing Him, and yielding ourselves to Him, He will take care of the cleansing and sanctifying processes from day to day, until He can present us without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

But perhaps it is well that we ask ourselves as to our being amongst those reciprocal lovers whose heart response must correspond to that of their Divine Lover. The solemn fact remains clearly and Scripturally that there can be a belief in Christ, an assured conviction that He died for all mankind on the cross; there can be a strict ordering of the life, rigid and exact conformity to religious duties, and yet there may be little -of the love that really matters. The heart is indeed deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. How often an impartial analysis of the heart would reveal unthought of selfishness, secret carnal motives, and other hidden faults. We have had great need of that gem of inspired warning, the thirteenth of First Corinthians, reminding us as it does that all that is not the outgrowth of love, is mere "sounding brass and tinkling cymbal." Christ asks for love, fervent heart-love, a love that embraces and clings to Him, as the altogether lovely One. He asks for a love that leans upon Him for strength and looks to Him for guidance, that rests in Him with complete satisfaction, and can truly say, "All I want I find in Thee." Membership in the visible Church there can be without belonging to Christ in the sense of a personal attachment most desired by Him, and there may also be the closest possible relationship with Him, outside all attachment to visible organizations. What is most important, therefore, is that we are among those whom He is sanctifying and cleansing, those whom He loves as He admonishes husbands to love their wives.

### **The Purpose of His Love**

If we should ask, "Why, O Lord hast Thou loved me in this wonderful way" surely His reply would be, "I have loved thee and given Myself for thee, that I might sanctify and cleanse thee with the washing of water by the Word; that I might present thee to Myself without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." How much we need to dwell on this glorious purpose of His, until we begin to see with increasing clearness just what our High Calling really means. In this same connection we recall the method employed by a dear brother of recognized deep spirituality, who we have reason to believe was faithful unto death in the manner he so clearly taught. This good brother in addressing the friends would ask the question: "Why, dear brethren, are we running in this race? and why do we desire to make our calling and election sure?" Then, out of a knowledge of how so many frequently express themselves, he would represent one as saying, "I want to gain the prize, in order to bless all the families of the earth," another as saying, "I want to become a partaker of the Divine nature"; another, "If I do not gain a place in the Little Flock, then I would rather have restitution." Replying to these suggestions he would say, "No! brethren, No! these can not be the reasons why we desire to gain the prize. Rather, the supreme motive behind all our desires should always be, God first. To glorify the Lord, therefore, must be the constant objective before the mind." And it is because of this very insidious tendency to think of the lesser purposes in God's abounding grace, that it is desirable for us to frequently analyze our real motives. This is

in the fullest sense of the word a love affair, and true love is forgetful of self because lost in adoration of another. Truly it must be with us,

"Since my eyes were fixed on Jesus,  
I've lost sight of all beside  
So enchained my spirit's vision,  
Looking at, the Crucified."

"That He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing." This is the amazing purpose uppermost in the love He has for us. This is the meaning to us' of the story of Bethlehem, Gethsemane, Olivet and Calvary. And, blessed assurance, if this spotless perfection is made our all-consuming' objective, we can know that He is "able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." (Jude 24.) And what a grief it must be to Him if we fail to fully reciprocate this love, and even measurably overlook the supreme purpose behind it. Can we imagine a prince who has found and loved some poor humble maiden far beneath his own station in life. He willingly runs all the risks and endures all the difficulties such an attachment is sure to produce. Now he seeks to adorn and beautify her according to the largeness of his love and the means at his disposal. The humble dress is laid aside, and the lowly home is left behind. The scanty fare that has been her portion hitherto is gone, and 'she sits now at a table filled with rich abundance. Can we suppose her princely lover satisfied, if her love rises little higher than gratitude for rich apparel, a palace home, and some one able to care for her? And yet it could be that and little more. Oh let us see to it, for our Lover's sake, that we are wide awake to His great longing concerning us, and be ourselves so consumed in love for Him, that all the traces, spots, and wrinkles of sin may be removed.

### **That He might Sanctify and Cleanse**

Think of Him who thus loves us so much, having all power to sanctify and cleanse us. Think how He tends over us with all the consciousness He has. of that great power, and correspondingly longing to enrich us with all the rich treasures of character adornment. "All that I have is thine," He assures us. Think then of how He would array and beautify us with His own character-likeness, displacing our frequent ill-temper, our impatience, our fret. and worry, by filling us with His own spirit of gentleness, forgiveness, love, joy, peace. Think of how He would enrobe us with an unfailing fidelity to truth, and an uncompromising adherence to purity, set the compass and helm of our lives so that in all things we will live to please and glorify Him, and endow us with an alertness of spiritual perception quick to, discern the direction of His will. To do all these things for us, our text tells us, He gave Himself up to all the shame and bitterness of the Cross, sparing not Himself in order to redeem us, to sanctify, cleanse, and wash us. And now in His glory with the Father His heart is set upon this great purpose, anticipating that glad hour when we who have borne the cross with Him shall share His glory.

"He who in the hour of sorrow, bore the cross alone,  
I who through the lonely desert, trod 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."

It is said that what is real pain in human beings amounts to little more than a numbed sensation in some of the lower animals.' ' If this be true, does it not open up the heart of Jesus before our eyes,



and permit a vision of how He can be affected by the things in us He desires to wash and cleanse away? For according to this theory regarding pain in higher and lower organisms, the higher the scale of existence, the greater the sense of pain. Where there is exceptional depravity, there will be little sense of sin. But there is a condition of spirit where sin becomes an anguish, an intolerable burden, yes, even with those who are far from Divine perfection. Then carry this fact on up and up until we reach the perfect moral consciousness of God and our Lord Jesus. Must it not be to, them a real pain beyond our powers of imagination, when they behold any absence of a supreme longing on our part to be made holy as they are holy? Surely so!

How then can we bring this purpose of His into our lives as an abiding experience? How can it become the root of all our daily thought, plans, and expectations? How can we correct and adjust all our viewpoints and efforts to this great purpose of the Lord, and how respond and live up to it? There is but one way to attain this desired goal. It is in earnest and steadfast prayer for that which the Apostle has asked for us in the first chapter of Ephesians: "That the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies." - Eph. 1:17-20.

### **His Purpose *Sure* of Fulfilment**

That such a spotless Bride will be found there can be no doubt. God's work can never fail, and therefore His predestined purpose is sure of complete fulfillment. The matter which particularly concerns us is that of our own oneness with Him in His plan for us, and equally important is the matter of our oneness with Him in all His ways and means of working out our cleansing and sanctification. In this connection, let us note again the wording of our opening text. Let us observe that He who loves us claims this work as His own. **He loved the Church, "that He might sanctify and cleanse it,"** that **He Himself** might present it to Himself a glorious, spotless Church. We come into Him by the act of faith, accepting Him and all His love and work for us, and we are made holy by yielding ourselves to Him, and all His providences for us. Holiness, like justification, is received by faith. He who is made unto us justification, is also made unto us sanctification. Spiritual life is not self-generated. We are begotten unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus from the tomb, and we are quickened in life by Him. It is God who worketh in us to will and to do His good pleasure, and we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus. All of these facts we know and rejoice in according to our measure of faith to believe them.

What then is our special concern in this matter? Manifestly we have a part to play in the making of our calling and election sure, otherwise we would not be urged by the Apostle to give attention to that important fact. Our part, according to the Scriptures, is to give ourselves unreservedly into the hands of our loving God, prepared to say under all circumstances, "Have Thine own way Lord." If we will do this daily and hourly, God will take care of all that needs to be done. But let us not expect that all His methods will be pleasurable experiences. There will certainly be chastisements which for the present moment will not be joyous, but grievous. Our hearts are like gardens overgrown with weeds which must be eradicated. And the removal of some of these weeds will not be brought about by the Gardener growing bigger and better vegetables and flowers, but by a very definite and determined use of the hoe, and we must be as willing to have this implement used, as we are willing to receive His rain and sunshine. "The Lord does His work



thoroughly if we will only let Him do it; if we put our case into His hands, He will search and probe fully and firmly, though very tenderly. Very painful, it may be, but only that He may do the very thing we want—cleanse us and heal us thoroughly, so that we may walk in real newness of life. But if we do not put it unreservedly into His hands, it will be no use thinking or talking about our lives being consecrated to Him. The heart that is not entrusted to Him for searching, will not be undertaken by Him for cleansing'; the life that fears to come to the light lest any deed should be exposed, can never know the blessedness and the privilege of walking in the light."

But perhaps we are thinking of the many hindrances that seem to hedge us about. We think of the foes within and without and unconsciously clothe these with a greater power than we give to the Holy Spirit imparted to us. Strictly speaking there are no foes to holiness—without. How can there be when it is declared in the Word itself that, "**All things work together for good** to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose." Nothing can be considered an exception to that magnificent statement. Oh, if we could only remember this every day and hour. what a difference it would make in our lives. If we actually believed it, the worries, the petty annoying things, the many things we count hindrances, the wrongs suffered, the 'disappointments, meeting us so often, all these would then be recognized as helps rather than hindering influences. Through these very things we are given opportunities for trust, for courage, endurance, hope and love, all of which are necessary to make us like our Beloved. If some of these are the Gardener's hoe, digging deeper into the soil of our hearts than we had thought necessary, let us not forget that He can see much more than we can, and let us seek His promised grace to bear patiently all His will.

### **Set Your Affection on Things Above**

But what about the foes within? Such foes there are, we know, persistent, deadly foes. But here again we are assured that "greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world." Christ will dwell in the heart of the believer, and this is an assurance of victory. The Church is the "habitation of God through the Spirit," and this is the greatest privilege possible to any, of His creatures. To work out His holiness in us is the joy of our adorable Bridegroom. For His own sake, and for our own, He who delights in all the Father's purposes, finds the fulness of His delight in fulfilling all of love's obligations to the Bride which the Father appointed Him. His supreme joy is to adorn and beautify that Bride in readiness for "a marriage such as earth has never known, when the Bride and Bridegroom are made one, before the Great White Throne."

Let us then, "Fill our affections with the cross of Christ, that there may be no room for sin. The world once put Him out of the house into a stable, when He came to save us; let Him now turn the world out of doors, when He comes in to sanctify us." Let our affections be on heavenly things this will enable us to mortify sins through the Spirit. Let our minds be single and therefore full of light, and constantly exercised with the things above. those blessed and soul transforming objects of contemplation: God Himself in all His glory and beauty; the Lord Jesus Christ who is altogether lovely, the fairest among ten thousand; the mysteries revealed in the inspired Word; the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of love Divine all love excelling. Were our affections, our conversations, our lives taken up, filled, and possessed with these things as it is our privilege to have them so, and as it is our greatest realization of happiness when they are so occupied, then what effectual working of the Spirit will be made possible thereby. And if we ardently love Him, will it be necessary to resort to any priming schemes to draw out a manifest devotion to Him? Will "a consuming love for the Bridegroom" require frequent "revivals" to keep it from degenerating into lukewarmness? No indeed! Rather it will be,

"From Him who now doth love me so,  
What power my soul can sever?  
Shall life or death, or any foe?  
No; I am His forever."

'Tis but a little and we will have reached the end of the way, a few more necessary experiences, a few more opportunities to prove the enduring nature of our love, a few more days for the completion of our sanctification and cleansing. O prepare us, dear Savior, for glory our Home.

## **The Christian's Adorning**

*"Whose adorning . . . let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." - 1 Peter 3:3-4*

A CLEARLY marked evidence of the actual presence of a live faith, of a quickened spiritual life, is this grace of a meek and quiet spirit. An opposite spirit discovered in ourselves should just as positively indicate the mind of the flesh as being in at least partial control. Perhaps no better way of knowing ourselves can be discovered than by knowing intimately the many striking illustrations of the grace of inward quietness given us in the Scriptures in the lives of Abraham, Moses, Samuel, Daniel, and others, and in the lives of the New Testament heroes as well-the Apostles Peter, Paul, and John, and more than all, and above all, in the character and the life, in the minutest details of the labors and trials of Jesus our Lord. One of the prophetic passages in Isaiah seems particularly to indicate this trait of the Savior's character where it says of Him, "He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets. And still more strikingly, where it is said: "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth."

The spirit of the flesh, impatience, is the opposite of the Divine spirit of meekness, which latter always manifests itself in a quietness of spirit. A failure to take time for meditation and prayer, a tendency to worry and fretfulness in connection with our daily experiences, or a disposition to set ourselves up as the severe and unjust judges of those of whom God alone is the judge, can be taken only as an indication that we are lacking in the spirit of meekness, of quietness, and that instead we are satisfied with self. It is true these characteristics, charity may consider as but evidences of spiritual infancy, for in later years one discovers the great advantage of having much time for deliberation, and the fully of entering upon any endeavor until the Father's will can be surely known. For the advanced Christian the most precious hours are those spent on his knees. One cannot come from such communion to judge or even to criticize unduly the servants of our Master or to complain regarding the tasks He assigns us. We find nothing of this nature in the life of our Lord. Without impatience or fretfulness He beheld the very evils, both physical and moral, which now try the patience of His followers, and He saw them under still more distressing circumstances, at least those of a moral nature; oppressions of the envious poor by the more fortunate rich, among whom were many examples to be found of degradation and crime with which we have little familiarity. Their guilt was in no way mitigated by the fact that the crime was cloaked under a form of godliness, for by their lives they were denying the power thereof. And there were few in the nation not displaying this open manifestation of lack of faith in God; a nation-wide selfishness and unbelief resulting in suspicion, envy, hatred, licentiousness,

irreligion, and often in open blasphemy. But He, our great Example, showed no impatience; fretfulness was never manifested. It was not with indifference, it is true, that He beheld these things and saw them more clearly than we can, but He beheld them, all the while maintaining perfect harmony with the mind of the Father which could wait the seven thousand years for the complete eradication of sin and sinful tendencies.

The Gospel narratives are full of instances in which the deep sorrow of our Lord's heart might easily have found expression in words of strong disapprobation and would surely have done so were it: not that such expressions would have been at variance with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. Only absolute necessity brought any expression of disapproval from Him, and we, His followers, need always bear in mind that these few instances were an illustration of His power to read the heart, and a warning that we should not judge according to appearances, we who have no knowledge as to whether the open fault is a result of willfulness or of weakness. As the little band one day traveled through unkind and inhospitable Samaria on their way to the city of Jerusalem, some of His disciples, feeling their importance and the indignity done them by the refusal of the villagers to supply them with food, suggested that He should "command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, even as Elias did." The power was there to follow this suggestion, but pity for this godless, hopeless nation made such an act an impossibility to His sympathetic nature. Other instances show that even when He found it necessary to disapprove and condemn the sin, He could be patient with the sinner.

### **"Ye Know not What Spirit Ye are of"**

For the sake of His disciples of all time this incident was recorded, that they might know that the spirit of those who witness a wrong doing is often more criminal than the deed itself. Note well that it was the disciples and not the Samaritans that our Master reproved, although their iniquity might have occupied every moment of His ministry had He chosen to discuss it. But instead He rebuked His disciples saying, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of," you are not able to realize how lamentably you lack the grace of a meek and quiet spirit.

A human-minded person would be intensely interested in a minute and very intellectual sounding analysis of the mental state present in our Master's mind at the time of giving His gentle rebuke to the disciples, but the spiritual mind is contented with the lesson of quietness and meekness there stored away for him. To learn that lesson we should share with our Master His inward harmony, the balance of His perfect mind, possible only where there is a complete submergence of our will in His will; for one trace of our mind left would mean in harmony when placed in contrast with, and necessarily therefore in opposition to, His perfect mind and will. Only by being brought into harmony with the Divine will can our warring and rebellious appetites be brought into harmony, and rest or quietness result. There is no longer the inward jarring of disorderly desires; warring passions no longer contend for rights to which the condemned sinner never had any valid claim. "With the love of God reigning supreme in one's life every natural desire and affection is exercised in subordination to it. There is not the inward warfare, which formerly existed, thought in conflict with thought, noble and ignoble desires contending, and the conscience asserting rights which it could by no means maintain."

The results of quietness of spirit in the various outward trials to which all Christians are subjected in the present life, are so evident as to make it unnecessary to discuss them at length here. To say, "Not my will but Thine be done," implies not only that we "will neither murmur nor repine at what the Lord's providence may permit," because "faith can firmly trust Him, come what may,"

but that we will also "joy in tribulation," for we know its blessed results with His promise and unlimited power in the forefront of every conflict. "Fret not thyself," says the Scripture, "because of evil doers," whether or not their evil touches our private lives or the lives of our brethren. If we find some of our brethren less positive and less watchful against the moral evils existing in the world in various forms, often brazen in their affrontery, a fretful rebelliousness against the evil, even though it come from a truly devout and sanctified heart will have little weight in the correction of this evil, as compared with the grace of a meek and quiet spirit. Such an one must realize that he cannot afford to permit the sin of his brother to produce in himself a rebellious state prejudicial to his own interest, and that probably without in any degree or manner proving of assistance to the other. Even in our desire to do good, the zeal of the flesh sometimes manifests fretfulness, and quietness of spirit is disturbed.

### **Ennobling Influence in Resigned and Humbled Sorrow**

But the exercise of this grace should not be limited to those occasions in which we are tested by the deflections of others. It is perhaps equally important that we shall be on our guard against any manifestation of fretfulness or impatience in relation to our own defects of character. Too often we mistake fretfulness for penitence, whereas in fact there is but little relationship between the two. There is an ennobling influence in resigned and humbled sorrow, constituting the truly efficacious beauty of a penitential state of mind, but the fretfulness always implied in an impatient and complaining sorrow can have only a depraving effect on this sensitive new creature. Seeking first the Kingdom of Heaven will mean not only that we will gratefully put to use everything that will assist in the building of the new creature into the likeness of Christ, but also that we will jealously guard against the entrance of anything, such as this fretfulness, that might retard growth. Fretfulness is the course of the world, and many times a day we may feel ourselves drawn toward its downward current, but just so many times His strength and His alone can deliver us from it and from the destruction to which it leads.

Slothfulness either spiritual or physical has much of the appearance of meekness, nevertheless has none of its qualities. "Natural quietude is the result of darkness; spiritual quietude is the child of light." The inactivity of nature is the child of selfishness; faith alone gives birth to spiritual rest. The latter does nothing and seeks nothing for its own pleasure but in everything seeks the pleasure and glory of God. Its rest is in God and not in self. The flesh in its foolish complacency walks blindfolded along the precipice. The spiritual one with unveiled face by faith walks in peace and absolute security the golden pavement of his heavenly home, in the pure light shed from God Himself. There can be no doubt or insecurity there. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide [safely] under the shadow of the Almighty." - Psa. 91:1.

### **Affections Regulated in Conformity to Love for God**

This remarkable adornment of meekness and quietness of spirit is the outgrowth of faith, and a faith based on intelligent love. Here enters the great importance of doctrine, for the great God of love must be known in verity, that ours may be an undissembled faith "from which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain janglings." Surely here every trace of meekness is lost. The cause for these noisy arguments it would seem is in part at least to be found in a love for one's own opinions instead of the love of the truth which should have governed. Those who love God and truth as they ought, regulate all their affections in conformity to their love for Him. By this regulation, order is restored to the mind, God takes the first place, we "seek first the Kingdom of

heaven," and all other affections become secondary or are entirely eliminated. As it is no ordinary love that can effect this, it is no common degree of faith that can produce such love, and no mere head knowledge of God that can produce the necessary faith, but where faith unmingled with doubting is attained, true quietness prevails.

Once the thought is ours that God Himself is watching and controlling in every event, meekness and quietness of spirit not only become easy but, to the one who has such a faith, no contrary spirit would be possible. Additionally, God is recognized as present to "work all things together for good," and rejoicing alone can result. Otherwise we acknowledge by our actions if not by our words that we do not believe this promise. Impatience in the Christian is impatience with God; fretfulness, a warring with God at testings permitted for our blessing; and these two unrestrained, lead unfailingly to, open rebellion. Hesitancy to "rejoice in tribulation" is the first step in this direful progression, the end of which is death. No Christian could intentionally place himself in such a position. Afflictions therefore, may be accepted hopefully as evidences of God's love and leading rather than with the thought that they indicate one has been cast off.

### **The Rewards of Faith**

The faith of Abraham will today enable one to wait as he waited for the child of promise. Joseph became a patriarch of faith under the severest trials, sold into slavery by his own brethren, to endure imprisonment under false accusations, with none to defend him, but he eventually "changed his iron fetters into chains of gold, his rags to royal robes, his stocks into a chariot, his prison into a palace." In his youth David made his bed in a cavern and pillowed his head on rocks, that later years might find him seated upon the throne of Israel. Unknown in his youth and unhonored even by his own family, his faith brought recognition from his God in due time. It is not alone the present inheritance but also the bow of promise that gives resignation to the life of faith. It was the shepherd king, having learned by bitter experience what it was to be driven by a jealous king into every hiding place of his native land, who could say, "the steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord; and he delighteth in His way."

Meekness is impossible except to one who has faith in God's commands that they are reasonable and righteous and therefore that they ought to be obeyed and that they cannot without danger be disobeyed. One with true faith knows that the commands, "Take My yoke upon you," and "fret not thyself" are not mere suggestions, but are commands to be accepted and obeyed. Human philosophies that would set such commands aside do not enter into the life of one who first denies himself, gives up his own will with all else, before taking up his cross to follow the Master. Fretfulness would throw aside the yoke, but faith realizes an elder Brother bears it with us as **our** yoke,' and He carries the heaviest end of the burden. A lack of peace in our experiences, no matter how strange they may be, means a lack of faith in the Lord's promises. "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever." - Psalm 125:2.

Fanaticism is another ill far remote from meekness and one which meekness will surely cure. Its restlessness, excitability, visionary ideas, and denunciatory attitude can find no place in the soul that knows rest in Him. Probably all fanaticism has in it some of the true elements of religion, but harmony within and harmony with God as well as with man and the universe are lacking. Even here the desire to do good is present, but repose is needed that it may be done not in the spirit of haste and selfishness but in God's way. Not being able to bear patiently with one who appears to be a brother in grave danger or an erring son of Adam, means of reclamation out of harmony with

God's Spirit are devised. God's seven thousand years' patience with the sinner are forgotten. But meekness will lead one to seek God's wisdom, God's methods and arrangements.

Again, quietness of spirit is essential in prayer, that our petitions may be requests and not demands. The Divine supremacy must be recognized that our petitions may always be "Thy will be done." There is little danger that arrogance will be displayed in the words of our prayers, but there is grave danger that our following conduct may display it. Loud professions, large contributions, and great works, count for nothing where a lack of faith is demonstrated in the clouded brow and restless spirit.

### **A Quiet Spirit Speaks a Man most Like God**

There are moments in our lives calling for joy, there is a time for sorrow, there are special occasions for gratitude, but in every moment meekness and quietness of spirit should be present. It is easy to have these graces as occasional visitors, but to make their possession permanent is the more difficult task. Just as surely as we should "in everything give thanks," just so surely we should evidence the true spirit of faith by a meek and quiet spirit. The peaceful acquiescent spirit, unshaken through years of stress, is the indisputable evidence, of a heaven-begotten nature, and an "ornament of great price" for which one should be willing to pay his all, and that joyfully.

To some it may seem we have recommended in too strong terms this ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, but we believe our presentation is not stronger than the Scriptures warrant. It is God's character that is sought, our imperfect will that is laid aside that His will may be done, our name cast in the dust that His name may be glorified, our spirits renewed by the banishing of self that He may reign supreme. "A quiet spirit speaks a man most like God; it capacitates a man for communion with God; it renders a man most serviceable to God, and it obliges a man to most accurate walking with God. A meek and quiet spirit is an incorruptible ornament, much more valuable than gold."



## **ECHOES FROM THE HARTFORD CONVENTION**

The somewhat smaller attendance at this convention than has been the rule in the past, seemed in no way to lessen the blessings of those who had the privilege of being there. There were no special railroad rates at this particular time to make it possible for many to be present. Perhaps the most unusual feature of the convention was the number of testimony meetings and the ease with which all the time was filled, in spite of the small number present to take part. The convention ended with a testimony meeting summing up the blessings of the two days, and demonstrating that the sessions which had started with the thought of seeking to devote more time in our private lives to dwelling on the "higher ground" of complete trust in God and joyful submission to His will, had already accomplished in a measure their purpose.

Although the minds of those present were enthused by the prospect of being "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ," the glories of the future were not permitted to take their minds from the necessity of providing for the present need. From the opening talk on 'contentment to the closing one regarding the waging of a good warfare 'with the weapons of God's provision-truth in its various manifestations - all the thoughts of the convention were exceedingly practical as well as spiritual. None of the testimonies spoke of how much we had done for God, although the necessity of giving our all was often stressed, but spoke rather of how much God has done, is doing, and will do for us. Waiting on the Lord was pointed out as one of the most necessary things for the Christian to learn if he would be found doing the will of God as Jesus did, not going ahead with his own plans, but being able to perform as well as to say, "I delight to do Thy will." It was a season of growing in grace and in knowledge-not so much the knowledge of doctrine during this time as the knowledge of God; but the thought was many times expressed that only through the knowledge of doctrine can we be protected in the good warfare of faith and advance to victory.

No public meeting was arranged for, but the brethren went to their homes prepared to bear a better testimony for their God both in their lives and in their words, in their daily living of Christ and in their speaking of the doctrines which manifest Him and which have brought hope into their own lives, and the telling of which always gives a pleasure second only to that of knowing Him, "whom to know is life eternal."