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Glorified in His Saints

"When He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." - 2 Thess. 1:10.

IN THE beginning of our spiritual life we find it comparatively easy to understand that Christians are to be a "peculiar people" unto the Lord, a people chosen to show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. Nothing appears more reasonable to our newly begotten minds in their early stages of development than that we should glorify our Father in heaven, and that whether we eat or drink or whatsoever we do we should do as unto Him and for His glory. But it represents an advanced lesson to fully appreciate that God Himself really glories in His people, that He actually glories in them as His very special treasure, a royal diadem in His hand, eventually to be exhibited to all His creatures as the crowning glory of His own handiwork and grace.

The Old Testament contains many statements suggestive of God's delight in His people, and of His jealous love for them, but it required the deeper revelation of the Gospels and Epistles to reveal that He could thus "glory in His saints." The most devout servant of former dispensations could never have imagined so great a possibility. It required the presence and power of the Holy Spirit to clearly show how believers are made the special inheritance of the Lord Himself, and how they become the crowning feature of all His creative work, therefore the special treasure in which He glories.

There has recently been brought to our attention the luminous comments of a writer who has enlarged upon this delightful theme in a most helpful manner, and we are passing them on for the profitable consideration of others, believing that all will appreciate the writer's pleasing presentation of a subject so precious to our hearts in these days.

A People for Himself

"In a descriptive allusion to the redemption work of Christ -- redemption 'from all iniquity,' and much beside -- the Apostle Paul declares that this gracious operation, purifying, and sanctifying, and glorifying, not only proceeds from the Lord Himself, but is likewise unto Himself-'a people for His own possession.' (Titus 2:14.) Did not the Master prepare His immediate disciples for

some such issue, when, in His great intercessory prayer, He said: 'All Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine and I am glorified in them'? - John 17:10.

"That the Lord is glorified, and will be glorified, carries the immediate assent of Christian people, but that He should reach a peculiar glory, realize a distinctive splendor, in them-through them, and by means of them-this is still more wonderful. Yet, as we believe the Lord, and accept His Word, we must acknowledge this majestic truth. And the great Apostle enlarges our vision in this regard. In a famous passage in which he encourages faith, love, and patience on the part of the Thessalonians, he forecasts the day when the Lord shall come to manifest His power, yes, but more than that-to be glorified in His saints, and to be marveled at in all them that believe.' - 2 Thess. 1:10.

"In days when interest in soul-uplift tends to the crowding out of leisure for the contemplation of saintship in the light of the glory of Christ, it is well to recognize the greatness of the destiny that awaits the people of God. We may think of 'things to come,' and in large degree overlook Christ's interest in His saints. We may appreciate much that engaged the hearts of prophets in ancient days, and yet pass by the fact that by one Offering the Lord Jesus 'perfected for ever them that are sanctified.' (Heb. 10:14.) But why pass by this sublime truth? Thankful for the offering, should we not rejoice that its perfecting will tell effectually and finally the glory of His redeemed people? Yet, not only will they be glorified by Him, but, and how shall we say it, **He will be glorified in them!** Like the perfect peace of God, so also will it 'be with the consummating glory of God, to be conferred upon the saints.

"As it were with bowed heads and unshod feet we dwell upon things that are Divine in origin and issue, from heaven and not from men. Here is nothing of human achievement; we are in the presence of the work of Christ -- calling, foreordaining, justifying, sanctifying, glorifying. Here are words that are shunned nowadays under the influence of forms of thought that explain operations of grace in terms that are human rather than Divine. But why be shy in presence of familiar categories of inspired truth? When we accept the outlook of glory, in fulness of experience -- glory, honor, and immortality -- why not make room for the Apostolic teaching that the glory not only comes from Christ, but that, when at length it shall be the blazing possession of His people, it will, of set design and purpose, tell for the enhanced glory of the Son of God Himself?

Without Spot or Wrinkle or any Such Thing

"As the sufferings of the saints go to 'fill up' the sufferings of Christ, so the glorifying of the saints will have part and place in the manifestation of the greater glory of Christ. Going from strength to strength, and becoming radiant with the forthshining of their Lord, the risen saints will know what it is to be 'transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.'

"Under every sky today there are men and women who look for the Lord's Return. Whatever their avocation and estate in life and its activities, they anticipate the coming of the Day of God. Reading the Old Testament, they are impressed with the fact that at His coming Christ will establish righteousness in the earth; and reading the New Testament, they find joy in the assurance that God will accomplish the number of His elect, and bring them each and all to His presence, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. True . . . the future may yield days of darkness that shall cry aloud for the manifestation of the light of heaven, as it were in living

flame. Notwithstanding, there is joy in the thought that He that will come shall come, and will not tarry, to the glory of His people and His own proper praise.

"This is all wonderful, and mighty in its appeal to those whose hearts are set in love upon the Lord Himself. In the regeneration, when Christ shall sit upon the throne of His glory, when He shall judge and rule, not only will good come to the world of humanity, but to those that now await Him, the while accepting His cross, doing His will, possibly being persecuted for righteousness' sake-to these there will come still greater blessing, with a part in ripening stages of the mighty Plan which brought the Son from heaven to earth, a Plan which will gather a new majesty when 'this same Jesus' comes 'to be glorified in His saints and to be marveled at in all them that believe.'

"What is your calling, brethren?' The question may well engage all who name the name of Christ. Called unto holiness? Yes, beyond dispute, and whatever of finality there may be in holiness, is embodied in the Divine design for the people of God. In a passage already quoted, we found that the Lord's purpose for His people is that they shall be with Him where He is. Will He be content with less? Will the future fall short of heavenly comfort and companionship? Nay, indeed, the days of weakness and deficiency will once for all reach an end when Christ shall be 'glorified in His people.' We have His word for it, and what He has promised He will surely bring to pass.

'We may trust Him fully
All for us to do;
They who trust Him wholly
Find Him wholly true.'

"The final glory' of the people of God will realize the desire of the glorified Son of God. If in one sphere He will bring forth judgment unto victory, so in another sphere He will, by a mighty endowment, realize in His people an issue in harmony with His own effulgent nature. Therein we reach a worthy conception of conformity unto the image of Christ. A people peculiar **unto Himself cannot** come short of 'the glory that excelleth.' And this is not something to -be earned, something to be attained by striving, the fruition of personal ambition and human attainment. Rather, it is an outcome of the forthshining of Christ, revealed from heaven with a purpose at once gracious and majestic. In the words of the Apostle -- 'Glorified in His saints, and marveled at in all them that believe.'

Through Grace

"The words that arrest us are beyond our power of comprehension. Here are depths that we may not fathom, but we may assuredly conclude that, in the time of His grand Apocalypse, the essential glory of our Lord and the derived glory of His people will mysteriously coalesce. The time having arrived-the fulness of time-for the Lord to receive His people -- 'called, chosen, and faithful' unto Himself, an accession of glory envelops Him, and as never before He will be the object of admiration and wonder. At length the Lord Jesus and His people are one in the beauty and grandeur of completed communion-Head and Body, Sanctifier and Sanctified.

"Through grace the Church partakes of the glory of the Lord; through more grace the Lord, in Divine condescension, will receive back upon Himself the luster which the glorified Church will reflect. To accept the suggestion of Dean Afford, 'the saints and believers are the element in which the enhanced glory, the effulgent marvel, are manifested.' Now at length, rejoicing in His

triumph, disciples enter into their Master's joy, and behold His glory; and He on His part realizes the joy that was set before Him when He endured the cross. Further, as never before -- at least in a unique sense -- there is demonstration before angels and men of the fact that the Church which is His Body is 'the fulness of Him **that filleth all in all.**'"

Walking in Newness of Life

[Contributed]

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." - 2 Cor. 5:17.

THROUGHOUT THE inspired Word of God mankind as a race are represented as dead -- dead in trespasses and sins, dead in Adam, alienated from God through wicked -works. Only those who have fled for refuge to the cross of Christ are ever spoken of as having life in God's sight. These have passed from death unto life through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and consecration to Him, and according to the above text and many others of a similar kind, those thus passed from death in Adam to life in Christ are now to be considered as living a new life. Of as life so altered in the matter of relationship to God as well as in all other aspects, it can (be truly said "all things are become new." Thus in another text we have the same Apostle telling us "that like as Christ - was raised from the dead by the glory, of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." - Rom. 6:4.

There is nothing ambiguous about such texts as the above. The natural man, living under the condemnation of death, and following the downward bent of the fallen fleshly mind is sensual, inherently sinful, dead. But the one who has turned from sin, and by faith in Christ found peace and forgiveness at the mercy-seat of God, has thereby experienced something, so far-reaching in its possibilities of relationship to God, to eternal life, and to present resurrection influences, that the contrasts of life and death used by the Apostle in these Scriptures become clear and forceful illustrations of this most important teaching of the New Testament. In fact, this form of illustrating the state of those who are in harmony with God and those who are at enmity with Him, is a prominent feature of our Lord Jesus' own teaching. "Let the .dead bury their dead," is His clear conception of those out of relationship with God. Then, in contrast, speaking of those who had entered the way of life, He said, "He that believeth on the Son 'bath everlasting life." And to this might be added the testimony of the Apostle John, "He that hath the Son hath life; and he -that hath not the Son of God bath not life." - Matt. 8:22; John 3:36; 1 John 5:12.

If any Man be in Christ

It is manifestly important then that we note very closely the language used in our text. We observe that Paul is careful to tell us that it is only to such as are "in Christ," that old things have passed away and to whom all things are become new. The words "in Christ" place a very particular emphasis on the, fact that much more than a belief in 'Christ and His sacrifice is necessary to an enjoyment of these "new creature" privileges. It is not -- If any man believe in Christ," but "If any man be in Christ." This distinction is ever a characteristic of the Word of God. To believe the word of Christ as true, and to have His word abiding in the heart, may be two vastly different reactions of the mind. One may hear His word and affirm faith in it and yet go on building on the shifting sand, being a hearer but not a doer of the word. The word of truth may indeed be received and believed by the simple processes of intellectual powers possessed, but the Scriptural emphasis is always placed on the deeper receptivity and response of the heart affections. "That on the good ground," Jesus said, "are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." - Luke 8:15.

We cannot be surprised, therefore, to find that throughout the entire Bible God puts so much emphasis on the depth of heart soil we display, and on the depth of heart devotion and receptivity we manifest. As He said to Israel of old, so He continues to say to all who profess faith in Him, or claim any special relationship to Him, "The Lord your God proveth you to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. (Deut. 12:3.) And this is the distinction intended in our text where being "**in Christ**" is the imperative requirement laid down by the Apostle.

And what does it mean to be "in Christ"? It means that we Have found the "new and living way, which He bath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh." (Heb. 10:20.) It means that by the exercise of faith in the atoning work of Christ 'we have now been "quickenened together with Him," and henceforth our "life is hid with Christ in God." This, then, is how believers ,are united to, Christ and can know that they are "in Christ." The two important steps into this relationship; are clearly stated by Paul: "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him." "If ye then be risen with Christ,, seek those things, which are above." (Rom. 6:8; Col. 3:1.) Thus it is through death that we enter the sphere of new creature life-through faith in the atonement secured by the death of Jesus, and then by virtue of our 'baptism into death with Him, we are raised to "walk in newness of life." As another has well expressed:

"It is in the power of a new life that believers are united to Christ. They were dead in sin, and He, in perfect grace, came down, and, though Himself pure and sinless, was 'made sin' -- 'died unto sin' -- put it away -- rose triumphant over it, and all pertaining to it, and, in resurrection, became the Head of a new race. Adam was the head of the old

creation, which fell with him. Christ, by dying, put Himself under the full weight of His people's condition, and having perfectly met all that was against them, rose, victorious over all, and carried them with Him into the new creation, of which He is the glorious Head and Center. Hence, we read, 'He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. (1 Cor. 6:17.) 'But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved *us*, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with 'Christ (by grace ye are saved), and bath raised us up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' (Eph. 2:4-6.) "For -we are members of His body.' (Eph. 5:30.) 'And you being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses.' (Col. 2:13.)" Thus we are constituted alive "in Christ."

Living as New Creatures in Christ

In the regeneration processes by which God's new creation class is developed, they are, by an act of pure grace planted in Christ, and thus like the branches in the vine, they are constantly partaking of the sap and strength of Christ the Vine therefore the life of Christ becomes increasingly manifest in them. The evidences of spiritual life must become sufficiently marked in the daily conduct as to give a real corroboration to a profession of relationship 'to Christ. This is made clear by the statement of Scripture: "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit; . . . Now if any man have *not* the Spirit of Christ, 'he its none of His." (Rom. 8:5, 9.) These texts, cover two important facts of Christian life. They very clearly point out our privileged and blessed standing in justification by faith, that is, our reckoned righteousness before God because we are *now* in Christ Jesus, and they also show

that because we are thus complete in Him, and recipients of the Holy Spirit in its creative power, the mind and character of Christ should, yes, 'must characterize our daily life.

In this new life, according to yet another text, there is a renewing or transforming work at once begun, for so we read: "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Rom. 12:2.) This .requires, therefore, that in this new creature life, new 'hopes, new visions, new purposes, new habits of thought, and an entirely new point of concentration will now control such a consecrated individual. And what will that point of concentration be? Surely it will be in perfect harmony with God's purpose for us, which is, that we should be conformed to the image of His beloved Son. Then it must follow that henceforth *only* that which definitely contributes to the development of Christ in the heart, and only that which is conducive to increasing spirituality, will interest and occupy the truly grateful believer. Under *no* other condition of mind and 'heart would it be true testimony to claim that old things had indeed passed out of the life. Then along with those new 'hopes, desires, etc., will come a greatly changed attitude of mind toward things in general, such as trials, environments, and our contacts with seemingly adverse circumstances. Of this condition the words of the hymn may be taken as a true expression

"How happy and blessed the hours
Since Jesus I always can see!
Sweet prospects, sweet birds, and sweet flowers,
Have all gained new sweetness to me;
E'en when the great sun shines but dim,
And fields strive in vain to look gay,
While I am so happy in Him,
December's as pleasant as May."

Among the many physical defects to which men and women are their, there is what is known as color-blindness. In the spiritual life there is an alarming possibility of a moral color-blindness. Was it not some such moral color-blindness against which Jesus uttered His words so full of deep significance "The light of 'the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is 'full of darkness." (Luke 11:34.) Certain it is, no one is living or can live the new life in Christ until the divine Oculist has trained the moral eyesight to see the fine distinctions by which God discovers the single eye. In the character -of God there are righteous standards, firm and 'absolute, without shadow of turning; therefore the newness of life set before the follower of Christ, and the strong and admirable life, is the life that is keen to respond to this vision of God's character. In the life of Jesus on earth there were many admirable *able* qualities of character displayed, but pre-eminent place is given to His hatred of sin and His love of righteousness. Thus it is written of Him: "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil - of gladness above Thy fellows." (*Heb. 1:8.*) Living as new creatures in Christ requires this same uncompromising love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity.

By the Spirit let Us Walk

The reader of Paul's 'first letter to the Corinthian Church must be struck with the seeming contradictions in several of his statements. In 1 Corinthians 1 :4, 5, we read: "I thank my God always -on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ: that in every thing ye are enriched by Him, *in* all utterance, and in all knowledge." Then while he is yet

practically in the introduction of the letter, he is chiding them because of "contentions" among them, factional disputes, some saying "I am of Paul"; others, "I am of Apollos"; and others, "I am of Cephas." Then in chapter 3, verse 1, he writes, "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto -carnal, even as unto babes in Christ." What a paradox these statements appear to be! But herein lies the lesson for us. Paul certainly recognizes these brethren as being new creatures in Christ, for he addresses them as saints. But while he gives them a standing as saints or new creatures in Christ, he very plainly tells them they are failing to live as becometh such. The Apostle can thank God that they are "enriched in all utterance, and in all knowledge," but they must, nevertheless, lament the inconsistency of their conduct. What pained the heart of Paul was that while they were enriched in knowledge, they had not entered into the truth in real spiritual power, in such a way as to really possess it and be possessed by it. He had wanted them to get hold not only of the letter but also of the spirit of the knowledge by which they had been enriched. He wanted them to understand that only the spiritually minded really possess the truth, and that if they would live as new creatures in Christ, the Holy Spirit must have free course in their lives in order to elevate them into the higher realms of maturity. He labored to show them that being conversant with the letter did not in itself indicate real spirituality.

Commenting on this very matter an able writer has well said "Spiritual knowledge is not deep thought, but living contact, entering into and being united to the truth as it is in Jesus, a spiritual reality, a substantial existence. 'The Spirit teacheth, combining spiritual things with spiritual,' into a spiritual mind it works spiritual truth. It is not the power of intellect, it is not even the earnest desire to know the truth [though this must be present], that fits a man for the Spirit's teaching; it is a life yielded to it in waiting dependence and full obedience to be made spiritual, that receives the spiritual wisdom and understanding. In the mind these two elements, the moral and the cognitive, are united; only as the former has precedence and sway, can the latter apprehend what God has spoken.

"It is easy to understand how a carnal or fleshly life with its walk, and the fleshly mind with its knowledge, act and react on each other. As far as we are giving way to the flesh, we are incapable of receiving spiritual insight into truth.. We may 'know all mysteries, and have all knowledge,' without love, the love which the Spirit works in the inner life; it is only a knowledge that puffeth up, it profiteth nothing. **The carnal life makes the knowledge carnal.** And this knowledge again, being thus held in the fleshly mind, strengthens the religion of the flesh, of self-trust and self-effort; the truth so received has no power to renew and make free. No wonder that there is so much Bible teaching and Bible knowledge, with so little of real spiritual result in a life of holiness. Would God that His word might sound through His Church 'Whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal?' Unless we be living spiritual lives, full of 'humility, and love, and self-sacrifice, spiritual truth, the truth of God, cannot profit us."

Surely if we thus "live by the Spirit" and "walk by the Spirit," in faith and obedience, we may rest assured that the Holy Spirit will do its complete transforming work in us. We can rest in the faith that the Spirit will impart sufficient strength to live as becometh new creatures in Christ, working in us to will and to do all that is pleasing in the sight of God. It is the rich possession of the Holy Spirit that makes and marks the spiritual man.

Old Things are Passed Away

In thinking of the "old things" which the Apostle tells us are to pass out of the new creature life, we realize there are many. We may think of the gross sins and weaknesses spoken of as "the works of the flesh and the devil," "but for the present it will be helpful to examine another line of old things which must pass away through the operations of the Word and Spirit of God in our hearts now, or pass away in the fire which shall burn eventually, utterly consuming all that is "wood, hay, and stubble." The life of the Christian is represented in Scriptures under the metaphor of a building. This illustration suggests the idea of a slow, continuous process, a laying of stone on stone until the structure is complete. Into this structure we are told may be "built "gold, silver, precious stones," or "wood, hay, stubble." Sooner or later the material with which we have built will be subjected to the test of fire, "the day shall declare it." This symbol of fire is but the Bible way of stating that a searching, revealing, testing, and destructive judgment will one day come upon all that is not of the gold, silver, and precious stones character. Whatever will abide in this test will be of permanent quality-it shall not pass away; but all that is not of this enduring quality will be utterly destroyed in that day of the revealing fire. The Lord will judge His people. He is judging them now. Christ is now coming in to judge, and when He comes into a life to judge it, light comes in with Him, and that light is pouring in upon the actions and inner life of all who are before His judgment seat. This is the solemn word of Scripture: "I am He which searcheth the reins ,and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. . . . He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." - Rev. 2:23, 29.

What then are our works-how have we built? Have we been building on Christ, in Him, and for Him? Have we 'built for His searching eye so faithfully that we shall not be ashamed before Him? Have the old things passed away under the power of the Holy Spirit's daily effective work in the heart through the passing years, or will they still remain to pass away in the fire which shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

How evident it is that in this revealing fire one class of service, of teaching, and one kind of life, will be brightened and beautified and glorified; and another class of such things will be destroyed and burned up. The gold and silver and costly stones will be glorified and heightened in beauty 'by being brought into this contact with the hand and heat of the Refiner sand His furnace, while the other will be proved to be so mixed with the old things as to merit destruction. And what will the day declare for each of us? How many surprises will there be -both among the workers whose building will abide the fire, and also among those whose works must perish in the flame! Well may we each ask ourselves, how much of my life work will be wiped out of existence, crushed into nonentity, and made as if it had never been at all? Whatever in our conduct has been acceptable to God, we are assured will last. It will last in the mind -of our heavenly Father, and it will last in glorious results to ourselves, because it will be in accord with the perfect will of God, which is the first great permanent reality in the universe. Because He abides for ever, so will that in us which has glorified Him abide forever. May we then, be more and more able to affirm with the Apostle, "old things **are** passed away."

Behold All Things are Become New

Happy indeed are they who really know that they are "walking in newness of life." To know that there has been a complete separation from the pursuits and attractions of the flesh, and a new point of concentration permanently fixed in the life, the new creature life, is to know the blessed testimony of the Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, and heirs of eternal life with Christ our Lord. And so, possessed as we can be by new hopes, new visions, new aspirations, a new life in Christ, 'how comforting are the assurances of the Scriptures which teach us that God really gives us this thigh and perfect standing through faith in the sacrifice of Christ.

No doubt the poorest [building on the foundation Rock, will have something in it that will remain after the fire of trial has done its work because it is on that Rock. But it is for us as true believers to cherish the noblest hopes and objectives. There is nothing new in seeking to be but "a doorkeeper in the' house of the Lord." It is proper enough to say with David that I would "rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord, than to -dwell in the tents of wickedness," but it is much more proper for new creatures in Christ to conform their aspirations and expectations to the revealed will of God. And those who gain this true outlook will ever be seeking for higher and higher attainments in Christian character. Such will be heard always singing,

"I want to scale the utmost height,
And catch a gleam of glory bright;
But still I'll pray till heaven I've found,
'Lord, lead me on to higher ground!"

So let us build on the foundation other than which no man can lay. Build on it gold and silver and precious stones, the things which are eternally new-true thoughts and holy deeds, loving, pure, unselfish Christ-like and permanent materials. Let us give all diligence to add to our faith whatsoever things are 'lovely, ennobling, things which never grow old nor pass away, because they originate in God, who is from everlasting to everlasting, ever new and 'unchanging. Then we shall not be "saved so as by fire," 'but by grace divine an entrance shall be ministered unto us "abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

"GOD'S WILL IS BEST"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thou Shalt Love Thy Neighbor

*"And who is my neighbor? . . . **He** that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. " - Luke 10:29, 37.*

A YOUNG man came to our Lord one day to inquire earnestly, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life"? Jesus' reply was, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Perhaps the young man surmised that there was some commandment that this One who could read men's -hearts knew he had been -overlooking, and so he inquires, "Which?" No theologian would ever have answered this second question as Jesus did: "Thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, honor thy father and thy -mother: and, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." There is here no reference to love for God or faith in Him. The first four commandments, comprising love for God, are passed over without even an allusion to them; and all the young ruler is enjoined to do is to "love thy neighbor as thyself"; for in substance this was Jesus' response. It is evident that this is not a mere oversight on the part of a historian, for Matthew, Mark, and Luke all record the incident in almost the same words. By the Master's reply, love for one's neighbor is given a position of the utmost importance. Is there not here an indication that true love for one's neighbor cannot exist in a heart that does not know genuine love for God, for Jesus surely did not intend His inquirer to suppose that he could attain eternal life if he did not love God. An additional suggestion is also hidden away in the Master's reply--that though this man thought he was keeping the entire law, he was lacking in even this apparently least important portion of it. A sure test, then, as to the state of our love for God, would seem to be to examine into the genuineness of our love for our neighbor.

One cannot love God without loving those whom He loves, and it is equally true that he could not love the creature with a pure love without having a greater love for the more lovely Creator. If our love to God be .an unselfish, a pure love, and if it be likewise of a degree suitable to its object, which is without gainsaying the highest degree, then of necessity the love for His creatures will be both subordinate to and regulated by it. If our 'love for God is pure and perfect, we shall be in complete accord with Him in His love toward all that He has made, and shall, according to our capacity, love just as He does.

Love for the Creator Impels Love for His Creatures

True and unrestricted love for God can result only in an unrestricted covenant of consecration, faithfully performed to the limit of our ability. And if our love for God results in a full consecration of all our powers to Him, that they may be used in conformity to His will, we must of necessity as a feature of the life of consecration, love those whom He loves. Also, whatsoever things He is interested in, whether they be things in heaven or things in the earth, things of greater or things of less importance -- these will interest us in so far as we are able to understand them and in so far as we have the capacity to appreciate them. In proportion as our reverence for the great Creator grows, the sacredness will be enhanced of whatever trace there is left of His workmanship in His trees, His streams, His eternal hills, His sky of endless blessings, His broad expanses of ocean, and even in His fallen sons of earth.

Though the reflection of the excellencies of our Maker is now barely traceable in His workmanship, as a meager revelation of His wisdom and goodness, it will evoke in us far greater admiration than the mere beauties of the object. In the flight of the seed-bearing bird, in the verdure that clothes hill and dale, in the cattle that feed thereon, and even in the tiny insect that darts from flower to flower, do we recognize the agency of Him who doeth all things so well that six thousand years of study has only begun to reveal to us a few of the marvels of the intricate relationship of the created forms that surround us; but having discovered some meager facts regarding the usefulness of an occasional one of God's creatures, we may grasp by faith the possibility that each may have a larger place in God's purposes than we yet can see, and that there is none that will not have served some use. But though one may remain in ignorance of the purpose for which a certain creature was formed, no one who is unselfishly interested; in the Maker can ever be indifferent to anything that He has made and takes an interest in.

As, in our contemplation of the objects of our love, we rise in the scale of creatures to those which have a moral and a rational nature, to those of our own race, or even to those kindred by the closer relationship of family ties, here also the exercise of love will be on the same principle of adjustment in accordance with the object's relationship to God. To complicate the difficulties of being always aware of this regulating principle, however, that love which we speak of as natural love enters in. Nevertheless, our love, whether "natural love" -- love for those who are near to us by earthly ties or whether an acquired love, if it is a love based on our relationship to God and the relationship of the object of our love to this God, it will always be subordinate to the love we have for God and will always be regulated by it. Jesus said, "Who is My mother, and who are My brethren? And He stretched forth His hand toward His disciples, and said, Behold My mother and My brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in heaven, the same is My 'brother, and sister, and mother."

Thus, though there will be modifications of our love from natural causes, a Christian's love for all things and all people will invariably be in and for God -- or at least that will be his earnest endeavor. Since God's requirement of us is that we love Him with all our heart, and since there is in all creatures traces of His workmanship, and since our fellowmen are those for whom He sent His Son to earth to die, it would seem that we could not rightfully claim to be loving God, or at least not as we should, so long as there is one of these creatures that is not loved with this same unselfish love-loved in and for God.

The Love that Begins and Ends in God

"But what," says a certain writer, "is loving any creature only in and for God? It is, when we love it only as it is God's work, image, and delight; when we love it merely as it is God's, and belongs to Him. This is loving it in God. And when all that we wish, intend, or do to it, is done from a love of God, for the honor of God, and in conformity to the will of God, this is loving it for God. This is the one love, that is, and must be, the spirit of all creatures that live united to God. Now, this is no speculative refinement or fine-spun fiction of the brain; but the simple truth, a first law of nature, and a necessary bond of union between God and the creature. The creature is not in God, is a stranger to Him, has lost the life of God in itself, whenever its love does not thus begin and end in God."*

* "Law's Spirit of Prayer."

This great supreme law of love for God not only dictates and regulates love towards our relatives, our friends, and all fellow creatures, but the seeking of our very own well-being and happiness comes under the same guidance. It is God's will that we should be well provided for and happy, in fact He requires it of us. But what does He consider the proper provision for our well-being? and what is true happiness? That which is necessary to both, we would say, is to love God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourself; this latter and all other creature loves being exercised under the supervision and limitation of the former. Thus only can one feel the full power of God's love for us, drawing us from the fleeting attractions of this realm and era of imperfection to the things that are eternal. Thus only can heartaches be avoided and fulness of joy be attained. Thus only can we now be united with the eternal things in a bond that need never be broken.

"Deny Thyself"-the First Requisite

The happy state described foregoing depends first of all upon a complete renunciation of self, an abdication of the throne of our own heart; and this is a miracle that only a revelation of God Himself can accomplish. No kingdom can ever know true happiness unless God is seated on the throne, whether it be the kingdom of earth or that of a human heart. And the great I Am can accept no divided throne -- self must abdicate unconditionally before He will take up the rule. No wonder those who have once tasted of His goodness, if they shall turn to an indulgence in the pleasures of this world for happiness, rejoicing in them more than in their God, are proved unable ever to learn an appreciation of the pure joys of His presence. One who can content himself with a few thousand acres or a few stocks and bonds -- with the leeks and garlic of Egypt, turning his back on the delights of the heavenly places where he has been seated with Christ, that he may have time for these transitory things, has lost or is losing a son's appreciation of the Father's love. The only means of restoring the lost happiness, the true joy of spiritual communion, is to renounce self entirely, that God may resume that throne in our heart from which we have banished Him in our foolish grasping for the "deceitful desires" of the flesh.

If the neighbor then is truly loved, our supreme desire on his behalf will be to assist him to that which we have discovered gives us true happiness, expecting however that in nearly every instance our privileges will be limited to sharing with him the least valued of our possessions.

Recognizing the frail body as still the workmanship of God, though fallen, the new mind seeks to glorify Him in its body, which is His, as well as in its spirit. It is of His design and under the operation of His grace that we are to be reflections of His own image, and that we are now temples of His Holy Spirit. A pure love for Him makes it impossible for us to desire to be or to have anything or to have any experience that would not be to His pleasure, and that would not therefore properly represent Him and indicate His Spirit dwelling in us. Thus our attitude toward our own selves and our prospects is exactly the same as that we bear toward all other of God's creatures, in this one respect at least, in that it is in complete subordination to our love for Him.

Having love for one's self in absolute control is the first essential to making it possible to love our neighbor as ourselves. When love of self becomes a portion of, or in a sense a manifestation of our love for God, a perfectly regulated love, fully conformed to the love we bear to our Creator, then there is nothing to interfere with our glorifying Him in our bodies, 'so far as -our desires are concerned, and our endeavors will be in harmony with our true desires. Seeking nothing, loving nothing, desiring nothing for ourselves but that which is recognized to be in harmony with His

will, that which will be to His glory even though slight the degree, the love of self becomes merged in and purified by an all absorbing love of God.

Pleasing Our Neighbor "for His Good"

Since the love for our neighbor, by Scriptural injunction, is to be measured by our love for ourselves, and since our interest in ourselves is only that we may be used to the glory of God, our interest in our neighbor will be not to supply him with the things that God denies even His own children, nor to deliver him from the experiences that are wisely permitted to come even to the household of faith by the God of the faithful for their testing and developing. Rather, while sympathizing with the poor, groaning creation in their present afflictions and in the greater tribulations yet to come before the revelation of their Deliverer, we rejoice that, during this season in which these very experiences are developing love in us, - the all-wise Father has not placed in our hands means, that because of our love for them in our ignorance would be used to deprive our neighbors of those experiences necessary to them that they may learn to hate sin and its consequences. Foreknowing the Church's lack of wisdom, He exhorts them to "do good to all men as they have opportunity," and then all but very meager opportunities are carefully kept from them, even our impetuous desire to now rush ahead to the filling of the earth with the knowledge of the Lord before the due time having been thwarted by permitting the god of this world to blind the eyes of all except those whom the Lord is now calling. Not one of the Master's disciples could have the wisdom to know when to speak to the world in parables and dark sayings "lest they should understand." For this reason the only safe love for our neighbor is that love that is perpetually subservient to a pure love for God, that will leave the direction and the outcome of all activities in His all-wise providence. "Filled with the love of God, the love of our neighbor flows out from the great fountain of divine love, in the various channels and in the degree which God chooses, as easily and as naturally as a stream flows from its lake in the mountains over the meadows land valleys below. There is no need of effort. Only let God, in His providence, furnish the occasion, and in a moment the heart will open, and the streams will gush out."

Pure Love in Action

As intimated in the above quotation, the love for our neighbor, flowing from the divine source, and thus under its regulation, being at all times equal to our love for ourselves, without effort adapts itself to every condition and occasion. Each may test his dove whether it be of this unselfish order by noting whether he is faithful in visiting the home of the poverty stricken and the bedside of the sick to minister to them of his greater physical and spiritual abundance, or lacking these opportunities, whether he sympathizes in the sufferings and rejoices in the consolations of others just as he does in his own. "Such souls as are really detached from themselves, . . . regard the mercies distributed to others with the same complacency as those they receive themselves; for, esteeming themselves as nothing, they love the good pleasure of God, the riches of His grace, and the glory He derives from the sanctification of others, as much as that which He derives from them. All is then equal, for the personal self, or **me**, is lost. The **me** is no more **me** [that is, in regard to the exercise of the affections] than another person. It is God alone that is all in all. It is God whom they love and admire; and who, in the exercise of this disinterested or pure love, causes all the joy of their hearts."

It becomes very evident, that, on the principles already laid down, it should not only be possible but easy to live in harmony with the command of our Savior to love our enemies, to bless them

that curse us, and to do good to them that hate and persecute us. Even in a measure to accomplish these things along natural lines would be not only very difficult but impossible, except in proportion as there is some trace of the divine character not eradicated by the fall. But where the love of God reigns in the heart their accomplishment becomes easy, for "We cannot love God as we ought, without adopting His sentiments, and loving what He loves." Since we were among those that He loved while we were yet sinners, it is accounted a great privilege to have a love faintly emulating His, in that we too love those who oppose us. We cannot hope to love as He does; nor can we hope to manifest our love as He did, for He gave the most precious treasure of the universe to suffer and die for the sinful, rebellious race, while we, at the 'best, have only an unworthy offering to bring. Not many will permit us to serve them yet, but in harmony with the Apostle's injunction we can do good unto all men as we have opportunity.

There are however no limitations on prayer. Instead, we can pray for all who despitefully entreat us. Neither in their unloveliness, nor in the cruelty and injustice of their treatment of us, is there hindrance to our faithful use of this privilege; for the only consideration with the one who loves God is that God loves these who hate us and that He requires us to love them. This knowledge throws wide open the flood gates of love.

There is the additional advantage in basing our love for our fellowman on our love for God, in that it is thus of too persistent and constant a quality to be interfered with by any outward circumstances. Based on the uncertainties of the creature, either ourselves or the one loved, it will be subject to numberless breaks and variations. The joy of loving can not be there. But unending peace and joy attend the love that finds its eternal source in God.

"And 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: this is the first commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. **There is none other commandment greater than these.**" - Mark 12:30, 31.

Christ's Offer of Freedom

"Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." - Lev. 25:10.

THE LOVE of freedom is inherent in all of God's intelligent creatures. And under certain limitations it was manifestly the divine purpose that all enjoy liberty, the limitations in every case being those of righteousness: of respect for the submission to the divine law, and mutual love and respect for the rights and liberties of fellow creatures. Within these metes and bounds, and within these only, is the rightful exercise of individual liberty.

Civilization, basing itself partly on an appreciation of the principles of justice and partly upon the lessons of history, attempts so to shape the laws of the land as to secure the rights of all. It is not surprising, however, that-with selfishness a ruling element in all hearts by nature-neither the laws nor the practices of the most civilized are perfect; that is to say, the largest amount of protection and the 'largest amount of individual liberty are not always secured. When we consider that the lawmakers and executives are all imperfect, we are properly amazed at the amount of justice we find in the world and the amount of liberty. If all the lawmakers were saints, fully in harmony with the divine arrangements and merely limited by the imperfection of their mortal bodies, we could not expect much better laws than we find in the world; and were it not that the Scriptures clearly show us that the Church, as kings and priests of the future, will be absolutely perfect in every respect and backed by divine wisdom and power, we could not anticipate for the Millennium anything much better than we now possess in the way of governmental machinery.

The Influence of the Bible

As we compare the various degrees of civilization throughout the world, and note that the wisest and best laws and wisest and best execution of them and the greatest true liberty of the people within reasonable bounds are found in those nations which have most revered the divine Message, the Bible, it is a strong argument that the Word of God has not only influenced the "little flock" who take it most seriously, and lay aside every weight and hindrance and worldly ambition to run with patience in the footsteps of Jesus, but it has influenced the minds of many who have never taken this step of full consecration. In a word, the liberty wherewith Christ makes free is not the liberty of license but the liberty of reason, of justice, of love; and in proportion as any one has received the spirit of the divine teaching, in that same proportion he is a freeman. We thank God, therefore, for the measure of national liberty which prevails throughout the world, even while we see clearly from the prophecies of the Scriptures, as well as written on the pages of the daily press, that a great misinterpretation of liberty is rapidly spreading throughout the world, which will eventually wreck the present civilization in anarchy.

The Fight for Liberty

All the liberty there is in the world today has been paid for; none of it has been attained without sacrificers. Why? Because selfishness is so entrenched in the race that those who possess power, authority, privilege, opportunity, would hold these for themselves to the disadvantage of others, to the enslavement of others, were not the rights and liberties fought for. Looking back over the history of nations, without approving of wars, every reasoning mind can see, nevertheless, that only through wars have liberties come to the human race. The mistake that is being made by

many today is the supposition that humanity would ever be able to attain the condition of absolute equality and unselfishness through laws or wars or any other means within the power of Adam's race.

The Scriptures point out to us that there is a limit beyond which we must not expect selfish humanity to make progress-that any progress beyond that limit must come from on high, through the establishment of the Kingdom of God's dear Son; that while wealth and influence and talents will yield to the pressure of the masses for their own protection and aggrandizement, they will not yield everything, but would permit the entire social structure to dissolve rather than to submit to a general equalization, as is the aim of Socialism. Hence Socialism, while not intending anarchy, will produce anarchy; while striving for greater liberty and universality of blessings of earth will effect a wreck of all these. Thanks be to God that His program is that on the wreck of present institutions He will establish the true reign of liberty on the plane of love, under the guidance of the Master and His joint-heirs.

The Christian's Fight

If the world's liberty has required fighting for, much more may we expect a battle for those who take the still higher ground of the Bible, and who strive for that liberty "wherewith Christ makes free." (Gal. 5:1.) For although this very scripture declares that Christ **gives** this freedom, the Word shows us that He gives it only to those who desire it and who will fight for it. Their battle is not to be with carnal weapons which the law of love forbids, yet their warfare is to be mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds of error. Against what, then, do they battle? We answer that their chief fight is against the fallen tendencies of their own beings. They find that, through the long centuries of the fall, sin has become inbred and entrenched in their flesh to such a degree that it necessitates a warfare in the new mind. They get the new mind or disposition through hearkening to the Word of the Lord, which, while speaking peace and forgiveness of sins through faith in Christ, invites to a newness of nature, and a jointheirship with Christ, through a full consecration of all to the divine service, to the service of righteousness *and* truth. The making of the consecration on the part of the believer was his entering upon the career of a good soldier of the Lord Jesus. It was his engagement to battle against sin and selfishness everywhere, according to the rules laid down by the chief Captain.

Liberty to Become Sons of God

This liberty of the Christian is declared by the Apostle John to be the power, privilege, or liberty of becoming a son of God. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name" (John 1:12), and again, "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." (1 John 3:2.) It should be noted that our Lord Jesus did not make us sons, but that He gave us the liberty or privilege **to become** sons.

What did our Lord Jesus do for us to secure us this great boon, this liberty or privilege? Something must have been done, for Jehovah changes not. (Mal. 3:6.) He did not once declare Adam and his children cut off from sonship and subject to destruction in death, as brute beasts, and then change that decree. Nor could, nor would, our Lord Jesus set aside the divine decision to reinstate the sinners to the dignity of sons and to worthiness of life. No; He came not to oppose the Father's will, but to obey it. "I delight to do **Thy will O God!**" was the sentiment expressed in His every

word and act. "Not My will but Thine be done," was His constant prayer. Hence we say He must have done something for us, by which He lifted from us the embargo of sin, to give us liberty to again 'become sons of God. What did He do for us?

Ah! yes! He did a great work for us; He gave Himself a ransom for us, He redeemed us from all iniquity and from all the condemnation and loss attaching to it. Giving thus the price of Adam's guilt He thereby purchased the dead and dying race, with full right to do what He wills to them and for them. He wills to give, during this Gospel Age, liberty to become sons of God to all that believe on His name. His name was called Jesus, which signifies Savior or Liberator. (Matt. 1:21.) "Thou shalt call His name Jesus for He shall save His people from their sins."

"It means so much to me, that, when He came,
They called Him 'Jesus!' 'Tis a gripping name
That takes a saving hold on one like me,
Who lifts new-visioned eyes that now would see
All false lights fade in presence of the true
What does it mean to you?"

Hence we see that it is to them that receive Him in the sense of believing in Him as their Savior or Liberator, that He gives now the liberty of becoming sons of God-none others. Believing that such a person lived at such a time is not the kind of belief that brings the liberty; believing that He was a fine Man who taught many excellent precepts, is not the kind of belief necessary; believing that He set a good example, and that all should try to follow it as best they can, is not the belief demanded here. No, it is a different belief, a belief in and recognition of His name Savior; the recognition and acceptance of Him as the One who saves His people from their sins. No one who rejects the Bible account of the fall and condemnation of all in Adam, and the utter loss of sonship and all its privileges (life, etc.), can possibly receive and "believe" in this Savior and Liberator, who by redeeming them grants them liberty or privilege to become sons of God.

But is it only to "believers" in His name that our Lord grants this privilege? Only these; belief in no other person will do, nor will the acceptance of our Lord by any other name than the one which acknowledges His ransom-sacrifice avail-He must be recognized as Savior, and not merely as Lord and Guide. He saves His people from their sins that are past as well as teaches and guides them to abhor and avoid sins for the future.

Next let us examine the liberty which believers obtain through the Savior. What does the expression liberty signify here? It simply means that our Savior, having paid the penalty of Adam's sin, offers to all who accept of His finished work, and who desire to return to the likeness of God and to sonship, a clear receipt **of exoneration** from the sin which brought condemnation upon all six thousand years ago, and that He will throw about such, a robe of righteousness to cover all their present imperfections and unavoidable weaknesses, so that they may at once go to God and thus find acceptance and grace to help, **until** having proved by their obedience in the present life, the sincerity of their consecration to God's will and service, they shall ultimately be delivered from all the present weaknesses into the grand perfect spiritual bodies like unto our Lord's. This is the promise to such overcomers, who thus will be received into final and complete sonship, as heirs of God, and joint - heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord and Savior.

Work out Your Own Salvation

The liberty which our Savior grants us is **free**; we can do nothing to purchase it or merit it; it must be accepted as a free gift of God through Jesus Christ, or not at all. But there the **free** part stops. Having obtained the privilege or liberty **to become** sons of God the matter thereafter rests with us, and to profit 'by this great privilege or liberty, we must work out our salvation, with fear and trembling. Appreciating the grandeur of the privilege put within our grasp, we must act, soberly, wisely, earnestly, not as those who idly play and beat the air, 'but as true soldiers we must fight a good fight. We must overcome our former Master, Sin; and let not Sin reign and rule in us, but throwing all our (at most) little influence on the side of our new Leader, Captain, and Forerunner, Christ Jesus, we must overcome the world, that with Him we may become sons of God 'without rebuke in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation, among whom we are to shine as lights. (Phil. 2:15.) If thus we prove our earnestness, and love-and zeal for God and His truth, we shall be accounted "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. (Col. 1:12.) Faithfulness in our warfare implies that we will be continually losing mental and moral likeness to the world, and be more and more conformed to the image of God's dear Son, who is a perfect likeness for us to pattern after. - Rom. 8:29; 1 Pet. 2:21.

Our Continual Need of the Robe

But if the liberty or privilege granted to us of becoming sons of God consisted only of a covering of the sins that are past, if it in no way continued to cover our imperfections, it would avail us nothing; for cleansed in the morning and presented to the Father as candidates for sonship, we would, through inherited weaknesses and imperfections be defiled and worthy of condemnation again before night; hence, as the Apostle declares, it would be a fearful thing for us in our present condition to have to deal direct with the perfect laws of the Father; and we are glad that He has graciously provided that we shall have our standing before Him as yet, not as individuals, but as body members of the perfect One whose robe of righteousness covers fully our every deformity and weakness, whose sacrifice made full atonement for every result of inherited depravity to which our shattered, depraved "earthen vessels" are subject.

So then, we are safe so long as we abide in Him -under the cover of His merit; while in Him, we are "accepted in the Beloved" by the Father as sons. But having been admitted to this privilege, having tasted that the Lord is gracious, having learned the necessity of abiding in Him, we must do the abiding-we must not ignore the precious blood through the merit of which this access into sonship and joint-heirship was obtained; we must not ignore our Redeemer, and attempt to offer our own **imperfect** works as meritorious and acceptable, else we shall come to nought. If any branch **abide not** in the vine it is cast forth and destroyed. (John 15:5, 6.) So then, the liberty which our Lord grants to all who come unto the Father by Him and in Him (John 14:6) is full and complete; and the assistance rendered such as draw nigh to God with their whole heart is **sufficient** that they may come off conquerors through (in) Him who loved them and gave Himself for them. This sufficiency of grace to help in every time of need is supplied mainly through God's Word, the exceeding great and precious promises of 'which are given us that **thereby** we may overcome self and the world, and become partakers of the divine nature.

It is thus the Father deals with those to whom, through the Son, liberty to become sons is now granted, namely, by the word of His grace-the Scriptures. Granted the privilege, or liberty, or

ability, to do so through their Redeemer's merit, these are then "begotten by the word of truth" that they should 'be a kind of first fruits of God's creatures.

The Apostle Peter tells the whole story saying "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath begotten us . . . to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us, who are kept by the **power of God**. [His exceeding great and precious promises and providences upon which we lay hold] through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time" (-in the end of the Age when the Body, the "Royal Priesthood," the "little flock" of sons of the divine nature shall be completed and glorified). "Wherein ye rejoice greatly though now for a season if need be ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith . . . might be found unto (or result in) praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. . . Of which [special] salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace [peculiar favor] that should come unto you." - 1 Pet. 2:10.

Overcomers of the Past

Since the overcomers of the Gospel Age -- those who use their ransomed privilege of liberty and become sons of God on the divine plane of sonship -- are to be so closely identified with their Lord and Head Christ Jesus, as to be called "members of His Body" His "Bride" and His Joint--heirs, it is evident that they are with Him, and by virtue of the ransom which He gave, are to be members in particular of that great Prophet and Life-giver Christ, and will share in the work of life-giving, restoring the dead and dying world to perfection; hence the term Everlasting Father, as well as every other title of the Head, is to be shared by His joint-heirs and co-workers. In harmony with this note the Apostle's words in Heb. 11:39, 40. Here speaking of even the **overcomers** of the past he contrasts their position (sons of Christ) with our position as sons of God (**in Christ**) saying, "These all, having obtained a good report [record] through faith, received not the promise [made to them] God having provided some **better thing for us**, that they without us should not be made perfect." - Heb. 11:40.

Since in God's Plan they are to be the children of Christ instead of the fathers, it follows that they could not get their life -- be perfected -- until the Christ (Head and Body) their Everlasting Father (or Father of their everlasting life) shall first be made perfect on the higher plane-sons of God of the divine nature.

The "Golden Age" to Come

"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." "Because the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption [death and dying] into the glorious liberty of the children of God." - Rom. 8:18-22.

Though the race in general will not become sons of God, it is here expressly shown that they may obtain, through the sons of God, the liberty or freedom from death, pain, etc., the common heritage of all sons of God. The children of Christ -- all who receive the redemption life--will stand as dear and as close to the Father, Jehovah, as sons, even as in the earthly family, the grandsons are as dearly loved and as kindly treated. And they shall be treated **as sons**, having full release from all corruption and from all condemnation. But here again it is shown that "they without **us**, [the sons and heirs] cannot be made perfect"; they cannot receive the life provided for

their until all the sons of God are selected and glorified. "The manifestation of the sons of God" is therefore the great event for which the whole creation waits and hopes and groans, even though in ignorance their hopes and expectations of the future are not clear and fixed, but only a vague longing for a "golden age" a "good time coming by and by."

Let us then, beloved, appreciate more fully than ever our glorious liberty-the privilege of becoming sons of God. Let us be strong, acquitting ourselves like men, receiving now by faith the special favor to be brought unto us at the appearing of our Lord Jesus for He that raised up Christ from the dead will raise up us also by Jesus, who will Himself present us before Him, unblamable and unreprouvable in *love*. - *Condensed from the writings of C. T. Russell.*

"It means so much to me, in crisis hours
When right seems baffled by opposing powers
'To hear His strong voice call, 'Be of good cheer,
For I have overcome this world of fear.
Here's refuge in My Word-My Word is true!
What does it mean to you?"

"THE VOICE IN THE TWILIGHT"

"I was sitting alone in the twilight,
With spirit troubled and vexed,
With thoughts that were morbid and gloomy,
And faith that was sadly perplexed.

"Some homely work I was doing
For the child of my love and care,
Some stitches half wearily setting,
In the endless need of repair.

"But my thoughts were about the 'building',
The work some day to be tried;
And that only gold and the silver,
And the precious stones, should abide.

"And remembering my own poor efforts,
The wretched work I had done,
And, even when trying most truly,
The meager success I had won:

"It is nothing but 'wood, hay, and stubble,'" I said:
'it will all be burned,
This useless fruit of the talents
One day to be returned.

"And I have so longed to serve Him,
And sometimes I know I have tried;
But I'm sure when He sees such building,
He never will let it abide.'

"Just then, as I turned the garment,
That no rent should be left behind,
My eye caught an odd little bungle
Of mending and patchwork combined.

"My heart grew suddenly tender,
And something blinded my eyes,
With one of those sweet intuitions
That sometimes make us so wise.

"Dear child! She wanted to help me.
I knew 'twas the best she could do;
But oh! what a botch she had made it
The gray mismatching the blue!

"And yet - can you understand it?
With a tender smile and a tear,
And a half compassionate yearning,
I felt she had grown more dear.

"Then a sweet voice 'broke the silence;
And the dear Lord said to me,
'Art thou tenderer for the little child
Than I am tender for thee?'

"Then straightway I knew His meaning,
So full of compassion and love,
And my faith came back to its Refuge
Like the glad returning dove."

The Pathway of Suffering

"That I may know ... the fellowship of His sufferings." (Phil. 3:10.) What strange ambition these words reveal; what a peculiar passion they express! We could well understand the Apostle seeking the fellowship of Christ's power, or being eager for the communion of Christ's joy, and striving after a share in the love of his Master, but this yearning to know the fellowship of Christ's sufferings seems to carry us beyond the range of the human. And yet is this not characteristic of the soul that truly loves Jesus Christ? The longing to share suffering is born out of a passionate devotion to the Lord.

"O the rapture of surrender
To the claims of Love Divine."

This desperate desire to participate in the reproach of Christ is a need of the life of closest and most intimate union with God. The finer the adjustment of heart and thought to the Divine will, the more deeply shall we become acquainted with suffering. Others who choose to live on the fringe of things may escape the tribulum of discipline, but life for them will be robbed of its sweetest fruit and will miss its highest and holiest purpose.

Friendship and fellowship must ever come to its noblest expression in the hour when hearts are welded together in the forge of affliction. It is the flail of suffering that releases those most fragrant spiritual influences which make hearts flow together in deepest harmony. *No* music so rich as that which pain provokes; the deeper the waters through which we pass, the sweeter the songs we sing.

Show me, blessed Master, that it is as I suffer with Thee that Thine image shall be perfected in me; that the vessel shall be shaped according to the divine design as it passes into the fire with Thee. Make me to understand that it is in the fellowship of Thy passion that I shall be initiated into the mystery of Thy Love; that splendor of Thy Cross will be seen and known to greatest advantage as I view it from Gethsemane. It is the heaviness of the burden that shall add to the happiness of my heart. The sharpness of the thorns that shall strengthen the tenderness of my spirit. The hardness of the way that, shall promote the holiness of my life. Even the blows of life shall but serve to bind me closer to Thee. The wounds that I win on the 'battlefield of temptation shall be the marks of my oneness with Thee.

"O blessed mystic union
With sacrificial love,
On earth a willing offering,
Enthroned with Christ above."

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