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Another New Year, How Shall We Use It

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." - Col. 3:16.

FOR MANY years now past, it has been the custom to select some special and appropriate text from the Word of God as a Year Text, a custom which has been considered by many a very helpful way of assisting them to keep the mind fixed on some very important feature of their Christian life, as in the New Year they meet the opportunities it brings for growth in grace and service for God and His people. In harmony then with this excellent thought the brethren responsible for the "Herald" ministry have made selection of the text above for 1936, confidently believing that it will be a very acceptable one to all our readers, and that meditation thereon will greatly stimulate our receptive hearts to an increased desire to follow the timely word of admonition it contains.

Who of those now privileged to enter another new year of probation under the blood of Him who stands in the presence of God for us, can fail to experience a real joy of heart in realizing that though we must lay in the hands of God all the soiled pages of the past year, yet notwithstanding the mistakes we have made, and the unlikeness of our walk to that of His beloved Son, God is ready to accept our sincere confession and graciously opens up another year to us saying, "Do better now My child." Could anything do more than this act of His grace to start us off over the incoming year's hidden pathway with a song in our hearts, and a renewed determination to be more faithfully responsive to Him in the days before us? Surely "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" will fill our mouths hereafter. Reviewing the past we- rejoice in the goodness and mercy which have so continuously followed us, and the future being as it is, so full of glorious possibilities, will we not be found saying with David, "Now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in His tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord." (Psa. 27:6.) What reasons there are for filling His courts with praise in this way! As the old year closes and a new one begins, does it not bring inexpressible happiness just to know that we are one year nearer Home, and therefore so much nearer that glad day when this mortal shall put on immortality, and there will be a deliverance from all the frailties of this fleshly house in "which we groan, being burdened." Then shall "we know even as we are known."

"O glorious hope of heavenly love!
It lifts me up to things above;
It bears on eagle wings;
It gives my joyful soul a taste,

And makes me, even here, to feast
With Jesus' priests and kings."

Before considering the admonitions contained in our selected text, it will be well to devote a little time to the preceding one in which the Apostle says, "Let the peace of God rule [preside, Diaglott] in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." Certain it is that this peace of God must reign in the heart before the word of Christ can dwell richly within, or acceptable praise to God be offered in His courts. Peace stands at' the very entrance of our approach to God. His first word to us is that of peace through the blood of the cross; "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Then beyond this entrance, and through all the advancing stages of Christian life, peace with God, and the peace of God, are intended to be the foundation of all our growth in grace and knowledge. What a rich possession! It means our enjoyment of the legacy Jesus intended all His faithful followers to have while still in the world in which much of suffering would be our portion, a peace which He Himself enjoyed amid all the contradiction of sinners against Himself. And how in keeping with the promise of Jesus to give us such a peace are the reiterated promises of God's Word. David describes it as "great peace," saying, "Great peace have they which love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them." Isaiah's expression is, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because He trusteth in Thee"; and Paul says that "the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." - Psa. 119:165; Isa. 26:3; Phil. 4:7.

What will it mean to have the peace of God ruling or presiding in our hearts? It will mean our constantly seeing that God through Christ is ever reaching out His arm of Fatherly love to us, enfolding us in a love divine, all love excelling. It will mean a blessed realization of the fact that we are assured of a divine affection, deep, infinite, inexhaustible. It will mean that our whole life in all its round of experiences is under the control of God's almighty power. With such things to meditate upon, what peace the Savior gives to trusting hearts!

This "peace is defined to be a state of quiet or tranquility, freedom from disturbance or agitation, calmness, repose. Such a state of mind is here affirmed of God. His is a mind tranquil, calm, undisturbed and never agitated nor even wearied nor perplexed by any of the cares of His vast dominion. Yet this perfect peace of God, the Scriptures show, is not due either to the fact that there are no disorders in His vast dominion, nor yet to any stoical indifference to pain or pleasure, but rather to that perfect poise of His glorious attributes which makes Him master of His situation as Sovereign of the whole universe. . . . He is never confused, bewildered, perplexed, anxious or careworn, nor in the least fearful that His plans will miscarry or His purposes fail; because all power and wisdom inhere in Him. The scope of His mighty intellect reaches to the utmost bounds of possibility, comprehends all causes and discerns with precision all effects; consequently He knows the end from the beginning, and that, not only upon philosophical principles, but also by intuition. . . . Thus we see that 'the peace of God' is compatible with great commotion and with sorrow and pain of any kind; for it is not dependent upon outward circumstances."

If, then, such a peace possesses our hearts throughout the year before us, can there be any doubt about the fulfillment in our lives of each of the inspired admonitions of our chosen text for 1936? In the enjoyment of such rest and peace abiding permanently within, we can say truthfully, "When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?"

The Word of Christ Richly Indwelling

Coming now to our text, it will be noted that its first admonition has to do with a rich indwelling of the word of Christ. In our study of the Bible how frequently we are met with the thought that it is only when the truth is received into a good and honest heart that its effects will be manifested in the life. In so many ways we are shown that it is only when we yearn for a deeper knowledge of the Word of God, to the end that we may be sanctified thereby, that any real and lasting blessing can come from our study of it. In the nature of things it follows that this rich indwelling of the word of Christ must be preceded by a hungering and a thirsting after such knowledge; for blessings of this kind are reserved for those only who earnestly desire them. This calls to mind the promise which Jesus gave in the matter of the work of the Holy Spirit taking His words of life and making them rich in revelation and blessing to us. He assures us of the Father's joy in giving the Spirit to us, and He likewise assures us that if we are hungering for the word of truth, the Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth, and show us things to come. "When, therefore, we pray for the Holy Spirit, and to be filled with the Lord's Spirit, we are to look about us and find the provision which He has made for the answer to these prayers, which He has thus inspired and directed.

"We find this provision in the Word of truth; but it is not enough to find where it is: if we desire to be filled we must eat; assuredly, we must partake of the feast or we will not experience the satisfaction which the eating was designed to give. He who will not eat of a full table will be empty and starved, as truly as though there were no food. As the asking of a blessing upon the food will not fill us, but thereafter we must partake of it, so the possession of the Word of God, and the offering of our petition to be filled with the Spirit, will not suffice us; we must eat the Word of God, if we would derive His Spirit from it.

If Ye Continue in My Word

"Our Master declared, 'The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life' (John 6.63); and of all who are filled with the Spirit it is true, as spoken by the Prophet, 'Thy words were found and I did eat them.' (Jer. 15:16; Rev. 10:9.) It is absolutely useless for us to pray Lord, Lord, give us the Spirit, if we neglect the Word of truth which that Spirit has supplied for our fulfilling. If we merely pray for the Spirit and do not use the proper means to obtain the Spirit of truth, we will continue to be at most only 'babes in Christ,' seeking outward signs, in proof of relationship to the Lord, instead of the inward witness, through the Word of Truth, which He has provided."

In this same connection we should remember the statement of Jesus, "If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Blessed promise! Does it not mean that every sincere disciple delighting to do the will of God, "shall know the doctrine," "be rooted and grounded in the truth," be "firm in the faith," and be ready "to give a reason for the hope that is in" him. He will be-prepared to "war a good warfare," to "witness a good confession," and to firmly "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ," even unto the end of the conflict. Thus the Word will be richly possessed and richly enjoyed. It will be "quick and powerful" as a sanctifying power, bringing forth in our lives its blessed fruits of righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Spirit, love, gentleness, meekness, faith, patience, and every virtue and every grace, which time and cultivation ripen to a glorious maturity.

And not only shall the true disciple thus know the truth and be sanctified by it, but also, as the Lord said, "The truth shall make you free." Those who have received the truth know by blessed experience something of its liberating power. As soon as any measure of it is received into a good and honest heart, it begins to strike off the fetters of sin, of ignorance, superstition and fear. Its

health-restoring beams penetrate the darkest recesses of our hearts and minds, and invigorate our whole being. Thus the Word dwells within us richly in all wisdom, and in its transforming and life-changing power.

Teaching and Admonishing One Another

The next portion of our text to be considered has to do with a duty we are frequently reminded of in the Scriptures. It has pleased the Lord to give His people an important part in the work of building one another up in our holy faith; and this is truly a very real responsibility which all must recognize and faithfully discharge. The Apostle Paul is himself one of the most outstanding examples of this recognized and faithfully performed stewardship. With what patient and unceasing labor he reiterates again and again the great essential facts of the plan of salvation, and the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. Surely these are days in which something of Paul's burden of heart should be felt by all of us as we too recognize our responsibility in this matter of assisting one another. Among other Scriptural admonitions bearing on this point we may well call to mind these words "But exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." And again, "But exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the Day approaching. For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins."- Heb. 3:13; 10:25, 26.

With so many inspired warnings given in the Word of God pointing with particular emphasis to this hour of temptation in which we are now living, it surely behooves every one of us to be giving all diligence to heed these warnings ourselves, and to faithfully point them out to others. The deceitfulness of sin with all of its hardening and soul-blinding effect is today a danger besetting all who are not walking with a careful circumspection in every avenue of daily life. Never more than today has this warning been needed, lest sin disguised as an angel of light ensnare our unwary feet in its entanglements. Today, to each individual the word is spoken in tones -of solemn warning, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

In the above Scripture the Apostle has reminded us that this exhorting of one another should all the more occupy our thoughts as we "see the Day approaching," and surely that Day is seen to be right at hand. What then shall be our word of exhortation, as we seek through the coming days of the new year to teach and admonish one another? Surely it will be to encourage steadfastness in keeping our lamps trimmed and burning, allowing no beclouding influences to dim the light of divine truth in our own hearts, or to hinder the shining forth of the power of the truth from our lives. Since the Day is so rapidly approaching, and only the pure in heart shall see God, should we not be emphasizing this fact with increasing earnestness in these days? How much teaching and admonition is still necessary to meet the subtle attacks of the Adversary to distract our minds from the truth that sanctifies the heart. The cross of Christ in all that it represents of divine love, complete provision for the cancellation of all our guilt, and the center of all our doctrinal faith, and all our happy privileges in the fellowship of the Gospel of Christ -- what a field for timely admonition is here! And as those who are "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ (Tit. 2:13), how fervently and continuously we should be reminding one another of this soul-stirring hope. Has not the beloved John told us that "every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure"? This being true, how much we may admonish one another to watch and pray to the end that we may be found of Him in peace, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

Let us note further a few of the many admonitions of the Word of God in which we are shown how we may thus teach and assist each other. What beauty there is in the words: "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works." And again, "Brethren, if any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou 'also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the

law of Christ." "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification, for even Christ pleased not Himself." "In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." "Beloved let us love one another.; and everyone that loveth is born of God. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." What a fellowship like to that above such loving consideration for each other as these various texts suggests. Surely if in these things we all seek to excel in the days before us, ours will be a ministry richly blessed of the Lord, greatly multiplying the fruits of our service for the Lord and His people.

In Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs

Living as we are today, manifestly in the very midst of events so eloquently assuring us that the end of the Church's warfare is near, what songs should fill our hearts. Prophets and Apostles have spoken their soul-inspiring messages, foretelling the events which are now taking place before our eyes. Jesus Himself has spoken of these same things and has given us His heart-cheering assurance, "Surely I come quickly." If in the days of long ago, when the Apostles were yet in the flesh, they ministered to the saints the word of comfort "Be patient brethren, the coming of the Lord-draweth nigh," then what joy should 'be ours today as we stand on the very threshold of the glorious consummation of all our hopes. Then, beloved, let our songs abound, and every tear be *dry*. The love of Christ makes fresh our hearts, a fountain ever springing, so that as children of the light we may have the praises of the Lord flowing forth from our hearts and lips in our daily life, as we with our "blessed hope" journey on to fairer worlds on high. What songs we can sing of mercies past The numberless blessings of the past when counted one by one should fill our lips with psalms and hymns, and the blessings of the present hour, not least of which is the fact that we are still standing in the favor of God, call for notes of loudest praise, while greatly multiplied blessings yet to be ours might well make us long for angelic tongue to sing the praises of our God.

We are not forgetting the oft repeated warnings of the Word that with these special joys which in several important ways are peculiar to this our wonderful day, there are sure to be sonic crucial trials awaiting the faithful saints in days to come ere we have finished our course. That the new year will have its shadows and its deep waters there can be no doubt, for it is still true as stated by the Apostle, "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake." (Phil. 1:29.) Yet surely we can also say, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy. (Acts 20:24.) Songs in the night He giveth. The glad songs of salvation are not affected by fluctuating circumstances, provided our faith is anchored firmly within the veil. It is in the midst of deep trials that our Master exhorts us to sing, saying "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven." Then whatever coming months may bring in. the way of trial and sorrow, let us be found encouraging ourselves and others with "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord," for to Him everlasting praise belongs.

My Song shall be of Jesus

Surely our song shall be of Jesus and His mighty power to save. Our New Testament abounds in notes of highest praise to Him "who loved us and bought us with His own precious blood." And

he who honors the Son, Jesus teaches us, honors the Father also. Therefore when we say, "My song shall be of Jesus" it is with this thought in mind, because all is by the Father through the Son. God delights to point us to His beloved Son as the One through whom salvation comes to us. Thus it is that Paul made the life, death; and resurrection of Christ the very center of his ministry. To him it was much more than a philosophy of religious opinions and dogma, it was a gospel of power unto salvation to every one that believeth. And Paul knew that none could sing this song of redeeming love in power until Christ was formed in the heart. Christ in the heart of the believer is still a most vital need before one's life can flow on in endless song above earth's lamentations, and before both lips and conduct will synchronize in a sweet harmonious melody pleasing to the Lord, and calculated to inspire songs in the hearts of others. With us, as with the Apostle, "For me to live is Christ" must be the keynote for all of 1936 if we want it to be the very best year of our lives thus far-the year of largest hopes, of largest, endeavors, and by the Lord's grace of largest successes in self-sacrifice, in overcoming the world and its spirit, in vanquishing self and the desires of the flesh, in resisting the Adversary, and in glorifying our Lord and blessing His people. Verily, a heart in which Christ has full control will be full of song, and out from such a life will assuredly flow a service of helpfulness to all within its reach. May such a life be more and more our own happy experience during 1936.

Golden Opportunities yet Abound

In conclusion we now notice briefly the last words of our year text: "Singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." Some translations give gratitude rather than grace in this last line of our text. This is manifestly a better translation. "O to grace how great a debtor" is the spontaneous language of a grateful heart, and that gratitude ever longs for an opportunity to reveal itself in devotion to God. Such golden privileges still surround us today. Strange indeed that any should feel that the days in which we live afford no special opportunity to spend and be spent in the ministry of the Gospel of comfort. The admonition still applies: "Do good unto all men as ye have opportunity," and hearts which are saying out of pure gratitude "Come hear what the Lord hath done for me," may still find opened doors. Hearts like the Master's will never fail to be touched with feelings of compassion for those in need of sympathy and help, and never be at a loss to find such needed service. A larger sympathy for all, we touch in life's pathway during this new year will contribute much to giving testimony to the genuine gratitude we ourselves feel for the blessings God has so graciously brought into our lives. Let our heart's love expand to wider reaches in an effort to comfort others with the comfort wherewith we have ourselves been comforted, and there is no question that the volume of praise in our own hearts will be greatly enlarged, and songs of gratitude will be going up to God from other hearts because we were ready, in season and out, "to preach good tidings unto the meek; to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, . . . to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Only let us come in deep and true gratitude to God as we enter this new and wonderful year, fully dedicating our lips and voice to Him, entreating our Lord that He will take and keep "My voice and let it bring honor always to my King." Who can estimate the good we all may do while the days of the new year are going by.

If we thus cultivate the habit of "teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," we shall be true Barnabas comforters of the brethren. Let us do with our might what our hands find to do, and reflect the "light of the glory of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ," so that others may see that our own life has been transformed, our own mouth filled with song, and our knowledge of impending events mightily at work lifting us up into the

heavenly places in Christ Jesus, far above the tumult and the strife, rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory because we know our deliverance draweth nigh.- Then --

"With-this blessed hope before us,
Let no harp remain unstrung;
Let the mighty ransomed chorus
Onward roll from tongue to tongue."

Thou Shalt Love the Lord

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." - Matt. 22:37-40

GREAT STRESS is laid in the Scriptures upon the necessity of "perfecting holiness in the reverence of God," specifically stating that without holiness no one shall see the Lord; but no less emphasis is placed upon the importance of developing to the full, love for God and our brethren, and even for our "neighbor." Undoubtedly this is because love is one of the most important of the several elements of holiness. Having begun to love, one has begun to be holy, though as yet he is far removed from the goal, which is reached only when one loves with all his heart-when there is no trace of selfishness left, pure love having crowded all else from the heart. However, before even the 'beginnings of love can be present, sufficient accurate knowledge of God must 'have been attained as a foundation for faith, without which there can be no sufficient basis for love.

The love to which we refer has little or no relation to the substitutes which the world calls by that name, and which in reality are its direct opposite various forms of selfishness. The pure love the Scriptures enjoin must be preceded by an "undissembled faith" which is "counted unto us for righteousness"; but the still greater honor is accorded to love of being "the fulfilling of the law." Of great importance, then, is the question as to whether we are perfected in love, for on that depends our being perfected in holiness. - 2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Tim. 1:5; Rom. 13:8-10; 1 Pet. 1:15; 1 John 2:5; 4:12.

A Dangerous Resemblance to Love

Referring again to the various states of mind which the world regards as love and which they call by that name, we would remark that there is in them a dangerous resemblance to the true, and they may arise wholly or chiefly from an appreciation of the benefits received from the one toward whom this emotion is felt, without their being a suitable regard for his motives and a proper appraisal of his character. In contrast to this is the true love that is drawn to one because of what he is in and of himself, having, however, a proper consideration of and appreciation for what he has done for us, as well as everything else that goes to the making up of his character. Only this form of love can be said to be perfect, because only this form entirely conforms to the object of its devotion, to the extent at least that it is possible for that object to be known. An increase in one's knowledge of a lovable character must result in an increase of love, and to attain the perfection of love, there must be a daily increase in knowledge of the most intimate character,

as indicated by the Apostle's prayer, "that your love may yet abound more and more **in knowledge**, and in all perception." (Phil. 1:9, Diaglott.) It is evident then that the love that is sufficient to establish the beginning of holiness will be far from adequate for the end of the course.

True Love Terminates in Object Loved.

In addition to the necessity of developing love in its perfection because it is one of the component parts of holiness, even nature itself requires it, human discernment teaching the distinction between selfish love and pure, disinterested love. If we profess to love a person, it is the common understanding that we love him whether or not we are the recipients of anything from him, loving him for the truly lovable and desirable traits which we are able to recognize in his character. Any kindnesses he may have shown us are merely additional reasons for and surely will result in an increase of love, though they can never be the primary cause of it, if it is pure-free from all thoughts of self. If a neighbor declares his love, that declaration is accepted and appreciated, but if afterwards it is learned that this which he calls love is caused and regulated primarily by the benefits he has been receiving, then it becomes evident that he is in reality governed by a love for himself and not for another. It is self-evident that true love must terminate in the object loved and not in the one exercising the duality.

In perfect accordance, with this is the ability of love to view all its own interests in their true light -- never in the egotistical or self-centered manner natural to the fallen flesh. In fact, true love will show no tendency to turn back upon itself, revolving upon itself as a center. It is, on the contrary, generous, self-forgetting, diffusive-always reaching out and finding new objects of devotion. Its direct opposite is selfishness, one of the most unlovely of the fallen human characteristics, which, fortunately for others, approbateness suggests to its possessor that he cover to the best of his ability. But poor indeed is this subterfuge when compared with the immeasurably more blessed privilege of those who have the divinely provided wings of faith and love with which to rise above their sordid selves. Selfishness cannot be covered or hidden, and there is no other means of effecting the miracle of overcoming it, but the power of faith and love. No wonder those who do not have these qualities, or who have them in only a slight degree, insist it is impossible to accomplish a thing so marvelous, so beyond their comprehension. The love that can lend itself to so worthy a cause, is appropriate incense for the altar of our God.

Excellence of True Love Recognized by All

The advisability 'of striving for the highest form of pure love becomes more evident when we discover that even heathen philosophers recognize and respect its beauty, and are equally informed of the unloveliness of self-centered interest. "Some ancient heathen writers, Cicero, in his treatise *De Amicitia*, and Plato in particular, in various places of his writings, speak in the highest terms of that friendship or affection which is disinterested. . . . Plato . . . advances the sentiment that the most divine trait in a man's nature, and that without which he cannot be happy, is to deny and go out of himself for love." Ancient and heathen writers as well as the later Christian scribes commend such friendship as that of Damon and Pythias, each of whom preferred to die at the hands of the tyrant Dionysius that his friend might live. This is true love, self forgetting love, a love in which even fallen man recognizes the divine element. Of it their poets sing, trampling under foot all imitations, and to this extent agreeing with the Bible standard. That "all men" recognize the excellence of true love, though they may not be willing to acknowledge it, is

indicated by the Master's words: "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." (John 13:35.) It would be unreasonable to suppose that a counterfeit or feigned love, the unworthiness of which is recognized by the sin darkened faculties of fallen man, would be acceptable to God. No imitation, but the purest of love must be our offering to Him.

This brings us to another reason for making our goal the highest form of love. The exalted character of our God, in purity excelling all others, of itself demands a love that is pure. Since all the beauties of perfection are combined in our God, the heart must be base indeed that cannot love Him for what He is, once that knowledge has been received and properly meditated upon; as no doubt such knowledge will involuntarily be pondered by a heart that, being dead to self, loves and appreciates purity. Since human beings reject all offers of love they know to -be based on selfish considerations, there can be no, doubt of the attitude of the One who far transcends all others in His standard of purity. Though all the angel hosts combine their eloquence, their powers would be inadequate to the description of His perfections. Because of what God is He stands forth from all the universe as the one natural, appropriate, and eternally sufficient object of pure love.

The Character of God Commands Homage of Pure Love

Loving God for what He is by no means indicates that those things which God has done for us, and also those things He promises yet to do, will not be taken into consideration. When one's powers are within his own control, what he does is the result of what he is-merely an outward manifestation of the character. Pure love, being based on the actual qualities of the object of its devotion, will be affected by every manifestation of that one's worth, whether they be acts of the present or of the future, acts done to us or to others, friend or foe. These acts, however, are recognized with appreciation not alone because of our share in their benefits, but chiefly because in them we find a revelation of excellencies that, because of a slight measure, of, Godlikeness in us we have learned to appreciate. Selfishness rests content as long as it is the recipient of favors, even though it believes that others are suffering under divine displeasure, punishments entirely disproportionate to their deeds. Pure love, recognizing in God the power to act in perfect accordance with His intentions, goes out to God only when knowledge and faith have combined to reveal One whose every act, past and future, manifests love in its purest form. Our spirit bears witness with His spirit. Selfishness would content itself with meager glimpses of God's love as revealed in His purposes toward this one little creature-self. The contrast is immeasurable between that and the pure love that is the outcome of a contemplation of the truth, the purity, the righteousness, and the grandeur of a love that administers in perfection the affairs of a universe. It is His character, as represented in His acts, presented in its entirety, and not in partial glimpses, which commands the homage of pure love.

An additional reason for seeking this pure, disinterested love is that the Scriptures enjoin it. "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart," leaves no doubt that self is to be dethroned that God may reign supreme. The heart that is still saying "Some of self, and some of Thee," knows little of love or of joy, knows nothing of pure love or of unmingled joy. It is for the good of the disciple-that he may experience these qualities to the fulness of his capacity, that such exhortations as those of the fourteenth chapter of Luke are given: "If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, [all that has a hold on self], yea, and his own life also [his very self], he cannot be My disciple"; and again: "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he bath, he cannot be My disciple," to "learn of Me" and of My love. All that self could cling to is swept away in the exhortation: "Love

not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

Alienation from Self and Union with God the Secret of Rest

Because of its weakness and its realization of its weakness, the human nature demands a center upon which it may revolve. Since this realization of weakness is not permanent but fluctuating, other dependent creatures or even faithless self are often chosen for this center. That anxiety and unhappiness can not fail to result from an arrangement so unsatisfactory, is amply demonstrated by the experience of all who have sought rest in any being other than God. The secret of true rest and happiness is to be found in complete alienation from self and all subordinate creatures, and in vital union with God. This will be confirmed, we believe, by all who have made the greatest advance in holiness during the centuries.. In the transition from the life of self to the life of absolute dependence upon God, each one has no doubt met the temptation to attach himself to inferior objects -- outward forms, teachers, organizations, or Christian friends. Those who build on such frail foundations are not prepared to meet the storms of life. They can never know the peace the Apostle so frequently prayed for, on behalf of the brethren: "Peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ," "the peace of God which surpasses all conception." It is they only who "let the peace of God rule in their hearts" that know the surety of being built upon the Rock. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." - 1 Cor. 1:3; Phil. 4:7, Diaglott; Col. 3:15; 1 Cor. 3:11.

It is the nature of true love to be satisfied with nothing short of constant increase both in the circle of those loved and in the quality or capacity of the love. It can therefore rest undisturbed and with entire satisfaction only in an object which has worth and fulness enough to satisfy this tendency. Only in God, and the One who is "the express image of His person," will the object be found in which an -infinity of being and of loveliness will make possible this eternal expansion of the creature's love. No dimming of His glories, no failure in His purposes, no change in His character need be feared; but an ever increasing exultation in the continuously unfolding glories of His infinite mind be anticipated and realized. Here is true rest, on the Rock of Ages. "Peace, perfect peace" must be the portion of the one who knows of a surety that the mark of perfect love has been reached, or that a divine hand is guiding him toward that "mark."

The Test of Perfect Love

The test is really very simple as to whether "His love has been perfected in us." If a Christian is thinking more of himself than of his God, if his joys and his sorrows are of more importance than God's will for him in them, the great lesson of self crucifixion is not learned. He is not ready to say, "The cup which my Father giveth me, shall I not drink it?" "When we are fully delivered from the influence of selfish considerations, and have become conformed to the desires and purposes of the Infinite Mind, we shall drink the cup, and drink it cheerfully, whatever it may be. In a word, we shall necessarily be submissive and happy in all trials, and in every change and diversity of situation, not because we are seeking happiness as a distinct object, or thinking of it as a distinct object, but because the glorious will of Him whom our soul loves supremely is accomplished in us. To the purified mind, the sorrows and joys of this life, when contemplated in the light of God's providences, are alike [acceptable]. Whatever God sends is welcome to it. Hence we say it shows a state of mind short of sanctification . . . when we think more of ourselves than we do of God, and more of our own happiness than we do of the divine

glory." In other words, if affliction causes sorrow which faith cannot overcome, our happiness means more to us than God's glory; if God is forgotten in our joys, self has hidden the God of the universe.

Again the quality of one's love for God may be tested by investigating the nature of his love toward his fellow Christians. He should ask himself, "Do I need to know with which group they are affiliated, what organization they are supporting, what denominational name they have taken, or do I love them because they are God's children?" A pure and unfeigned love for God will invariably result in a sincere love for all who have been begotten of, God. In a pure love for God, will be found the true basis for Christian harmony. It is impossible that Christians shall dwell in peace together except as they shall have found some common center of interest. Without some such binding influence there will be, continual fluctuations of their fellowship. Individual interests, there will be in every group, but if each Christian's repose is in the love of God, no, thing that is a trifle by comparison can cause even a ripple on the surface of his fellowship. Or if for a moment that calm should be interrupted, the Master will be there to say, "Peace, be still." "It is party and selfish interests which divide. A common interest unites. God, being loved with perfect love, and for His own sake, makes all hearts one. It is then that we all drink, and are all nourished, at the same fountain."

A Universe United in Love

Harmony among the angels was possible only so long as self-interest was excluded by a supreme love for God and His law. Concord cannot be restored to their ranks until all are drawn as, by a magnet to the one Center as the supreme object, of attraction and delight. When the eternal perfections of their Creator are re-established as the supreme delight of each, a knowledge of His unchanging perfection finally having excluded all doubt and fear, the Morning Stars will sing together again for joy. The love that is now drawing together all true disciples that they may be one even as the Father and the Son are one, will eventually present to the Father a Universe united in "love, the bond of perfectness." Thus saith the Lord: "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind," for the new shall be the kingdom of love.

Of General Interest

EASTER CONVENTION Warrington, England

Advice is just received from the Bible Students Committee, London, England, concerning a General Convention to be held during the Easter season, and we are pleased to publish the following announcement.

"A General Convention of Bible Students will be held in Warrington, Lanes., at Easter time, April 11, 12, 13. The friends extend a very warm welcome to the brethren who are able to come and share with them in the precious things of the Lord. Fuller details may be obtained from the Secretary, Mr. David Stanley, 140 Knutsford Road, Grappenhall, Warrington, Lanes."

Dear Brethren:

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Head Christ Jesus.

Recently, we received two copies of the journal, "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom, which we have carefully perused. Bearing in mind Brother Paul's injunction, "Prove all things," etc., we very carefully scrutinized all of the articles, and wish to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you for the splendidly prepared articles which we received as from the Lord by your hand. ... Enclosed please find money order for one dollar for an annual subscription. Sister P and I pray for grace from on high to uphold you to the end of the race.

For several years we have been deprived of the fellowship of all but one or two and that by mail, and have celebrated Memorial alone for the same period. We humbly thank our Lord for this cheer and fellowship and would very much like to thank our brother or sister personally, who requested the "Herald" sent to us.

Your brother and sister by His Grace,
Mr. and Mrs. W. H. P. - La.

Responding to the suggestion of some of the friends we have pleasure in printing below Brother Russell's "Morning Resolve," which we heartily commend as a helpful beginning for the day:

MY MORNING RESOLVE

My First Thought I Desire Shall Be:

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord [for grace to help]. I will pay my vows unto the Most High." - Psalm 116:12-14.

Remembering the divine call, "Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice" (Psalm 50:5), I resolve that by the Lord's assisting grace I will today, as a saint of God, fulfill my vows, continuing the work of sacrificing the flesh and its interests, that I may attain unto the heavenly inheritance in joint-heirship with my Redeemer.

I will strive to be simple and sincere toward all.

I will seek not to please and honor self, but the Lord.

I will be careful to honor the Lord with my lips, that my words may be unctuous and blessed to all.

I will seek to be faithful to the Lord, the truth, the brethren, and all with whom I have to do, not only in great matters, but also in the little things of life.

Trusting myself to divine care and the providential overruling of all my interests for my highest welfare, I will seek not only to be pure in heart, but to repel all anxiety, all discontent, all discouragement.

I will neither murmur nor repine at what the Lord's providence may permit, because

"Faith can firmly trust Him, cone what may."

The Divine Program of Grace and Life

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world " - Titus 2:11, 12.

THE APOSTLE Paul is usually very specific in his statements and is addressing Titus in this manner here. He had left him in Crete for a particular purpose, that is that he should set in order the things that were left undone and that he should ordain elders in every city: and, again specifying that these should be blameless, as the stewards of God; lovers of hospitality and of good things, sober, just, holy, temperate, holding fast the faithful word in teaching, that they might be able by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

He urges him to speak the things which become sound doctrine: that the aged men be sober, vigilant, grave, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. He also specifies the things he should urge upon the aged women, the young women, the young men, servants, etc., and above all he enjoins this son after the common faith to show himself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned.

The Grace of God Hath Appeared

This 11th verse opens with one of Paul's frequent "Fors," as he passes to one of the most important truths in all the Scriptures, that, "the grace of God which bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared." The arrangement of this verse in the common version is not correct, for it is manifest that this great truth has not appeared to all men either then or now, but it is equally true that the grace of God shall extend to all men in due time and shall bring salvation to all; and also that this fact shall be known of all men and that such knowledge shall (soon) cover the earth as the waters cover the deep, while now darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness its people. Can we not hear this strain of the angelic host as it rings out over the Judean hills in that early morning long years ago when, "the glory of the Lord shone round about" those shepherds who were "keeping watch over their flock." "And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. . . . And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." - Luke 2:8-14.

This is the fundamental truth upon which is based the whole Christian structure, and as we read, we note that the grace of God has appeared. Men did not bring it, nor ask for it, nor in any way are they responsible for it. It is by the grace of God, the gift of God, uninvited, unearned, undeserved.

We find as we examine the text that this grace of God here presents two thoughts in particular, that is it is a saving grace, and also an instructing or teaching grace; for we read that the grace of God hath appeared bringing salvation, and that it teaches us that we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Now let us consider more particularly the first clause of the statement, and what is meant by salvation. What does it mean to be saved? According to our understanding of this matter we all believe that there are two salvations, for the Savior Himself said the time will come when all in their graves shall hear His voice -- the voice of the

Son of Man and shall come forth: those who have done well to the resurrection of life, those who have done not so well (evil) unto the resurrection of judgment or trial. (John 5:29.) And again by the voice of John in The Revelation: "Blessed and holy is he that bath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power."

The Church's Present Responsibility

Our particular interest, however, rests upon its application to the Body of Christ; but in either case there is a positive standard set which must be reached by all who attain to that status covered by the term salvation. "No man can come to Me except the Father which bath sent Me draw him." This is the first step toward salvation -- covenant relation with Him in order that we may seek forgiveness, and this implies the confession of our sins. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." - 1 John 1:9.

It seems from this that in order to be forgiven, we must confess our sins, and in order to confess, we must recognize that we are sinners. This brings us in humility before God, and the barriers of separation crumble as we bare our inmost thoughts to Him and open the holy of holies of our being, the innermost recesses of our minds, to which none but God and ourselves can have access. None but God can understand. We often ourselves fail to understand the motives which actuate our being. But under the illumination of the Holy Spirit we behold and are shocked beyond measure when we see at "the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north: where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy." (Ezek. 8:3-10.) And when we behold "every form of creeping things and abominable beasts," and all the idols of Israel portrayed upon the walls round about, upon the walls of the holy of holies of our being, we stand as it were naked, in the presence of God, convicted of sin and crying out for forgiveness as we realize our own unworthiness and find borne in upon us that great truth that the grace of God hath appeared unto us, and brought unto us salvation and the realization that the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. - 1 John 1:7.

But this is not enough; if we go no farther, we are like the stony ground of the parable, we receive the seed with joy but having no root it dureth only for a while.

The Apostle Peter understands the danger to which the consecrated are exposed for he admonishes us thus: "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 3:17, 18.) Here then is the secret of maintaining our standing, of being able to break the power of sin in our lives, of setting aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us. That secret is to grow in grace. Let us observe that the Apostle does not say grow into grace or into knowledge, but to grow in grace and in knowledge as though we were in these already and must grow and develop, that is, build a character like unto that of the Master Himself, not continuing as babes in Christ, but feeding upon the strong meat and by so doing reach the full stature of the measure of a man in Christ Jesus. Thus we are able more and more fully to resist the temptations of the world.

Another speaking of the successful resistance of temptation says: "The first step is obviously and always of the nature of a recoil. The mind starts back from the evil of suggestion at least so far as to plant itself more firmly down in the attitude of resistance. The next step in resistance is obviously the reaching for and grasping one's weapon. First the mind recoils, next the mind recalls. Opposite the alluring suggestion it places the steadying word from the mind of God. 'Shall

I say, Father, save me from this hour?' said our tempted Lord. But his recoiling mind recalls, 'For this cause came I unto this hour.' Now, what shall we recall? For us all the mind of God is gathered up in Christ: the full glory of that mind shines in the face of Christ. In a moment we may recall the loving kindness, the holy purity, strong sympathy, and present grace of the supreme. For the Christian man who believes in the ubiquitous, ready presence of, 'Grace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,' the claim of goodness is instantaneously recalled, the help of Divine strength instantaneously summoned, by one single gesture of the Spirit." We may know something of this forgiveness and help in our human relationships and experiences, and how marvelous it is ever there.

Salvation -- to be rescued from some impending destruction; after being rescued must maintain the standing by Grace of God.

Grace of God in the Church

And so we read that the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, and we ask now, What is meant by the grace of God? The word used in the original is "charis" and means graciousness of manner or act, especially the divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life, carrying with it the thought of joy, gladness, favor, or gift.

This divine influence upon the heart can mean, only one thing and that is, growth of character, and this in turn means an ever increasing degree of the Holy Spirit in the life, manifested by the fruits of the same. This thought is much in evidence in the writings of the Apostle Paul and seems to have pervaded the life and teaching of the early Church to a greater degree than is evident today, for there seems a great need at the present time for this divine influence upon the heart of the average professing Christian.

Graciousness of manner or act upon the part of God toward the individual of the race, for His salvation, means simply the love of God manifested in the narrow features of the eternal purpose of God, or Divine Plan. God is love, and in His heart dwelt this grace from the beginning. But it was one of the secrets hidden from men, and partly revealed down through the line of the Ancient Worthies, and still more so in the nation of Israel, for these alone of all the nations did He know. Through their Prophets and the types and shadows of the law do we get a fore-glimpse of the appearing of His grace to be manifested in His own due time. In the miraculous birth of Christ did the grace of God appear in all its fulness. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him." Not toward us only, for He brought salvation to all men, because all men need salvation more than they need anything else. Mankind is sick, the nations are sick, and we are thankful for the grace which provides the tree of life, "and for the leaves of the tree which are for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse . . . and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face: and His name shall be in their foreheads. . . These sayings are faithful and true." - Rev. 22:2-4.

The quality of graciousness of manner and act are shown most fully in the Master, and if the Christian's consecration be genuine he will grow to be more like Him. "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. 3:18.) This we believe applies to growth of character here and now as shown in our daily lives. "We have, first, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the undeserved love and favor which God in Jesus Christ bears to us sinful and inferior creatures and,

next, we have the consequences of that love and favor in the manifold spiritual endowments which in us become graces--beauties and excellencies of Christian character. So, then, one who is a Christian ought to be continually realizing a deeper and more blessed consciousness of Christ's love and favor, and manifesting it in his life."

Growth of the Spiritual Life

These beauties and excellencies of character, all holy desires and determinations, are due to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The grace of God in Christ shining upon the soul of the consecrated causes the growth of holiness, righteousness and love, as evidenced by an increasing graciousness of manner or act toward those with whom we come in contact.

Growth in the spiritual as in the natural presupposes life, and of necessity demands health, so that one cannot grow in the Christian graces or life, except the Christ-life be there. If this principle be not there, there can be no growth. Nor does this growth mean a mere imitation of Christ in our outward life, but it means that we must be inspired by the same life principle which inspired the Master, that is the Holy Spirit of God.

It is, therefore, beside the point in our daily lives to ask what would the Master do in this difficulty; for the Master was a perfect man with a perfect mind. Hence His conclusions would not be the same as ours, as human beings, because of our imperfect mind, and so we ask that our minds be filled with His Holy Spirit that we may exercise the spirit, of a sound mind. It is very obvious that the Holy Spirit could not produce the same perfect conduct in its action upon an imperfect instrument, a mind contained in a fleshly body of sinful man, as it could and did when operating upon the perfect mind of the Master, for though His was contained in a body of flesh, it was not fallen flesh. However even though "we have this treasure in earthen vessels," we may so live as to please God. We may maintain a degree of spiritual health that makes genuine growth possible. When this growth ceases, it is a sure symptom of spiritual disease which may progress until atrophy of the new creature *may* become a reality, and the newly begotten may abort. Some part of the mind, the will, the affections have not been fully surrendered or we have been looking backward after putting our hand to the plow.

In the spiritual as in the natural, prevention is preferable to cure. With a proper atmosphere, growth takes place without effort upon our part. We cannot simply by desire alone accelerate growth. The spiritual in the Christian grows as the flower grows, without effort. There is no formula for spiritual growth, and yet the Apostle commands growth on the part of the consecrated.

There must be some way or means by which this desired process may be aided and attained. We cannot say to the plant grow and it grows: but men and women who have covenanted with God by sacrifice, possess a will which can either help or deter the soul in its growth. We can so firmly fix our gaze upon the Author and Finisher of our faith, that our whole being becomes so absorbed, so concentrated in Him that all things else become secondary. We may so strongly determine that the will of God may rule our hearts, may become our will as it became the will of Christ, that we may, grow into His likeness, and our will to be holy, even as God is holy, so become the ruling passion of our lives, that we can truly and gladly declare with the Apostle, "I do not live, Christ lives in me." We can do this and so fan the spark of spiritual life, or we can fail to do it and the spark will be extinguished.

Must Keep in Touch with Life-Giving Forces

This growth, too, of the spirit~begotten is a gradual one; it is not instantaneous, as we all know. It must continue until we pass from the Holy into the Most Holy: from the moment of begetting to the moment of birth on the spirit plane which we believe to be now coincident with the death of the human organism. It is a work of the human lifetime and requires a force like that which we apply to the things of every-day life, and call, for lack of a better definition, vital force. This vital force we find in all the growing things of nature. Sever the root of the plant and although it derives its main support or food from the air through leaf and branch, it dies because it lacks that living touch with its native elements. The flow of that vital force has been interrupted. It is this which makes life appeal to the mind of man. It is this which makes death so frightful to the human mind of man.

This vital force in nature is as mysterious as life itself to the human mind. And in like manner is this spiritual force to the mind of the new creature. We do not know the process by which it is nourished, but we do know from experience that we must keep rooted in the things of spiritual life, in the atmosphere above the things of the earth. We must put aside the things of the flesh, and, "set our affections on things above," for we are dead, (to the things of the flesh) and "our lives are hid with Christ in God." And here is the source of our growth; our vital force flows from Him into us as long as we keep rooted in Him.

Another necessity of Christian growth which parallels the physical in a way, is repair. Sometimes with most of us our vital force slows down and may be evidenced by the decline of our faith to some degree, or our love fires may become dimmed, or our enthusiasm wanes; we have been caught off our guard, we have taken our eyes from His face, our minds have not been stayed upon Him, and our peace has in a measure departed. The remedy is the proper food, that is, Christ. The degree in which we feed upon Him is the measure of our Christian life. We find that food in the Word of God, and in prayer coming close unto Him, claiming the promises so freely given for our comfort and spiritual health here and now. In the silence and quiet of the desert or the deep do we draw our greatest inspiration. In the secret places we can best appropriate the food drawn from His Word. "For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." (Isa. 30:15.) It is "in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs," that we see His countenance and hear His voice; and "sweet is His voice and comely His countenance." (Song of Sol. 2:14.) Along this line the Apostle admonishes us and tells us that "unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. . . Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of. Christ: that we, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." - Eph. 4:7-15.

His Spirit in the Inner Man

Thus we see that in order to be a grace unto salvation, it must effect a growth in grace and in knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; we must constantly grow up into Him. And growing thus, what are our possibilities of character likeness unto Him even in this present life? It is in this present life that we must grow up into Him. What may we become like if the full splendor of the benediction of the Apostle upon the Ephesians, falls upon us? "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in

love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; arid to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." - Eph. 3:16-21.

Catch that thought: "That ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." This exhortation is nothing short of a prayer for all consecrated Christians. But what can he mean by the expression? Is it not one of the extravagances of the enthusiast? Surely one can say, "Paul, thou art beside thyself, much learning path made thee mad." There we can hear the joyous answer, "No, my dear brethren, I have been 'eye witness to the glory of the Lord; I have had a direct revelation, I have been carried down into the third heavens and I cannot reveal unto you the glory that awaits you." "But, as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." (1 Cor. 2:9-13.) My exhortations and prayers for you are only God's promises to you and concerning you. I mean just what I said, "I how my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."

This would mean nothing at all to the human mind, but as we exercise the power bestowed by the Holy Spirit, we have revealed in a measure to us One who was filled with all the fulness of God, made perfect by suffering, the embodiment of the grace of God, who quietly says to us, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne." - Rev. 3:20, 21.

"My Father, can it be
That thou hast willed
Such an inheritance for me?
That I with all Thy fulness should be filled --
That Thine own Life with all its glorious light,
And love, and purity, and wondrous might,
And depth of grace,
In me should find a dwelling-place?
In this the hidden thing
The mystery which long hath slept,
In Thine eternal counsels kept --
That from the source, the everlasting spring,
Thyself should flow,
Through Thine own Son,
To me, the Life which makes the Head and Body one?
Yea, Thou hast said it, and I know It is Thy will
Thy temple thus to fill --
To give no less
Than all! I may possess
The fulness! I may be
Complete in Him by whom I live --
Who comes again to give
Himself -- The Life that fills my soul with Thee!"

The Power of the Spirit

"To be spiritually minded is life and peace." - Rom. 8:6.

ABILITY TO understand the Scriptures, to talk fluently upon them, and to expound them clearly, is a qualification which we think should follow in the wake of spiritual mindedness; but some might- be able to expound Scripture very well, and to express truths in very good form who are not necessarily very spiritually minded. A parrot can repeat certain words and phrases; but no one would think of a parrot as being spiritually minded. So there are some people who can repeat certain spiritual truths, apparently with a good deal of zest.

To be spiritually minded is to have a mind in harmony with the Spirit of God, and fully surrendered to the Divine will-fully consecrated to the Lord. It would not be enough merely to have a preference for good, saying, "I prefer not to do any gross sin; I prefer to live a life that will be honest and decent." This attitude would not be spiritual mindedness. Adam was not spiritually minded, but in his perfection he had a mind to do right. He had the mind of God in the sense that he had a balanced mind, not one having a preference for sin, or one that was weak. He was sound minded and could appreciate things from the standpoint of righteousness and justice. But even in his perfection Adam had not a spiritual mind in the highest, or Scriptural sense of the word.

Our Lord became Spiritually Minded at Jordan

In Romans 8:6 the Apostle Paul uses the expression, "spiritually minded" in describing a certain class who have become followers of Christ, who have made a full consecration of their lives to the Lord and who, in harmony with this consecration, have been begotten of the Holy Spirit. These are spiritually minded. These are granted a spiritual insight into Divine things.

This was true of our Lord Jesus. Having left the glory which He had with the Father, and having humbled Himself to take the human nature, He was found in fashion as a man. We read that He was not an imperfect man, but "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." (Heb. 7:26.) Yet with all these special qualities He did not have the spiritual mind to which the Apostle has reference. Our Lord had a mind such as Adam had before the fall-a mind in perfect harmony, perfectly balanced. Our Lord received a spiritual mind, however, at the moment when He was begotten of the Spirit, when He made full consecration at baptism, and as a consequence the Holy Spirit descended and lighted upon Him in bodily form like a dove.

Following that begetting, the Lord had an enlargement of understanding and was granted to see certain deep things of God which He had not seen before His consecration; so we read in that very connection that "the heavens were opened" to Him-the higher things became clear to Him-the more spiritual things. These things St. Paul calls "the deep things of God." "The natural man," St. Paul says (the natural man would be a perfect man; fallen man is imperfect, unnatural), "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, . . . neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14.) Then he proceeds to say that we have received the Spirit of God through the begetting of the Holy Spirit; and that having the new mind, this Spirit begetting, we are enabled to understand the deep things- of God. "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God; and we have received . . . the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." Thus to us is it given to know the deep things of God.-1 Cor. 2:11, 12.

No Natural Man is Spiritually Minded

So, then, the one who has been begotten of the Holy Spirit is spiritually minded. He sees things from the new standpoint which God specially brings to the attention of the Spirit begotten. As the Apostle John says, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye all know it. (1 John 2:20.) Whoever receives this begetting of the Holy Spirit, this anointing, has an understanding of heart and of mind which is different from that which any natural man would have, a quality that will progress with him. He has the privilege of growing in grace and in knowledge and in the appreciation of the deep things of God; and he should grow.

The Apostles Peter and Paul go on to explain (1 Peter 2:2, 3; Heb. 5:13, 14; 6:1, 2) that one thus begotten of the Spirit of God is at first only a babe, and, as a babe, should desire the sincere milk of the Word—the first principles of the doctrine of Christ; but as he goes on he should feed upon the strong meat of God's Word. Some of those who have the begetting of the Spirit may be blessed with the special gift of language, so that they can make the matter very clear to others; some others who have also received the begetting of the Spirit may not be blessed with this gift. But all certainly would have the desire to tell forth the blessings which they have received from the Lord, that others might know and might glorify God in their bodies and spirits, which are His.

As these spiritually minded ones would thus endeavor to tell the Good Tidings, we have no doubt whatever that the Lord's blessing upon them would more and more qualify them as ambassadors and representatives, that they might tell the message to others—if not in one form, then in another. We have noted, however, that some who speak with stammering lips have sometimes accomplished very wonderful things, while some with a great deal of eloquence have failed to obtain the same results. The victory is not always to the strong nor to the swift; for the Lord may grant His blessing with the feebly spoken word, particularly if the whole life be in harmony with the message given out.

The Life not the Words, a True Index

We have been surprised at times to find that some who have apparently considerable understanding of spiritual things, in the sense of being able to tell about them, do not always give the best evidence in their lives that they really have the Spirit of the Lord. Sometimes in their private lives there is that which is quite contradictory. This condition surprises us; causes us to wonder how it is that those who apparently understand the Truth should be without the power, or manifestation of the power of the Truth in their daily lives. We should bear in mind that whoever speaks the Word of the Lord with his mouth, should uphold it in his every act, thought, in private life as well as in public.

The Bible should be the standard. Everything else is certainly quite contrary to the Divine will; and that person who fails to uphold the Truth in his daily life gives evidence that he has not the Spirit of the Lord in the proper degree. If, therefore, any of us should find that in our daily lives we have not been living in conformity with the message of our lips, it would be a matter of serious concern, for we cannot doubt that whoever is out of harmony with the Lord in his heart will sooner or later get out of harmony in his utterances.

The Secret of all Power

We read of our Lord that "they were astonished at His doctrine; for His word was with power." (Luke 4:32.) We have before us in these words the greatest teacher that ever lived; and if we inquire wherein His power consisted, the answer is, It was the power of the Holy Spirit, which He had without measure. (John 3:34.) This is the secret of all power in the work of the Lord. Learning and worldly wisdom, or natural talents of fluency of speech or oratory, are no substitutes for this indispensable requirement for the Divine service. No preaching, no teaching is of value, except it be in the power of the Holy Spirit.

In this power our Lord Jesus came up from the wilderness into Galilee. How did He obtain this power? He obtained it in the same way His followers may obtain it, namely by entire consecration to God, faithfulness to that consecration, and by -communion with Him in prayer and meditation upon His Word. The complete consecration our Lord had made and symbolized at Jordan; and while carefully studying the Law and Prophets in order to an exact knowledge of the will of God, He had just endured a most subtle and severe conflict with the powers of darkness for forty days alone in the wilderness. Through implicit faith in the wisdom, love, and power of the Father, He came off that battlefield victorious, and filled with the power of that Holy Spirit which had given Him the victory. Thus He was equipped with power from on high for the great work upon which He immediately entered. It was no wonder, indeed, that the people "were astonished at His doctrine; for His word was with power." "He taught them as one having authority" as one who knew the Truth by an implicit faith in God which admitted of no doubt, and by the practical demonstration of its power upon His own heart-and not as the scribes who had no such insight into the holy things of God.

Silent Influence of a Consistent Christian Life

It is thus and only thus, that the followers of Christ may also gain this power which will mightily convince men of the Truth, and which will compel respect for it, even in those who are not prepared to receive it into good and honest hearts. The preacher or teacher acceptable to God must, therefore, like the Lord, be first sincerely and fully consecrated to God. Then, when tried and tempted, he must prove his faithfulness to that consecration. Then let him go forward in the work of the Lord with a resolute purpose, to do His will at all hazards of human approval or disapproval, or of human praise or persecution. Most likely, like the Lord Himself, he will have some of both-at first some of the praise, but afterward the bitterness of persecution.

There is no preaching of the Truth more forcible than the silent influence of a consistent Christian character, bearing in richness and luxuriousness the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, and self-control. And no preaching of the Truth, however eloquent, reasonable, and logical, is likely to be productive of results to the glory of God, if not backed by the silent yet potent influence of a consistent Christian life.

Here is a way of preaching the Gospel which may be measurably overlooked by some who are anxious to do more active service in the cause we love. Let us not forget that golden opportunities lie all about us. Ye are indeed living epistles, known and read of all men. Our families, our relatives, our neighbors, are judging of the Truth by its effects upon us. Let us not forget this. We must be transparent and let the light of God's truth shine through all our doings.