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Our Lord's' Great Promise of a Hundred Fold

"And every one that hath left houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children or lands, for My Name's sake, shall receive a hundred fold ["now, in this time" - Mark 10:30], and shall inherit eternal life." - Matt. 19:29, Am. R. V.

THIS great generalized promise has perplexed many thoughtful and devout minds, the minds of many who do not doubt that Christ will be as good as His Word. They can trust Him for their future reward, and leave themselves in His hands without misgiving or fear. They are conscious that they have already entered upon the new life He promised to bestow; and they can readily conceive that in the world to come, this life, freed from the hindrances and restraints of their mortal body, and clothed upon with their house from heaven, will unfold and expand on the spirit plane in ways beyond anything they can now appreciate. "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.) But while fully realizing this, such are not always able to see that any earthly possessions, or ties, or pleasures, which they have abandoned for His sake, are restored to them on earth, now, in this present life; and not only restored, but multiplied a hundred fold. It will be time well spent, therefore, if we meditate on this great promise, and see in what sense, or senses, this may be true.

"Full Measure, Pressed Down"

Of one thing we may be very sure: Christ will be no man's debtor. However little we have learned of Him and His promises, we have learned this much, that it always has been, and it always will be, gain to lose what we leave for Him; that whatever we give to Him becomes more truly our own; that whatever we lay up with Him, will be returned again, with interest; that in His rewards Christ uses large measures, pressed down, shaken together, and running over.

This is the general principle underlying any promise made by our Lord or by His Father, and it is present in this great promise. In seeking to understand it, however, we must first remember that

though at times men may have to leave houses and lands, just as He suggested to the rich young ruler, and even to sacrifice kinships both of blood and affection, in order that they may be true to Christ; at other times, at most times even, we can be true to Him, only by the wise use of such possessions as we may have, and by being very faithful to the kinships in which we are placed and the attachments we have formed. No man serves Christ by simply renouncing all that he owns, or by breaking loose from any tie of blood or friendship. Then only do we serve Him by forsaking our natural ties, or our acquired possessions, when they come between us and Him, when we must renounce either Him or them. Throughout the Gospels He claims to stand first with us; and He advances this claim because, only as we love Him supremely, can we love our neighbors as we should, or use our possessions so as to get from them the full benefit they are capable of yielding us. In short, what His demand of us really comes to is, that our spiritual interests and affections should engage our chief attention.

Wise Counsel Against Mistaken View

In one of the old Watch Towers Brother Russell comments very helpfully on this phase of our subject. "Let us guard," says he, "against a mistaken view of our Lord's words respecting the forsaking of father, mother, houses, lands, etc. Our Lord certainly did not mean that we should sacrifice others in order to be His disciples." If any man will come after Me, let him deny, not others, but himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me, says our Lord. (Matt. 16:24.) "Hence in making our consecration, and in our endeavor to carry it out, we are to remember this, and to deal justly and lovingly with those who are dependent upon us, and for whom we are responsible by ties of nature. For instance, the selling of houses and lands, the forsaking of these, would not mean that the Lord would have us deprive our families of necessary comforts and temporal provisions. Other Scriptures show this distinctly, that he who provides not for his own—for those for whom he is the responsible caretaker -- is worse than an unbeliever. It would be worse for any of the Lord's people to neglect the ties of duty than for an unbeliever to do so, because with his higher light and sounder spirit of mind, he should appreciate the situation more clearly than do others, and therefore be more just in his dealings with those who are properly dependent- upon him."-See W. T. R3845.

In What Does a Man's Life Consist?

The next thing we observe in this great promise of our Lord is that He calls our thoughts away from that which is **outward** to that which is inward, from that which we **have** to that which we **are**; and He intimates that our true property or wealth consists not in any of the possessions from which we must soon part, but in the powers and gifts of that life which neither change nor death can touch -that life which is hid with Christ in God.

The Apostles were thinking of houses and lands, parents and children, thrones and principedoms; Christ speaks to them of life, the life eternal, as their true inheritance, the life which, as it unfolds its energies and graces, makes us ever more fully partakers of God. It is as though He warned them: A man's life does not consist in the abundance of things which he possesses, but in righteousness, peace and joy in the possession of the Holy Spirit, in the vigor and variety of a life under the control of the Master; in his ability to get the real good of all that is around him, even though it be not, in a legal sense, his own. Once let him rise into the spiritual life, into the new life in Christ, and all things (not merely those which are his legally, abut **all** things), become his,

since he now has the capacity to make them all -- even loss and pain, change and disaster-- contribute to his highest welfare, and swell the volume of his life.

A Figurative and Spiritual Promise

Again, we must not forget that our Lord was speaking in the picturesque and paradoxical style commonly used not by Himself only, but also by all the great Jewish teachers of His time. His disciples, who were accustomed to this style, would instantly discern that His promise was not intended to be taken literally, but in a figurative and spiritual sense. Our Lord often said things which were not intended to be understood literally, but which yet had in them a depth of meaning. Many such statements appear in the Sermon on the Mount. For example, He there says: "Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away." (Matt. 5:42.) Every one knows that this instruction of our Lord could not be complied with, literally. Even a Ford or a Rockefeller would very soon find his fortune exhausted if he attempted to do so. Not only so, but he would not be helping most of those to whom he gave, and in many cases would be injuring those who sought to borrow. When, however, we take the words in their true meaning, and understand our Lord to be laying down, not a golden **rule** or **law**, but to be establishing a golden principle, His words present no difficulty. Large hearted generosity is to characterize His followers, and He lays down this golden principle in so paradoxical a form that we cannot mistake His meaning.

So with the promise we are now considering. It was not to be understood literally. Some of the relationships here mentioned, for example, **cannot** be literally multiplied a hundred fold either in this life or the next. Others of them could hardly be thus multiplied without becoming a curse to us instead of a blessing. One cannot literally have a hundred fathers or mothers, and surely no sane man or woman would wish to have a hundred children.

Four things, then, we have observed in connection with this promise:

1. It is not intended to teach that we should sacrifice the interests of others in order to be disciples of Jesus.
2. What we **are** is important; what we **have** is of little account.
3. Its promise of a hundred fold return of anything we have forsaken for Christ's sake and the Gospel's is not to be understood literally, but in a figurative or spiritual sense.
4. It does relate to the present life, as recorded by St. Mark, as well as to the life to come, and it is sure to be fulfilled in generous measure.

What, then, is the meaning of the promise, and how shall we understand it in its figurative or spiritual sense? Perhaps the answer to this question may be summed up and expressed under two headings

1. In Christ, that is, in His love and service, we find all that makes our kinships and possessions of real worth to us.
2. In virtue of our oneness with Him we possess all things and persons in a deeper, truer way.

Let us briefly consider this great promise from these two aspects.

First, we find in Christ, in loving and serving Him, all that makes our natural kinships and our possessions of real worth to us.

What are our possessions, such as houses and lands, and our kinships, such as the ties which bind us to father, mother, husband, wife, and children, good for? What is it that gives them their value? For what ultimate end were these blessings conferred on us?

If we consider this question our conclusion must surely be that our kinships and possessions are valuable to us and reach their true end only as they minister to our highest welfare, as they help to develop our various faculties and powers, as they furnish us with opportunities for serving others, and both enable and incline us to avail ourselves of those opportunities. God has grouped us in families and bound us to each other by many sacred and tender ties in order that we may love and help each other, and that by loving and serving each other we may develop and train, in ourselves and those with whom we are closely associated, the virtues and affections by which both we and they are raised in the scale of being and led on to the highest attainments of which, by His grace, and in His power, we may be capable. Out of the great common inheritance which He has bestowed on mankind as a whole, God secludes a little for each one of us, makes it in a special sense our own, in order that we may learn to use and administer it—use it, not for our own ends alone, or chiefly, but for the general welfare. To possess much, or many things, is not in itself an advantage; it may be a grave disadvantage. It is a grave disadvantage if we neither possess nor develop the power to use them wisely, so to use them that we become wiser and better men, and help to make other men wiser and better. To have many kinsfolk and friends will not help us toward the true end of our being, unless we can so occupy the kindly relationships in which we stand as to do good by them and to get good from them.

Now suppose any man comes clearly and honestly to the conclusion that he can be true to Christ and the Gospel, only by parting with something which he possesses, something in which the world tells him his wealth consists; or suppose he finds that he must break with some relative, or give up a former friend, because the association is working injury to his moral and spiritual welfare, will he really lose any thing by making this sacrifice for Christ's sake and the Gospel's? Will he not rather gain by it? Goods were given for his good. If he is the better man, the more capable and serviceable, the more virtuous and noble, for sacrificing his goods, or some of them, he gains, by sacrificing them, the very ends for which they were bestowed on him, and is the richer for their loss. He has added to the power and quality of his life.

In like manner if a man has to break a friendship or sever a relationship which is weakening and degrading him, he may lose a friend and all the comfort or pleasure he might have received from and through him; but for what were friends and relatives given, save that he and they should minister to each other's well-being? If his welfare can be secured only by losing a friend, is not the loss a gain? And may not the loss be gain even to the friend he forsakes when that friend discovers the motive of his separation?

The Apostles gave up home and livelihood, father and mother, wife and children; that is, they gave up the use of their homes for a time, and did without the comfort of their families. And those back home joined with them in the sacrifice. But did not both their kinsfolk and the Apostles themselves gain immensely by the sacrifice, and gain, too, in those very ends of moral and spiritual development to promote which kinships and possessions are conferred on men? Away from the family love which soothed, encouraged, and inspired, these faithful men went out with the simple Gospel, to be misunderstood, abused, driven from place to place. And yet, as time

went on, and they found themselves the spiritual fathers of multitudes, and recognized that they had been the means in God's hands of communicating a new life to the world, they found their compensation. Verily, they had their hundred fold, and that now, in this present time.

The second aspect in which we wish to consider this promise is: In virtue of our oneness with Christ we possess all things and persons in a deeper, truer, way.

Strictly speaking, a man's property is exactly what he can appropriate; just that, and not a jot more. If, for example, a man buys a large piece of ground, fences it in, builds a mansion on it, lays out a garden, plants a park, landscapes the grounds, no doubt it is his in the full legal sense; and yet there is no law, there is no title which can be conferred by law that can make it really his. It may be ours far more truly than his. If, when we have the opportunity, we go over his mansion and gaze on the works of art that adorn it, or walk through his grounds, and study their exquisite complexities of form and color, light and shade, we see in them innumerable beauties, which, for lack of brain or training, he cannot discern in them; if they teach us lessons he cannot learn, and quicken in us deep and pure emotions to which he is insensible, they are ours in a far higher sense than they are his; and they are ours rather than his simply because we can appropriate more of that which is in them, and of that which is highest and best in them. In us they have subserved a noble use; they have kindled our imagination, cultivated our intellect, touched and purified our heart. A thousand accidents may destroy his legal possession of them—a fire, a bankruptcy. But no accident can disturb our possession of them; they have entered into our life, shaped our mind, become a part of our very being.

But if a neighbor should follow in our steps—if he, too, should look over the fair estate, and let its beauties sink into his mind and heart, and if, besides our purely aesthetic enjoyment of them he can lift an unpretentious eye to heaven, and say, "My Father made them all"; if, as a dear 'brother now passed beyond used to say, as we would watch a glorious sunset together: "There's one of my Father's paintings"; if he feel that the varied loveliness of stream and sky, of cloud and sunshine, of tree and flower, has been given by God, and given that he and his brethren may enjoy and profit by them; if he permit them to quicken new faith, hope, love, peace in his heart, they are even more truly his than they are ours; for he has gotten a still deeper and more enduring good out of them; he has compelled them to minister to his highest welfare. They are his in a sense in which they can belong to none but those who are likeminded with himself, and whose spirits are as readily touched and in tune with the finer, higher, issues of life.

The Power of Appropriation

Really and strictly, then, we possess -- we own just as much, and only as much, as we can appropriate. But -- and here we touch a still more important question, on what does the power of appropriation depend? Obviously it depends on the kind of life that is in us, on its volume and quality, on the vigor and variety of its faculties, and on the manner in which these faculties have been developed, and trained. He who has the most life in him, and in whom this life has been best cultivated, will possess himself of most of that which is really valuable and enduring. He will see farther into men, and be able both to do more for them and to get more from them than can those in whom there is less life or a life less cultivated and accomplished.

Thus it was with the Master, was it not? He was poor, destitute, even; and yet all things were His. He gently detached Himself from the common kinships of life; and yet all men were His. The quality of life which animated Him enabled Him to appropriate the teaching, the beauty, and the

inmost value of whatever met His eye, from the flowers of the field and the ways of the street, to the purple heights of the mountains and the deep recesses of the human heart.

Life, not merely Continued Existence Promised

It is precisely this same quality of life which He possessed that He offers us. While a continued existence is always implied in the promise of eternal life, yet something vastly more than a continued existence is promised. It is life of which our Lord speaks, and which He promises' life of the highest quality in the richest abundance. He offers us the opportunity of participating with Him not merely in a continued existence, but in the "power of an endless life." If we truly love and serve Him, He gives us a life that is worth having, a life that is spiritual, a life like His own and one with His own.

Might not He then, who through His contemplated sacrifice was to open up a new way, a way of life, through the veil, that is to say, through His flesh; might not He securely, confidently, promise that whatever men might leave or lose in order to lay hold on this life should be returned to them a hundred fold? Was there not in this life, which He promised to bestow, all that made kinships and possessions valuable or dear to them? Did it not give them the power to make whom and what they would their own? And will it not confer a similar power, and an equal reward, on us? If the mind that was in Christ be in us, are not all things ours by the selfsame right by which they were His? And have we not the power to make all that is really good and enduring in them our own?

Let us then prize and pursue that which is inward rather than that which is outward, and that which is spiritual rather than that which is carnal, that which is eternal rather than that which is temporal. All that is really valuable and enduring is within us. Accident may, death will, strip us of all else. We can take nothing out of the world except the character we have developed. And even while we remain in the world, our wealth, our well-being, our enjoyment even, depend not on what we can grasp and gain, but on our power to seize and profit by the teaching, the beauty, the real hidden worth, of all that is around us. With this power, the power of the Holy Spirit, in our hearts, and grace to use it, the poorest of us may be the richest of men.*

*This is the first of two articles, the second of which will appear in the next issue. Much of the material it contains has been drawn from the writings of Samuel Cox.

"WHAT HAVE WE DONE TODAY?"

"We shall do so much in the years to come,
But what have we done today?
We shall give out gold in princely sum,
But what did we give today?
We shall lift the heart, and dry the tear,
We shall plant a hope in the place, of a fear,
We shall speak with words of love and cheer,
But what have we done today?

"We shall be so kind in the after while,
But what have we been today?"

We shall bring to each lonely life a smile,
But what have we brought today?
We shall give to truth a grander birth,
And to steadfast faith a deeper worth,
And shall feed the hungry souls of earth,
But whom have we fed today?"

The Elect of God

"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto You, and Peace, be multiplied." - 1 Peter 1:2.

PAUL is evidently addressing an audience of Jews, when, in the synagogue at Antioch he says, "The God of this people of Israel chose [Greek: "elected"] our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt." (Acts 13:17.) The Apostle is assuring them that the promise of Deut. 7:6 has in part been fulfilled, when he continues, "and with an high arm brought He them out of it." Peter informs us that the complete fulfillment is to be found in the Church, who have dwelt "as strangers in antitypical Egypt, and whom God is bringing out "with an high arm." (1 Pet. 2:9.) This Scripture, which assures us that Israel was elected to a special place in God's Plan, while all other nations were passed by, illustrates the election of the Gospel Age, which has so mystified students of the Word.

The subject of election is too large to consider exhaustively in the space at our disposal, but we may profitably review some of the Scriptures on this subject, especially noting some of the features that will be of practical import in our Christian development. Foremost among these is 1 Peter 1:2: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the.. Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." In association with this text let us specially notice Eph. 1:4, 5, and 2 Thess. 2:13, 14. But before examining these, the meanings of the original Greek words, "elect" and "foreknowledge," and those of similar import should be examined.

Distinction Between Foreknowledge and Foreordination

The translation "foreknowledge" cannot be improved. The verb from which it comes is found in 2 Peter 3:17, though somewhat hidden because the two parts of it have 'been separated "Seeing ye know these things **before** beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." This text warns us that some of the "elect," the "unlearned and unstable," (literally "the unlearning," those not progressing in knowledge, and "the unpropped," those not sustained by the living and the written Word) "wrest" ("put on the rack-put to the torture") Scriptural statements that do not suit them "to their own utter destruction." We see from these words that being of the "elect" gives us no occasion for carelessness, that "utter destruction" is still a possibility.

The same word is used in Acts 2:23 to tell us that God foreknew that the Jews would deliver up Jesus to be crucified. 1 Peter 1:20 informs us that from "before the foundation of the world" Christ was foreknown as the slain Lamb. The Church also was foreknown, and "whom He did foreknow, them He also did predestinate." (Rom. 8:29.) For our limited intelligence, the task of understanding how God can foreknow without prearranging, coercing, is a very difficult one; though the Scriptures very definitely teach that God grants to every creature the privilege of choice as to his course.

The word "predestinate" (Rom. 8:29), Strong defines as meaning "to limit in advance"; Thayer, "to decide beforehand"; Liddle and Scott, "to mark out beforehand." The Revised Version

substitutes "foreordain" for it, which word in the King James Version is often a translation of the same word as is rendered "foreknow."

The Meaning of "Elect"

It is still more important, however, that we have a correct understanding of the first word in our text-"elect." Our English word comes from the Greek, which in turn is made up of two words, "ek" and "lego." The latter of these means "to lay; to cause to lie down; to collect; to pick out"; "to lay forth." Evidently there is no thought of separating into groups, but rather of "collecting," "that they may be one." Still greater force is added to this by the word "ek," meaning "as well exit or emission out, of, as separation from something with which there has been close connection." God's part in this matter of election, is to separate us from the world and the flesh with which -we have, had close connection, with the intent that we as the elect shall have and maintain a close connection with each other member of this company. The means is, of course, by being closely knit to Him who is our common Center. Liddle and Scott says that the word "eklego" is used of soldiers and oarsmen, picked for their ability to stand long gruelling hours of extreme service. From Barnes we learn that the use of this word does not refer to a purpose to choose, but to the fact that we are already chosen, adding that it is "to choose, with the accessory idea of kindness or favor."

The predeterminate counsel of God is clearly indicated in numerous passages referring to the writing of names in a figurative book that has been in existence from the foundation of the world. (See Rev. 17:8; Dan. 12:1; Psa. 56:8; and Exod. 32:32.) Eph. 1:3 speaks of the Church as elected "in Him; before the foundation of the world." Since some have seen in this word "foundation," the destruction of a world prior to Adam, we would do well to examine its true meaning. Fortunately it is a word frequently used in classic Greek, since the eleven times it is used in the New Testament would be entirely too few to give us the basis for a definite understanding of its meaning. However, none of these gives even a suggestion of the thought of destruction, but instead each is quite in conformity with the Liddle and Scott, and Thayer definitions "a throwing or laying down; the injection ... of the seed of animals and plants." An allusion to this last meaning is seen in Heb. 11:11.

"Elected to be Saints"

The very word "plan" carries in it the thought of election and foreknowledge. The unchangeable God (Job 23:13) who foreknew Adam's free moral agency and his fall, the humility of the Logos, His testings, His faithfulness unto death, and the glory to follow, also foreknew that, as with Adam, it would not be "good for Him to be alone," and therefore predestinated that there should be a bride in association with Him in the work of bringing the benefits of that ransom to the world of mankind. This company was "elected **in Him** before the foundation of the world." Small wonder they were "elected to be saints." (Rom. 1:6, 7.) But we cannot forget that when Jesus said "I know whom I have elected" (John 13:17, 18), He was including Judas. (John 6:70.) In Europe there are frequent athletic contests for which American representatives are elected. Their election does not assure them of success; it merely grants them the privilege of running. Judas had that privilege, but failed. Since "No man could come unto Jesus except it were given him of the Father" (John 6:55), who "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will", (Eph. 1:11), evidently Judas was fully capable of attaining a place in the Bride and had every opportunity and assistance to that end. We may think of many good reasons why God should have permitted Judas

to run in this race, though foreknowing that he would be a failure, yet there may be known to God many more as well as better ones than we could mention. But Paul reasons from the statement of God to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy"; "so then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Judas was elected to the privilege of running, and he might have been to the "praise of God's glorious grace."

"Elect unto Sprinkling of the Blood"

"In love having predestinated us for sonship [Diaglott] according to the good pleasure ["the benevolent purpose"-Thayer] of His will" (Eph. 1:4, 5), undoubtedly that sonship insures the utmost of protection and assistance. But this does not mean there were no good reasons for predestinating certain ones for sonship. If there were no good reasons, He would not have predestinated any.

In 1 Peter 1:2 we find especial consolation, because it assures us that we are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God," that is, "in agreement with, or on account of the foreknowledge of God," Thayer says. Nor does this give us a basis on which we can claim superiority to others, for instead, "God hath elected the foolish things of the world." Let us not be surprised when we find that is actually the case; but "God hath chosen us **in Him**" (Eph. 1:4), and we will make no mistake to fellowship all who are appreciating their privilege of being in Him, all who have "the spirit of sonship [Diaglott] whereby we cry, Abba, Father", all who recognize that our sonship is "that we should be holy and without blame before Him." Thayer calls attention to the fact that this is the description of a sacrificial lamb. As such we are "elect . . . unto obedience and -[following that-in the next Age] sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. 1:2; See also Hebrews 12:24 and Exod. 24:8.) Who can comprehend grace so abounding, that "God hath from the beginning elected you, to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth, ... to the obtaining of **the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ**"-the glory of 'blessing all mankind, figuratively "sprinkling the blood of Jesus."

But even in this life, in addition to salvation, He "bath blessed us [the elect] with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. 1:3.) We are promised that for our sake the time of trouble "shall be shortened" (Matt. 24:22); that the great deceptions of the final testings of the Age shall not deceive the "very elect," (Ver. 24) but that rather His "angels . . . shall gather **together** His elect from the four winds and from one end of heaven to the other." Let us not allow anything to separate us. Holding together will be made comparatively easy if the fruitage of our lives includes love, and if it "remains." "I have ordained you [Thayer: "have placed you in a passive position"] that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." (Liddle and Scott: "stand fast as in battle.") (John 15:16.) Strange and varied experiences must come to every tree that it might be a fruit-bearing tree, but none should ever forget that "It is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13.) Practically all our trials and testings, individually and as a church, have come as a surprise to us, but not so with our God-"known unto Him -- [that worketh in us] are all His works from the beginning of the world." - Acts 15:18.

"Elect through Sanctification of the Spirit"

Only the experienced lapidary can tell the possibilities of the rough stone that is brought to him. Many mistakes are made by teachers who tell parents that their child can not acquire this or that branch of learning, but not so with our heavenly Father. Every stone that is accepted by Him is capable of the polish that would merit it a place in His crown, every pupil admitted to the school of Christ could, if he would apply himself, graduate with honors-attain the "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. 12:14.) Is this not the clear teaching of the statement, "elect . . . through sanctification of the spirit"?

We must not, however, forget the other statement, that "God hath from the beginning elected you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth." Nor must we forget that it is always truth, not guesses, that sanctifies, and that since no one of us has all the truth, it is not the province of any one of us to dictate to God as to which set of truths He shall use with another brother in sanctifying his spirit-not his body, of course. In thinking of this word sanctification one must remember that the setting apart is in order that the one set apart may be cleansed from pollution of heart and life, that he may be fit for the use of God. It is for this reason that Peter's statement which we have considered is followed by the injunction to "abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." (1 Pet. 2:11.) The fleshly mind strenuously objects to the corrected translation of this passage: "abstain from the desires of the flesh"; but there is no other means of attaining sanctification of the spirit-we must "make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the **desires** thereof." (Rom. 13:14.) "He hath elected us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before Him."

Evidently our attaining to the thing for which God has elected us depends on our faithfulness as well as on God's choice. According to Romans 9:31-33, Israel, though elect, bath not "attained . . . because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law." Their trouble was "going about to establish **their own** righteousness, having not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." (Rom. 10:3.) We have much need, in these days of special trial, to gird up the loins of our minds, to be sober and hope **unto the end** for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ. All our senses will be required for the doing of "this one thing." There will be no time or strength left for the flesh.

"If Ye Do These Things"

After listing the qualities found in the character pleasing to God, Peter makes the accusation that "he that lacketh these things is blind [the Greek seems to indicate, is deliberately closing his eyes] and cannot see afar off" - cannot hope to the end, nor can he even remember the beginning when "he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather brethren, **give diligence to make your calling and election sure.**" While recognizing the absolute necessity of a definite doctrinal foundation, we do not find in the words that follow any indication that agreement with any particular group of brethren is necessary, but "if ye do these things [build up the character Peter has been describing], ye shall never fall, for so an entrance shall be administered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." We are -not forgetting that truth is necessary for the work of sanctification, but we are also remembering that the Scriptures nowhere limit the sanctifying power to any one set of teachings. This text also promises the **abundant** entrance only to those who give of their abundance, those who make "no

provision for the flesh," "those who abstain from the desires of the flesh," those who "give **all diligence.**"

With the downward tendencies of the flesh *always* active and the allurements of the world and Satan always evident, no one could have the courage necessary to enter, or having entered, to continue the fight, were it not for the assurance that "God is for us. Who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31.) Would that each of us might have his eyes opened, as were the eyes of Elisha's servant to see the angel hosts about us. "The angel of the Lord [still] encampeth round about them that reverence Him, and delivereth them." (Psa. 34:7.) Is there one of those angels that is not delegated to this very purpose? "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those that shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. 1:14.) And there is never any delay in their reaching our loving Father with word of any of our needs, for these "angels do always behold the face of My Father," is Jesus' assurance. - Matt. 18:6.

"We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning elected you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto He elected you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. **Therefore, brethren, stand fast.**"

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him; [Diaglott] in love having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of His glorious grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved." Being scattered in the literal sense Peter meant, and strangers from the commonwealth of Israel, will (so long as this "scattering" is not because of "discord among brethren") do no harm if we are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," and if we give the "all diligence" required.

"Grace unto you, and peace be multiplied."

Seeing With Opened Eyes of the Heart

"Having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints." - Eph. 1:18.

THE PRECEDING verses of this chapter reach a most fitting conclusion in the prayer with which it ends. Paul has been seated in the heavenlies, and in thought carrying his readers out into the lengths and breadths of their inheritance in Christ. But how well he knew that it is possible to have ears that hear not, and eyes that see not. He knew too that among those who do see, there are degrees of spiritual sight. Some are blind, some are short-sighted and "cannot see afar off." Some do not want to see, and none so blind as those who will not see. Some are content to see in salvation a way of escape, a self-centered perspective, wholly inconsistent with the character of the high calling of God through Christ. Therefore the Apostle sees the need of all having "a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of God, having the eyes of the heart enlightened." The opening of their mental eyes was much, but unless there was the further opening of the eyes of the heart, there would be no such vision as Paul wanted them to experience. What an immense difference this inner seeing with the heart makes. There is, a wealth of enjoyment in possessing 'The seeing eyes,' which see best by the light in the heart that lies.' The attitude and powers of the deeper mind will determine the degree of vision habitually exercised, very well illustrated in the thought contained in the lines:

"Two men looked through prison bars, One saw mud, the other stars."

One had eyes to see only his immediate environment of limitation and plight, the other could realize that "prison bars do not a prison make" to a mind capable of ascending 'beyond the distant stars. Or to carry the thought into another realm, think of these two men as being,, one of them limited in vision to the lower level of being habitually absorbed in the question of "what shall I eat, and wherewithal be clothed," the other possessed of those higher sensibilities which lift man above the animal. Place these two men in some spot where nature is clothed with splendor, their eyes will look on the same landscape, see the same hills and valleys, the same variety of colors.; the first man will see but little of the real beauty of the scene, while the other man will covet the skill of the poet or artist to put that gorgeous picture in an expression of the heart. And so this natural distinction finds its correspondency in the spiritual realm. Paul, therefore, seeing with the inner eyes of the heart, the riches of God's grace, and of His inheritance in the saints, cannot but desire the same vision for all his brethren. And in that vision there are three things he particularly prays that they may see, namely, the greatness of their hope in Christ, the wealth of God's possession in them, and the power He can exercise to bring all their hopes to fruition.

What then, is that hope? What is the final objective in the mind of God for us? Those who "cannot see afar off" will see it largely as a matter of escaping condemnation, of deliverance from the world of toil and strife, and of reaching a place "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. Or it may -be that a place of honor in the kingdom looms large before their eyes as an incentive also. All of these the overcoming saints will surely gain, but is it such things Paul has chiefly in mind? No indeed! He is far from encouraging a viewpoint largely centered in the thought of a reward for service rendered, especialy in view of the very imperfect character of any service performed. And he is by no means encouraging a seeking mostly of heaven as a refuge from the storm and stress of life, a sort of anodyne hope, something to assuage the pain of present

distress this view would not be worthy of such a character as Paul. It would be too much in character to the man who in natural- things centered life in the problem of what to eat and wear. No! the Apostle looked over an inheritance so vast and rich that he fain would lift all eyes to the same things. What a glorious hope he set before us! Can we not hear him say

"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."

The Supreme Objective of True Hope

Strange indeed that any one should be disposed to aspire to anything lower in attainment than the highest possibilities. To be so disposed would seem to suggest the limited spiritual vision. It is easy and trite to say, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness," but the test of the genuineness of such a statement on the part of any one, lies in the degree of concentrated hope and longing pointing in that direction.- This is an outstanding thing in Paul's life, summed up in five short words, "This one thing I do." And as "he" wove those words into his beautifully expressed ideals, did some one remind him of present limitations, of inherent weaknesses, and suggest that he was aiming far too high? If so, we can be sure of the answer he made. His whole attitude was that of knowing that if he aimed an arrow at the stars, it would go very much higher than if aimed at an object within reach on the lower levels. He sees the attainable set beyond the horizon of the present life, and that end, and nothing short of that end holds his undivided attention. And what is it? He tells us: "I press along the line, towards the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." To gain this objective he suffers the loss of all things, counting them all as "vile refuse" to the end, he says, "that I may gain Christ," "be found in Him," "know Him and the power of His resurrection"-an end he has not fully attained when he writes, but which is never to be lost sight of until he has laid hold on all that for which the Lord has laid hold on him.

What a noble spirit, what a commendable view of Christian life this was for Paul, and how attractive it should be to us. No ideal could be more elevating in its tone, or more spiritually effective in power to make great attainments such as this, the most desirable of all our aims in life.

Stated in brief words, Paul was visualizing these great worth-while attainments to know Christ intimately, to love Him supremely, to serve him in complete self-abnegation, to follow Him unquestionably as one "who could truthfully say, "Where He leads me I will follow." He wanted to be like Christ, and like Him in such a way as to make manifest "the savour of His knowledge in every place." (2 Cor. 2:14.) He wanted it to be so much more than theoretical for him, to --say, "Christ liveth in me." Thus id the aims he pursues, the affections he cherishes, the person of Christ is the center. For himself and for the brethren, he loves Christ as indeed the Author and Finisher of Christian faith, the Alpha and Omega of all our translation into the kingdom of light and heavenly glory. When life is thus centered in Christ, and faith lays hold with a sure confidence not to be cast away, that He who bath begun the good work in us is abundantly able to complete it, will we not realize more clearly that such are our high-calling possibilities. If God from eternity past predestined us to be holy and unblemished, to be wholly conformed to the image of His Son, to be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, we can hold no lower hope for ourselves and be pleasing "to Him. And why should we not be like Paul in our

concentration on this objective, and like him in-s faith in believing that end a glorious reality for himself. Why, should we not, when, "by two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil whither the Forerunner is for us entered." (Heb. 6:18-20.) What a great ".recompense of reward"! What a glorious hope, made attainable for us through the grace and love of God. "Unto Him be glory in the Church by Jesus Christ, throughout, all ages, world without end. Amen." - Eph. 3:21.

God's Riches in His Saints

We come now to the second of the things previously mentioned as things Paul desires for his brethren-that of the wealth of possession God would have us know e has in us. a Does it not seem incredible that God could consider Himself enriched through anything we could bring to,-dim of affection or service? How profoundly this revelation should affect us! Surely we could never take such a place in °his purposes without the most assured foundation for so undeserved a favor. But it is all blessedly true. "God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." (1 Cor. 1:27.) Thus it becomes the privilege of the lowly to rejoice with Mary, in her song: "He that is mighty bath done to me great things, and holy is .His name, . . . He hath put down the, mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low-degree." (Luke 1:49, 52.) And as though to remove all doubt from our minds that such a place in God's affections and estimation could be ours, we have the word of assurance given us: "He that spared not' His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things. "If children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." (Rom. 8:32, 17.) Since, then, God spared not s own Son for our salvation, and chose us in m before the world's foundation to be His peculiar treasure, He must set an infinite value upon us. Precious thought!

Who can tell the value our heavenly Father sets upon the tested and demonstrated fidelity of His children as through much tribulation they hold loyally to Tim? Who can know the intensity of affection, He feels toward one of His trusting and devoted saints? All human illustrations of such love, be they ever so outstanding, must fail to be any adequate example of .his Father love for those who reverence Him. And so, though, "Beneath His feet all the worlds lie spread in their starry splendor, our sun with its train of planets no more than one glimmering spot of light among ten thousand," yet amidst this magnificence, what is the sight that wins His tender, fatherly regard? "Thus saith the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity," "to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word." The Creator rejoices in His works as at the beginning-heaven and earth is His dominion. But these are not His "inheritance." His inherit ands in the love of His children, in the character of is saints. We are to be "to the praise of His glory." We are to Ws praise now, and also His joy of heart when He beholds us growing upward in Godlike qualities of mind and heart, growing in grace and knowledge, possessing more and more of purity, gentleness, love, and patience. How great then will be His pleasure in those who can be presented "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy"! (Jude 24.) Who of us can fail to be moved with gratitude for such a place among the treasured possessions of our God Maybe in His never failing goodness give us increasing evidences of "what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe." - Eph. 1:19.

According to His Mighty Power

This is our last of the three things for which Paul fervently asks on behalf of his brethren. The Apostle rejoiced in a gospel of which he could say, it "is the power of God unto salvation." He well knows that one might see these wonderful possessions as features of God's plan for His elect Church, and that one might cherish such aspirations, but all would be but a mirage unless this third thing was within the reach of every aspiring believer. This is therefore the "power" inherent in the Gospel of which Paul was not ashamed. As we read his confident statements in chapters I and III of his Ephesian letter, should we not be constrained to say with full assurance and joy, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" Think of such words as these, "According to the working of His mighty power, which ..He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies." "We have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Prim who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." "That ewe would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His *Spirit* in the inner man." "Unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." - Eph. 1:19, 20, 11; 3:16, 20.

This is the power we can count on for attaining all of that for which the Lord has laid hold of us. Let us properly appraise it, and then with the Apostle affirm with confidence, "We are not of those who draw back, but of those who go on to the saving of the soul." This is energy for all our weakness, sufficiency for all our needs. Christ within the heart can reverse the currents of life, setting in motion those onward and upward influences by which we are "changed from glory to glory." We are asked to think of Jesus as dead and laid away in the tomb of Joseph. He could never have raised Himself from that grave, the Apostle would remind us, but He was raised by the power of the Father. Now we lift our eyes and see Him at the right hand of God exalted. Are we not being urged then in the appeal of these several texts to measure the power of God's almighty hand in thus raising our Lord from death and placing Him far above angels, principalities and powers, and then like David encourage ourselves in the Lord, that this almighty power is underneath us, to accomplish for us our complete raising up to the same lofty heights, where we shall be through all the ages "to the praise of is glory, who first trusted in Christ."

Ours is the happy, privilege of being of those who have trusted in Christ. We have heard the word of truth, the Gospel of our salvation. We have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, and thereby received the "earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the promised possession, unto the praise of His glory." (Eph. 1:13, 14.) Are we to finally receive that inheritance? As we have just seen, there is no reason for our not possessing it. Unlimited resources are at our command. Every influence of grace and love lies in God's revealed will to draw us onward to this glorious end. What more can He say than to us ,V-re has said, in revelations of His grace in Christ, making us accepted in that beloved One. Exceeding great and precious promises are ours to receive in faith, and experience their influence in separating us completely from all that is not conducive to or in accord with our spiritual prospects. Surely H draws us with such cords of love, and binds us to Himself inseparably. He holds us "in His own right hand and will not let, us go." But there can be failure. We can fail, utterly fail to abide in Christ. Awful possibility! How shall 'we avoid so great a loss? Keep a single eye, an enlightened heart, and hold fast till we enter with Him in our inheritance.

-- Contributed

"Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make!
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take,
What parched grounds refresh, as with a shower!
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all, the distant and the near,
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear;
We kneel, how weak! - we rise, how full of power!
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong
Or others, that we are not strong,
That we are ever overborne with care,
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy, and strength, and courage are with Thee?"

Unto Us He is Precious

1 Peter 2:7-9

THE INTIMATE knowledge of Christ as the altogether lovely One, the Chiefest of ten thousand, is one of the most precious privileges given to any human being. The Christ as a universal figure is acknowledged by all as possessing a degree of perfection inexplicable to the philosophy of man. The historical Christ stands aloof from the ordinary individual, remote, distant; in perfection of ideal, unattainable.

He came to His own, 'but they received Him not. They could not discern in the lowly Jesus the qualities of Priesthood and Kingship. His testimony, which was the spirit of prophecy, fell upon deaf ears. The vision of a world restored to harmony with God could not pierce the impenetrable veil of their racial pride and prejudice.

The Crime of Jewry

This rejection of the stone of stumbling, elect, precious, is not the least part of their punishment. In rejecting the Gift, they spurned the Giver, and those who can appraise the value of that most precious Gift can measure the loss sustained by those who disowned Him, but to those who received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.

This personal relationship to Christ gives access to the inner circle of God's love. Christ becomes the Elder Brother, the One who enters the innermost recesses of our being—Christ in you! He never disappoints, because He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He is the closest friend, the inseparable loved One, and the Sharer of our joys and sorrows. He is ever near in the difficulties and perplexities of life. Friends and even brethren may disappoint us, and sacrifice friendship for an opinion, but His ear is ever open to our cry, His eye is never shut, His sympathies are ever warm and tender, pulsating with the abundant living energy of divine love and compassion.

"What a friend we have in Jesus!" When called upon to tread the rugged pathway, all flecked with the foam and spume of the storms of life, even then He is our Guide and Shield, and will lead us safely to the quiet resting places. He is the Good Shepherd who careth for the sheep. Unto us who believe, the preciousness of Christ is sweet indeed.

According to Our Acceptance by Faith

He is precious to us according to the degree of our acceptance of Him. He is the gift of God, the best and most costly. God so loved that He gave. It is our inestimable privilege to receive of His fulness. Oh that men would open wide the doors of their hearts and give entrance to Him who desires "to come in unto them and sup with them"!

He is precious for what He has done for us. Let us consider for a moment that we Gentiles were aliens and strangers, without God and without hope. By His blood we have been brought nigh, and the virtue of His sacrificial work has accomplished for us, through faith, the forgiveness of sins, being justified by His blood. It is no small thing to have received the atonement effected for us through His obedience even unto death, and by which, a new and living way is opened up into the holiest of all.

But grace is added to grace, for not only are we justified, but we have access to the further grace and sanctification by the spirit and induction into the Church, which is His Body. As members in particular of that Body we come under the headship of Christ, "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."

Privilege and Experience

This fulness is expressed in the terms privilege and experience. It is well sometimes to look backwards, and, in the light of what we were, to mark the steps of progress that have led to what we are. The impulsive, impetuous and rash Peter became one of rocklike quality, bold and courageous, as the power of Christ was made manifest in him. Our association with Christ confers upon us the privilege of sonship. Our interests become mutual, and therefore our activities must be in line with His activities. These activities are summed up in the word Reconciliation. So long as there remains one being out of harmony with God, so long will the work of the Christ be expressed in terms of reconciliation until love has saved to the uttermost, and only when the sin and the sinner become inseparable will the consuming fire of God's justice remove the individual beyond the scope of mercy.

Our Mutual Experiences

It is in the ministry of reconciliation that our most precious experiences in Christ are found.

The first essential is the possession of the spirit of reconciliation. If we have only an intellectual knowledge of atonement, we will never experience the joys and sorrows of that holy ministry. Our contact must be twofold; it must be contact with God and with man, and that contact was fully revealed in the ministry of Jesus. His presence amongst men is the most eloquent testimony

to the fact that He possessed the spirit of reconciliation in fullest measure. "He who was rich, for our sakes became poor."

The spirit of reconciliation is evidenced by the desire for self-effacement if thus reconciliation can be effected between God and man. The outworking of this desire must find its expression in service. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many." Our fellowship with Him, therefore, must be one of mutual experience in the work of atonement, and herein lies the secret power of effective service in that ministry.

His contact with God was maintained by His communion with God in the Spirit. He who had compassion on the multitudes as He realized that they were as sheep without a shepherd, expressed the **spirit** of reconciliation by ministering to their need. He knew that the Lord Jehovah is the great Shepherd, and His interpretation of Jehovah was in expressing the characteristics of a shepherd.

Effective Service

His contact with sinners caused His great heart of love to yearn for their recovery, and this was expressed in works of mercy and loving kindness. We read of Him that He cured all their diseases, and that He went about continually doing good. He did not shun the leper, nor recoil at the open sores of men, moral and physical. He dined with publicans and sinners, and had compassion on the harlot and those who were outcast from society.

In the ministry of atonement He came into contact with every human need. His knowledge, that ultimately death would be abolished, did not blunt His sensibility to the awful nature of death, and it is recorded of Him that in the full consciousness of bereavement He wept in sympathy with others. The supreme test of the spirit of reconciliation was, however, when He poured out His soul unto death. The Cross of Christ is the symbol of fullest surrender to the spirit of divine love in the work of reconciliation.

In this aspect of reconciliation we can have the honor of association with Him, and this privilege, when rightly used, brings us the same experience, namely, suffering, ignominy and shame. Let us, therefore, dear brethren, witness to His sufferings by active service in His cause.

There is also, however, the other aspect of reconciliation, contact with God, the Author of salvation.

At the close of the day, we read that He went apart into the mountain to pray. By the exercise of our spiritual sense we can visualize our blessed Lord, apart, in communication with the Father. The night breezes are fanning His noble brow, the stars are shedding the soft luster of their radiance about Him, and that lone figure is seen against the horizon kneeling in the act of worship and prayer. Who can tell the sweetness of that communion and fellowship of spirit and the confidences exchanged, the inner consciousness of the presence of the Father, the soft caressings of love, the assurances of past faithfulness, and the revelations tenderly given of the further sacrifices required in the work and ministry of reconciliation. How precious these moments of prayer and fellowship with the Father must have been to our Savior, and surely here was the place of vision and the source of power.

We can also in some measure enter into this experience with our risen Lord and Heavenly Father. If our ministry in contact with humanity and its need is to be one of power and vision, then its success will be determined solely by the contact which we have with the Author of Atonement, our Heavenly Father, and the Medium of Atonement, our Lord Jesus, through the Spirit of Atonement, the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.

In these closing days of the Church's career in the flesh, our prayer continually should be:

"O for a closer walk with God,
To glorify His name;
To let my light shine on the road
That leads men to the Lamb."

Unto us, therefore, He is precious, because He has given us the assurance that our relationship towards Him is eternal; that He has gone to prepare a place for us, and will come again and receive us to Himself; that our sorrow will be turned into joy, and that our apparent defeat will be turned into victory. May the thought of our future inheritance be the theme of our meditations, "to be like Him and to see Him as He is."

Be faithful ministers of the New Covenant, and in due time the reward will be yours. Let not the allurements of this world dim the radiance of that glorious hope.

"Unto us, therefore, who believe, He is precious.

- *Selected.* .

LEAN HARD

"Child of My love, lean hard,
And let Me feel the pressure of thy care.
I know thy burden, for I fashioned it
Poised it in My own hand, and made its weight
Precisely that which I saw best for thee.
And when I placed it in thy shrinking form I said,
'I shall be near, and while thou leanest
On Me this burden shall be Mine, not thine.'
So shall I keep within My circling arms
The child of My own love; here lay it down,
Nor fear to weary Him who made, upholds,
And guides the universe. Yet closer come;
Thou art not near enough.. Thy care, thyself,
Lay both on Me, that I may feel My child
Reposing on My heart. Thou lovest Me?
I doubt it not; then, loving Me, lean hand."

Resting at Jesus' Feet

"The annual 'Labor Day Convention' held in Minneapolis on September 5th and 6th this year and attended by about 150 of those who love the Truth and enjoy assembling with those of 'like precious faith' is again in the past, but the memories and blessings of the occasion will be everlasting. Time rushes on! But the same *time* which brings us into our trials, tests, sorrows, and difficult experiences is rushing us on to the fulfillment of our hopes. 'Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.' - 2 Peter 3:11.

"Upon entering the Convention Hall one's eyes fell upon the motto, hung above the speaker's platform,

"The Master is come and calleth for thee." - John 11:28. On the left wall another large motto read,

"Faith can firmly trust Him, come what may." - Pastor Russell in Morning Resolve.' On the right wall, "'It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." Lev. 17:11.2 ' "To us there is but one God, the Father." - 1 Cor. 8.,6. "Follow peace with all, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." - Heb. 12:14.'

"In his address of welcome, the chairman for the first day, among many helpful suggestions and thoughts, said that when the Convention was over his hope and confidence was that we should be able to look back upon its experiences 'and realize that sweet sense of heartfelt satisfaction and thankfulness which is the portion of those who know what it means to come apart, to rest at Jesus' feet, there to catch something of His spirit: thence to take away a little more of His likeness.' We feel sure this hope is realized in all who were privileged to be present with the Minneapolis friends those two happy days.

"The subjects used by the speakers were: 'Love and Praise'; 'Faith'; 'Consecration,' using Hymn 277 - 'Take my Life'; a splendid public talk on the topic, 'The Mystery of the Bible'; 'Trouble'; 'Dwelling and Abiding with God'-Psa. 15; 'Prayer'; and the last speaker gave a resume of the various talks, with additional thoughts, closing with the Scripture, 'Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.' - 2 Cor. 13:11.

"The services were interspersed with musical numbers which were helpful and inspiring. An orchestra of several instruments assisted with the singing and in making melody unto the Lord.

"On Sunday morning the Polish friends were addressed in a special meeting in their own language. The young people, of whom there was a large attendance, were addressed on Monday by two brethren.

"The heartfelt testimonies, as always, were inspiring, especially that of a dear sister of the local Class whose husband had been smitten by severe illness. Although at times able only to speak a word or two between pauses, being overcome by tears, she persisted until through with what she felt impelled to say, which included her love and confidence in the Lord, and faith that His way is best; and realization that many blessings of faith, trust, confidence, submission, and leaning on the Lord *alone* had resulted from the heart-breaking experience. When her testimony was ended there was not a dry eye in the hall, and prayers ascended that *if it were God's will* relief might be granted.

"A little foretaste of '*what it will be to be there*' was given us in Minneapolis."

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. E'en 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.'"

- *Selected*

Messages of Encouragement

Dear Sirs:

Some time ago in some manner I came across your leaflet, "Where Are the Dead?" Many times I have asked myself that question, since nearly all of my relations have passed. I hope I can trust your solution, as it certainly seems just.

Two years ago I lost my darling son-a very good, kind, conscientious young man. His passing worried me daily and nightly, for he was not a Christian, although 'a fine, honest boy, and his passing was almost sudden. 'The only hope I have is your leaflet and an answer direct from above in my great sorrow. I held my Bible and prayed the Lord if there was any hope for my boy to be saved let me open the Bible to a passage that would let me know. I opened it to Romans 8, and my eyes first fell on verses 26 and 27. Between those verses and your leaflet I have been able to carry on. . . . If you have any leaflets that can give me hope, please send me some, and I will be grateful and appreciate same.

A sorrowing mother,
B. J. P. - Calif.

The following from the same writer will prove an encouragement to all who are seeking to comfort others with the precious message of the Truth:

Dear Friends:

The book, "Divine Plan of the Ages," has been received, as well as your letter and the leaflets. I am enclosing 30 cents in stamps to pay for the book, and as soon as possible I hope to donate toward your work. Needless to say I do not have the money now or I would gladly send it. Both the book and leaflets, as well as your kind and loving thoughts, have done much to lull the sorrow in my heart, and I am more than grateful to you all.

Thanking you from the depths of my heart, and asking you to pray for me, I remain

B. J. P. - Calif.

Evils of Religious Controversy

"In my opinion, no other feature of religious controversy is so dangerous as that which is found in the hostile spirit with which such controversy is too commonly conducted. Whatever may be the dignity of the Son of God, He is most honored by those who are most careful to imbibe and exhibit the spirit required in His precepts, and displayed in His example. However unexceptionable a man's creed may be in other respects, he has little claim to be, regarded as a friend of the Savior, if his faith works by hatred instead of by love.

"The bitter controversies among Christians, relating to the doctrines of their religion, may perhaps account for the astonishing blindness which has so long prevailed in regard to the antichristian practice of war. By such disputings within the ranks of believers, the attention is diverted from the benign and forbearing spirit of true Christianity, and a belief in some mystical doctrines expressed in language not found in the Scriptures, has been treated as more important than that love which is 'the end of the commandment,' the 'fulfilling of the law.' When, therefore, it shall be duly understood, that love is the sum of all Christian duty and all moral excellence, that true faith always works by love and purifies the heart, that the precepts of Christ are designed to teach us what we must be and do to obtain eternal life, and that the doctrines of the Gospel are exhibited as motives to obedience; then the bitterness of theological controversy will subside, sanguinary customs will no more disgrace the Church of Christ, and the pagans may again exclaim, '-Behold, how the Christians love one another.'" - *Selected*.